

The Canon



Preface to The Canon

The term “Canon” is defined as a straight measuring tool, and is used in the Church of Jesus Christ and shall be the aggregate official documents of Ambassadors of Christ and affiliated groups, missions, churches and organizations.

When Jesus faced Satan in the wilderness He quoted from Deuteronomy 8:3, reminding His listener that we live “*on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord.*” Therefore, we affirm that our foundation is firmly planted in the written revelation of the works of God as recorded in both the Old and New Testament--the Bible. Furthermore, we affirm that God speaks to us directly by His Holy Spirit to reveal His ways and will for us. Therefore, any written code or set of rules must be considered secondary and transient in relationship of God’s sure revelation of Himself to us.

The Canon of Ambassadors of Christ and any other written bylaws or guidelines, fulfills a very real need of human beings to have practical guidelines for following the revealed ways and will of the Lord. We walk by faith, but, by virtue of being finite minded, it is not easy for us to live with unrecorded reflections regarding our understanding of God's ways and will for this moment of actualization.

In the 14th chapter of 1 Corinthians, Paul reminds us that “*God is not a God of disorder but of peace,*” and, “*everything should be done in a fitting and orderly way.*” It is on this understanding of the Word of God that any organized organism of Ambassadors of Christ bases its written bylaws.

The Canon provided the directives for accomplishing God's ways and will for us. Like a road map, it leads us throughout work, but does not and should not provide every detail in a lavish prerogative. It is the structure within which we move by the Spirit of God. If every Christian were completely and perfectly in accord with the Lordship of Jesus Christ, then any and all rules would be nothing less than refuse and should be

unnecessary. This should be our goal. But in the meantime, as needed, guidelines serve a valid purpose.

Since this Canon is *not* written on slabs of granite, it is, and always should be open to Spirit-led interpretation and frequent changes in order to meet the needs of the growing Church as it seeks to fulfill its work for the Lord. In making changes to the Canon, it is important that they be done soberly, reverently and with regard to both the Word of God and the Holy Spirit's guiding in this particular day. This is accomplished by the General Convocation as the overseers who have as their tools the Word of God, a lively prayer life, knowledge of the experience of the Church through the ages, and a sense of the visionary direction of the Church in our day. Individuals and subdivisions of the Church are also provided means of having significant input in these changes through the vehicle of Overture to the Minister's Fellowship and the General Convocation.

The Canon of Ambassadors of Christ reflects a *centrist* view of the Church as an organization, neither leading to the extremes of hierarchical elitism nor to the extremes of congregational whimsy. *God has led us most purposefully by His Spirit to establish this Church by reasonable and very workable order.* The Canon is the tool to edify this work of the Lord in the saints and not a sanctimonious code.

We remember a time when Jesus “superseded” the Law by feeding the hungry on the Sabbath. Christ was observing a higher priority of the Law on the basis of love and grace. In any of the written protocols or formal councils of the Church, we must always remember that we live under the freedom of grace that is the gift of God given through Jesus Christ to all believers.

Therefore, in the sight of God, and by order of the Church of Jesus Christ, We resolve that the Canon of Ambassadors of Christ, as Amended shall be construed as the Official Bylaws of Ambassadors of Christ.

Preface to The Canon

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION (A)

A-Article 1 Corporate Name

A-Article 2 Registered Agent and Registered Office in the State of Illinois

A-Article 3 Board of Directors

A-Article 4 Purpose

A-Article 5 Other Provisions

A-Article 6 Name and Address of Incorporators

BOOK OF GOVERNMENT (G)

G-Article 1 Name

G-Article 2 Purposes

2.1. SPECIAL PROVISIONS in Voting Rights:

2.2 Prohibited Activities

2.4 Intent of Perpetuity

2.5 Dissolution Clause

G-Article 3 Location and Fiscal Period

G-Article 4 Membership

4.1 Prerequisites for Membership

4.2 Preparation For Membership

4.3 Membership Procedure

4.4 Dual Membership

4.5 Household Membership

4.6 Categories of Membership

4.7 Voting Rights

4.8 Status of Membership

4.9 Transfer of Membership

4.10 Dissolution of Confirmation

4.11 Reinstatement of Membership

[4.12 Congregational Meetings](#)

[4.13 Affiliate Membership](#)

[G-Article 5. Deacons](#)

[5.1 Definition](#)

[5.2 Procedure](#)

[5.3. Board of Deacons](#)

[G-Article 6. Elders](#)

[6.1 Definition](#)

[6.2 Procedure](#)

[6.3 Board of Elders](#)

[G-Article 7. Curates](#)

[7.1 Definition](#)

[7.2 Procedure](#)

[G-Article 8 Seminarians](#)

[8.1 Definition](#)

[8.2 Candidate Procedure](#)

[8.3 Appeal Process](#)

[8.4 Licensure Procedure](#)

[8.5 Ordination Procedures](#)

[G-Article 9 Discerning Calling](#)

[9.1 Preparation](#)

[9.2 Examination](#)

[9.3 Special Provisions](#)

[G-Article 10 Bishops](#)

[10.1 Definition](#)

[10.2 Procedure](#)

[10.3 Special Provisions](#)

[G-Article 11 Presiding Bishop](#)

11.1 Definition

G-Article 12 Status of Licensed and Ordained Individuals

12.1 Authorization for Candidacy

12.2 Logical Sequence of Training

12.3 Deacons

12.4 Elders

12.6 Curates

12.7 Seminararians

12.8 Bishops

12.9 Presiding Bishop

12.10 Emergency Change of Status

12.11 Ordinary Change of Status

12.12 Sabbatical Leave

12.13 General Procedures

G-Article 13 Ecclesiastical Adjudication

13.1 Adjudicating Differences

13.2 Confidentiality

13.3 Inactive Status of the Ordained

13.4 Preliminaries to Deconsecration

13.5 Deconsecration of Deacons and Elders

13.6 Affirmation of Ordination

13.7 Deconsecration of Elders

13.8 Deconsecration of Bishops

13.9 Automatic Deconsecration

13.10 Guidelines for Ministry, Ministry Candidates and Personnel

Toward the Church:

Toward the Community:

Expectations:

Standards of the Kingdom:

Consequences:

[Preventing Burnout:](#)

[Warning:](#)

[Additional Considerations:](#)

[Guidelines for Placing On Inactive Status:](#)

[Guidelines For Reinstatement to Active Status:](#)

[13.11 Authority](#)

[13.12. A Final Admonition:](#)

[G-Article 14 The Church Council](#)

[14.1 Definition:](#)

[14.2 Authority](#)

[14.3 The Church Council in Mission Churches](#)

[G-Article 15 Ambassadors Fellowship Group](#)

[15.1. Definition](#)

[15.2. Procedure](#)

[15.3 Authority](#)

[15.4 Special Provisions](#)

[G-Article 16 The Chartered Mission](#)

[16.1 Definition](#)

[16.2 Procedure](#)

[16.3 Authority](#)

[16.4 Bylaw Provisions](#)

[16.4 Special Provisions](#)

[G-Article 17 The Chartered Church](#)

[17.1 Definition](#)

[17.2 Procedures](#)

[17.3 Authority](#)

[17.4 Special Provisions](#)

[13.11 Authority](#)

[13.12. A Final Admonition:](#)

G-Article 14 The Church Council

14.1 Definition:

14.2 Authority

14.3 The Church Council in Mission Churches

G-Article 15 Ambassadors Fellowship Group

15.1 Definition

15.3 Authority

15.4 Special Provisions

G-Article 16 The Chartered Mission

16.1 Definition

16.2 Procedure

16.3 Authority

16.4 Bylaw Provisions

16.4 Special Provisions

G-Article 17 The Chartered Church

17.1 Definition

17.2 Procedures

17.3 Authority

17.4 Special Provisions

G-Article 18 The Embassy

18.1 Definition

18.2 Procedure

18.3 Authority

18.4 Special Provisions

G-Article 19 Other Subdivisions

19.1 Definition

19.2 Districts

19.3 Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary

G-Article 20 The Minister's Fellowship

20.1 Definition

[20.2 Presiding Bishop](#)

[20.3 Meetings](#)

[20.4 Membership](#)

[20.5 Commission](#)

[G-Article 21 The Board of Trustees](#)

[21.1. Definition](#)

[21.2. Organization](#)

[21.3. Appointment of Trustees](#)

[21.4. Meetings](#)

[21.5. Agent of Transactions](#)

[G-Article 22 The General Convocation](#)

[22.1 Definition](#)

[22.2. Representation](#)

[22.3. Meetings](#)

[22.4. Voting](#)

[G-Article 23 Properties and Fiscal Policies](#)

[23.1 Purchase and Sale of Real Property](#)

[23.2 Loans](#)

[23.3 Accounting and Deposit](#)

[23.4. Designated Funds:](#)

[23.5 Budgets](#)

[23.6 Endowment Funds](#)

[23.7 Tithes](#)

[23.8 Property](#)

[23.9 Clergy Expenses](#)

[23.10 Other Funds](#)

[23.11 Pastor's Salary](#)

[23.12 Debt Guidelines](#)

[23.13 Property Usage Agreement](#)

G-Article 24 General Procedures

24.1 Clergy Reports

24.2 Financial Reports

24.3 Quorums

24.4 Transfer of Ordination

24.5 Nominating Committees

G-Article 25 Books and Records

25.1 Registries

25.2 Procedures

25.4 Minutes

25.5 Accessibility

25.6 Identification Cards

Definition

G-Article 26 Amendments

26.1 Overtures

26.2 Provisional Amendments

26.3 Veto

G-Article 27 Dissolution

27.1 Legal Dissolution Clause

27.2 Specific Dissolution

C-Article 1 Authority

1.1 General Authority

1.2 Moral Conduct

C-Article 2 Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation

2.1 The Official History

2.2 Guiding Principles

C-Article 3 The Official Logo

3.1 The Logo

C-Article 4 Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith

4.1 Formation

4.2 Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith

4.3 Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith (Short Form)

C-Article 5 The Historical Creeds of the Church

5.1 Definition

5.2 The Apostles Creed

5.3 The Nicene Creed

5.4 The Athanasian Creed

C-Article 6 Statement of Faith

6.1 Human Nature

6.2 God the Creator

6.3 The Old Covenant

6.4 The Ten Commandments

6.5 Sin

6.6 Redemption

6.7 God the Savior

6.7 The Christian Covenant

6.8 The Holy Spirit

6.9 The Holy Scripture

6.11 The Church

6.12 The Ministry

6.13 Prayer and Worship

6.14 The Sacraments

6.15 Baptism

6.16 The Lord's Supper

6.17 Rites

6.18 Christian Hope

6.19 Fellowship of the Saints

6.20 Abundant Life

C-Article 7 Theological Positions

Position 1: Consecration and Re-consecration

Position 2: Accessibility of Children to Communion

Position 3: The Trinity

Position 4: Doctrine of Divine Presence

Book of Worship (W)

W-Article 1 Authority

1.1 General Authority

1.2 Extemporaneous Statements

W-Article 2 Liturgical Colors

2.1. General Statements

2.2. Liturgical Colors and Meaning

2.3. Usage

W-Article 3 The Rule and Order of Corporate Worship

3.1 Authority

3.2 General Statements

3.3 Elements of Corporate Worship

3.4 Hymns of Praise

3.5 Records of Worship

3.6 The Principal Liturgy

W-Article 4 General Confessions

Confession 1

Confession 2

Confession 3

Confession 4

Confession 5

W-Article 5 The Agapé Hymn

5.1 Origin

[5.2 Usage](#)

[5.3 The Agapé Hymn](#)

[5.4 Words for Projection](#)

[W-Article 6 The Ordination Hymn](#)

[6.1 Origin](#)

[6.2 Usage](#)

[6.3 The Hymn](#)

[6.4 The Hymn for Projection](#)

[W-Article 7 Official Worship Books](#)

[7.1 Scriptures](#)

[7.2 Hymnal](#)

[7.3 Inclusive Language](#)

[W-Article 8 The Order for The Sacrament of Baptism](#)

[8.1 Ordering of Baptism](#)

[8.2 Unusual Circumstances](#)

[8.3 Registry](#)

[8.4. The Liturgy for the Sacrament of Baptism](#)

ARTICLES OF INCORPORATION (A)

Article of Incorporation

State of Illinois

General Not For Profit Corporation

A-Article 1 Corporate Name

The name of this corporation shall be Ambassadors of Christ.

A-Article 2 Registered Agent and Registered Office in the State of Illinois

The Registered Agent for this corporation is Rev. Richard J Lee.

The registered office shall be located in Illinois until 2020 then the registered office shall be located in Missouri.

A-Article 3 Board of Directors

The first Board of Directors in Illinois shall be:

Rev. Richard J Lee who resides in Illinois

Stephen J Lee who resides in Illinois

Rev. Michael Ramey who resides in Illinois

A-Article 4 Purpose

The Purposes of Ambassadors of Christ are for religious, educational, and service oriented purposes.

A-Article 5 Other Provisions

The specific provisions of self government are provided in the Canon of Ambassadors of Christ (attached)

A-Article 6 Name and Address of Incorporators

Rev. Richard J Lee Pontoon Beach Illinois

Stephen J Lee Pontoon Beach Illinois

Michael Ramey Pontoon Beach Illinois

BOOK OF GOVERNMENT (G)

G-Article 1 Name

1. The name of this corporation shall be Ambassadors of Christ, and shall operate as a Church.
2. Granite City Ambassadors of Christ shall operate as the Canon church for those who are affiliated with the same.
3. All congregations in cooperation with Ambassadors of Christ shall be known as Ambassadors of Christ, and shall be part of the General Convocation. All Ambassadors of Christ shall work together to maintain the unity of the faith and practice of Ambassadors of Christ in every assembly.
4. Each member congregation, ministry, mission or fellowship group shall use the name “Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation” to identify itself as being in cooperation with the Synod.

G-Article 2 Purposes

The purpose or purposes for which Ambassadors of Christ has been organized are: exclusively for religious, educational, and service purposes;

1. To promote the spiritual welfare of its members and the community in the whole world in the Christian Faith and tradition; and all other legal powers permitted Nonprofit Corporations in the State of Illinois and including but not limited to:
2. To conduct worship services, public forums, social gatherings, and other activities to further the purpose of Ambassadors of Christ;
3. To organize Mission Churches and Charter existing Churches under provisions of these Bylaws for the advancement and promotion of the general purposes of Ambassadors of Christ;
4. To accept members into Ambassadors of Christ by the Rite of Confirmation as provided for in the Bylaws;
5. To elevate Confirmed Members to positions of Church Leadership by the Rite of Ordination as provided for in the Bylaws;

6. To appoint Ordained Pastors and other leaders as overseers of the various Mission Churches, Charter Churches, and other Subdivisions as provided for in the Bylaws
7. To make distributions to organizations that qualify as exempt organizations under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provisions of any further United States Internal Revenue Code)
8. To carry on any and all activities permitted to be carried on;
 - a. by a corporation exempt from Federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code), or,
 - b. by a Corporation, contributions to which are deductible under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code.)

2.1. SPECIAL PROVISIONS in Voting Rights:

1. Members accepted by the Rite of Confirmation into any Ambassadors of Christ congregation shall be restricted in voting rights in matters coming before the assembly of Mission Churches, Charter Churches or other Subdivisions as specified in these Bylaws and shall have no voting rights on matters coming before the Minister's Fellowship.
2. The Minister's Fellowship *reserves the right* to amend, alter, change or repeal any provisions contained in the Articles of Incorporation in the manner now or hereafter prescribed by the statutes, and all rights conferred upon the Members of the Mission Churches, Charter Churches and other subdivisions herein are granted subject to this reservation;
3. The Minister's Fellowship confers upon General Convocation the right to repeal or amend the Bylaws of Ambassadors of Christ and to adopt new or additional Bylaws as provided for herein.

4. The Corporation shall be a non-profit and non-political organization. No part of any earnings of which shall inure to the benefit of any member or individual, except reasonable compensation for goods and services or other expenditures in furtherance of the Corporate purposes exempt from taxation under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code).
5. No Officer or Director of the Corporation shall receive any compensation for his/her service as Officer or Director except as reasonable compensation for goods and services or other expenditures in furtherance of the Corporate purposes exempt from taxation under the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code).

2.2 *Prohibited Activities*

Ambassadors of Christ shall not engage in any activity which is inconsistent with the Law.

1. The Corporation shall distribute its income for each taxable year at such time and in such manner as not to become subject to the tax or undistributed income imposed by Section 4942 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code).
2. The Corporation shall not engage in any act of self dealing as so defined in Section 4941(d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code).
3. The Corporation shall not retain any excess business holdings as defined in Section 4943 (d) of Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code)
4. The Corporation shall not make any taxable expenditures as defined in Section 4945 (d) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954

(or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code).

5. The Corporation ***shall not*** unreasonably accumulate income within the meaning of Section 504 of the Internal revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code).
6. The Corporation shall not be operated for the primary purpose of carrying on an unrelated trade or business as defined in Section 513 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code).
7. The Corporation shall not engage in any transaction or activity prohibited by Section 503 and in particular Section 503(c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code)
8. The Corporation shall not engage in any transaction or activity which will affect the tax status of gifts, donations, etc., under Section 170 (c) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code).
9. The Corporation shall not engage, otherwise than as an insubstantial part of its activities, in practices which are not in furtherance of one or more of the Corporate purposes.

2.4 Intent of Perpetuity

1. The Church of Jesus Christ, known as Ambassadors of Christ, was established by the will of God for the purpose of fulfilling the will of God in perpetuity.

2.5 Dissolution Clause

1. In the event of dissolution of the Corporation, after the settlement of all outstanding debts, its assets shall be distributed to a religious organization or institution which qualifies for tax exemption under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the

corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code), and which organization or institution can best accomplish the general objectives for which this corporation was organized. Said religious organization or institution shall be selected by two-thirds vote of the Minister's Fellowship or, in the event the Minister's Fellowship does not make such a selection, then by account of competent jurisdiction within the State of Illinois.

G-Article 3 Location and Fiscal Period

1. The principal office of business of the Corporation shall be in **the Village of Pontoon Beach Illinois located in Madison County.**
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall have the power and authority to change said principal office of business from one location to another in the state of Illinois.
3. The fiscal year of the Corporation shall begin on the first day of September in each year and end at Midnight on the 31st day of August of the following year.

G-Article 4 Membership

4.1 Prerequisites for Membership

1. A person shall be a professing Christian to qualify for Membership.
2. We believe that a person becomes a professing Christian by:
 - a. Recognizing, renouncing and repenting of sin and the sinful nature;
 - b. Accepting forgiveness of sin by personal faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God, and;
 - c. Witnessing God's grace through water baptism, signifying and sealing our union with Christ.

3. Such a belief and commitment of the will and heart to become a Christ like makes one a member of the Family of God and a Member of the Body of Christ, the Church Universal.

4.2 Preparation For Membership

A professing Christian who desires to become a Member of Ambassadors of Christ shall:

1. Attend worship regularly for a period of no less than two months prior to admittance into membership.
2. Attend and successfully complete the New Members/Confirmation course, known as “Foundations of the Christian Faith”, as prescribed by Ambassadors of Christ, provided by Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary, which shall include study of the Ambassadors of Christ Affirmation of Faith, review of the Canon and, in general, consider the worship, work and witness of this Church,
3. Communicate with an Elder of the Church on an individual basis regarding their faith; and
4. Sign, in good faith, the Membership Commitment.
5. If the applicant has not yet received Water Baptism, he/she shall make arrangements to receive the Sacrament of Baptism.

4.3 Membership Procedure

1. After a person fulfills the above requirement, he/she shall participate in the Rite of Confirmation before the Congregation of a Church or Mission of Ambassadors of Christ, thus fulfilling the Scripture, “that if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved,” (Romans 10:9-10).

4.4 *Dual Membership*

1. Membership in Ambassadors of Christ does not preclude membership in any other Church. Dual Membership is permissible at the discretion of the local Pastor.
2. Dual Membership for those seeking ordination ***shall never be permitted.***
3. Dual Membership shall not be allowed on any denomination so long as it espouses heretical theology, including but not limited to the following:
 - Spiritism based cults;
 - Theosophical based cults;
 - Christian Science;
 - Unity;
 - Baha'i
 - Mormonism;
 - Jehovah's Witnesses.

4.5 *Household Membership*

1. Children, age twelve and under, of Confirmed Members shall be considered household Members and receive the grace and nurturing of the Church. They shall not be eligible to vote.

4.6 *Categories of Membership*

1. Recognizing that all believers are called “a royal priesthood of believers”, and are members of the Body of Christ, we recognize the following categories of non-professional and professional Members:
 - a. Members
 - b. Household Members
 - c. Affiliate Members and
 - d. Honorary Members

2. God calls some individuals with professional standing into service directed ministry. We recognize the following offices of Professional Laity:
 - a. Deacon
 - b. Curate
3. God calls some individuals into full-time service. We recognize the following General categories of Professional Ministry:
 - a. Seminarian;
 - b. Elder (NOTE: Elders serve as Pastors, Bishops, and Presiding Bishops.)
4. There shall be no provisional confirmations, license or ordination granted. All requirements shall be met prior to celebration of the Rites of Confirmation, Commissioning and Ordination.
5. Honorary confirmations and offices (titles without authority) may be granted where a local Pastor wishes to allow honor in mitigating or special circumstances, and such honorary confirmation or office shall be reported to the Minister's Fellowship on a timely basis.
6. All ordained positions include a lifetime commitment to leadership in the sacramental life of the Church, except when referring to Commissioned officers and Commissioned Elders.

4.7 Voting Rights

1. Each Member shall be entitled to one vote on each matter submitted to a vote of the Members.
2. Voting by proxy shall not be permitted. In special circumstances this rule may be set aside by a motion and a simple majority vote.

4.8 Status of Membership

1. ***Active Members*** are any Confirmed Member attending and supporting Ambassadors of Christ Churches, Missions or other Subdivisions within a one year period.

2. ***Inactive Members*** are any confirmed Member neither attending nor supporting Ambassadors of Christ Churches Missions or other Subdivisions within a one year period.
3. ***Passive Members*** are any Confirmed Members not attending nor supporting Ambassadors of Christ Churches, Missions or other Subdivisions on a regular basis within a two month period.
4. ***Adherents*** are any unconfirmed person currently attending or supporting Ambassadors of Christ Churches, Missions or Subdivisions.
5. A ***Household Member*** is any actively attending person age twelve and under who is the child of a Confirmed Member.

4.9 Transfer of Membership

1. Any Member may transfer from one Church, Mission or other Subdivision to another by request of Letter of Transfer sent to originating body.
2. Transfer of Membership shall not be accepted until at least one year following the date of confirmation unless a geographical change of location or the member shall justify the transfer.
3. Any person may transfer Membership from another Christian Church body to an Ambassadors of Christ Church, Mission, or other Subdivision by request of Letter of Transfer sent to originating body and by acceptance by the appropriate Elder upon the person's full compliance with all provisions for the Rite of Confirmation.
4. The receiving Church, Mission or other Subdivision shall enter Statement of Transfer of Membership in the Book of Registry of both the local and Canon Church.

4.10 Dissolution of Confirmation

1. Each Church, Mission or other Subdivision is required to purge its rolls at least annually, during the month prior to the General Convocation of Ambassadors of Christ. The process includes:

- a. Identify Inactive and Passive Members on the rolls,
 - b. Notify Inactive and Passive Members by mail, requesting return mail response from Inactive or Passive member stating their desire with regard to Membership status.
 - c. Notify the Minister's Fellowship of negative or nonexistent responses
 - d. The Minister's Fellowship shall take action on each case and notify both the person and the local body of action taken.
 - e. Dissolution of Confirmation shall be entered in the Book of Registry of both the local and national church.
4. Request for Dissolution of Confirmation (resignation).
- a. A person desiring a Dissolution of confirmation shall present a letter requesting the same to the Elder or Moderator of the Church, Mission, or other Subdivision where the Rite of Confirmation was performed, or the Church, Mission or other Subdivision wherein Membership currently resides.
 - b. The person shall then be adequately counseled by the Elder.
 - c. The letter or request with an accompanying letter of explanation shall be sent to the clerk of the Minister's Fellowship for action.
 - d. The Clerk of the Minister's Fellowship shall review resignation to ascertain if there are complications involved with status of Ordination or other pending actions. If there are none, the resignation shall be automatically referred back to the local Church by the Clerk of the Minister's Fellowship for local action.
 - e. If there are complications, the clerk shall bring the resignation before the Minister's Fellowship.

- f. The Minister's Fellowship shall notify the local body and the individual member of action taken.
- g. The Dissolution of Confirmation shall be entered in the Book of Registry of the local congregation and the national Churches.

4.10.c. Dissolution of Confirmation for Cause

1. A Minister, Bishop, or Regent may present a request for consideration of Dissolution of Confirmation against an individual.
2. A letter to this effect shall be presented to the Minister's Fellowship for action and a copy sent to the individual involved.
3. The Minister's Fellowship shall notify the local body and the individual of preliminary action taken.
4. The individual may appeal the action in writing to the Minister's Fellowship within 30 days of receipt of notification.
5. The Minister's Fellowship shall notify the local body and the individual of action taken (preliminary action shall be deemed final action in lieu of an appeal).
6. The Dissolution of Confirmation shall be entered in the Book of Registry of the local and Canon Church.
7. Loss of contact with the Church for one year shall constitute cause for automatic dissolution of Confirmation. The Dissolution of Confirmation form shall be entered in the Book of Registry of the local and Canon Church.

4.11. *Reinstatement of Membership*

1. Since the Confirmation of a resigned member has been rescinded, the person shall be required to join through the normal ordering of the Rite of Confirmation.
2. The Elder(s) may petition the Minister's Fellowship to alter provisions for reinstatement.

4.12 Congregational Meetings

1. An appointed Elder or Moderator shall convene Congregational Meetings at least quarterly for the purpose of sharing information and any other business as may rightly come before the Congregation.
2. The Congregation shall not meet without the Moderator. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit Membership, and shall be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the Minister's Fellowship
3. Copies of agendas, minutes and other supplementary documents shall be sent to the Minister's Fellowship with the monthly Pastor's Report.

4.13 Affiliate Membership

1. Affiliate Membership shall be granted to any person affirming that the Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith represents a testimony of their faith.
2. A signed Application for Affiliate Membership shall be presented to the Minister's Fellowship using the application found in Section P of this Canon.
3. Affiliate Members shall be under care of a local Ambassadors of Christ Congregation and shall be encouraged to pursue full membership.
4. An Affiliate Member shall have a voice in meetings but not a vote.

G-Article 5. Deacons

5.1 Definition

A Deacon is an Active member who is commissioned by the Rite of Commissioning or ordained by the Rite of Ordaining a Deacon with principal responsibility in the service branch of the Church, management of properties and finances, care of holy vessels, preparation of Communion,

care of needs of Members and Adherents, and any other duties as may be assigned by the Elders and/or Board of Deacons.

5.2 Procedure

A person who desires to become a Deacon shall have been a confirmed Member of the local Church body for at least six months prior to the public Blessing as a Deacon Candidate, shall have served as Acolyte, Greeter, and/or Usher in the local church for at least three months prior to blessing as a Deacon Candidate, shall have served as Sacristan of the local Church body for at least one month prior to blessing as a Deacon Candidate, and shall be endorsed by the Elder(s)

1. The Candidate shall be trained according to the standards established by Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary.
2. Following the successful completion of their training, a person preparing for Ordination as a Deacon shall be commissioned for a one year term by the Rite of Commissioning prior to being authorized for the Rite of Ordination. The Candidate shall be adequately counseled by the Elder(s) prior to the end of the Commissioned term to determine whether they shall be ordained or not. The one year term shall not be renewed unless a special providing has been requested in writing.
3. The Candidate shall be ordained according to the Rite of Ordaining a Deacon.
4. Candidate blessing shall be lifted automatically upon withdrawal from training and shall be required for reentry into training.

5.3. Board of Deacons

The Board of Deacons shall consist of duly elected Deacons who shall serve in making decisions regarding their area of responsibility, defined above.

1. The Pastor shall serve as Moderator of the Board of Deacons. The Pastor may choose to delegate such moderator responsibility to another cleric of the local congregation.

2. The Board of Deacons may select such other officers as may be deemed necessary.
3. The Board of Deacons shall be responsible to the Board of Elders as well as to the Clergy.
4. The number of Deacons on the Board of Deacons shall be at the discretion of the Pastor, but shall not be less than three.
5. The Moderator of the Board of Deacons shall be responsible for scheduling meetings, calling meetings, and preparing the agendas. The Board of Deacons shall meet at least quarterly.
6. The Board of Deacons shall not meet without the Moderator. Any Deacon who shall participate in any authorized meeting shall automatically forfeit office, and shall be subject to the disciplinary procedure of the Minister's Fellowship.
7. Eligibility to serve on the Board of Deacons shall include:
 - a. Availability
 - b. Regular attendance at Sunday Worship Services,
 - c. Regular attendance at mid-week Bible Studies, and
 - d. Regular attendance at other regular functions as designated by the Elders and or Board of Deacons.
8. The Deacon shall formerly be addressed as "Deacon".

G-Article 6. Elders

6.1 Definition

An Elder is an Active Deacon who is commissioned by the Rite of Commissioning or ordained by the Rite of Ordaining an Elder with the principal responsibility in the spiritual oversight of the Congregation, the establishment of local policy in harmony with the Word of God and the Canon, the care of the spiritual needs of Members and Adherents, superintendency of teaching and any other duties as may be assigned by the Board of Elders.

6.2 Procedure

A person who desires to become an Elder shall have been an ordained Deacon of the local Church body for at least six months prior to the Elder Candidate Blessing and shall be sanctioned by the Board of Elders.

1. The Candidate shall be trained according to the standards established by Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary.
2. Following the successful completion of their training, a person preparing for ordination as an Elder shall be commissioned for a one year term by the Rite of Commissioning prior to being authorized for the Rite of Ordination.
3. The Candidate shall be adequately counseled by an Elder who is Consecrated as Bishop prior to the end of the term to determine whether they shall be ordained or not. The one year term shall be renewed once a year three years, but shall not exceed three renewals.
4. **The** Candidate shall be ordained according to the Rite of Ordaining an Elder.
5. Candidate blessing shall be lifted automatically upon withdrawal from training and shall be required for reentry into training.

6.3 Board of Elders

The Board of Elders shall consist of duly elected Elders who shall serve in making decisions regarding their area of responsibility.

1. The Pastor shall serve as Moderator of the Board of Elders. The Pastor may choose to delegate such Moderator responsibility to another Cleric of the Church.
2. The Board of Elders may select such other officers as may be deemed necessary.
3. The Board of Elders shall be responsible to the Clergy.
4. The Board of Elders shall serve and the Personnel Committee.

5. The number of Elders on the Board of Elders shall not exceed one for every ten or partial increments of ten Members, and not less than three.
6. The Moderator of the Board of Elders shall be responsible for scheduling meetings, calling meetings and preparing the agendas. The board of Elders shall meet at least monthly.
7. The Board of Elders shall not meet without the Moderator. Any Elder who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit office, and shall be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the Minister's Fellowship.
8. Eligibility to serve on the Board of Elders shall include the availability to regularly attend Sunday Worship Services, mid-week Bible Studies, and any other regular functions as designated by the Pastor.
9. The Elder, unless otherwise designated, shall formally be addressed as “Elder”.
10. The Elder serving as Pastor shall be addressed as “Pastor”
11. An Elder who has been Consecrated as Bishop shall be addressed as Bishop

G-Article 7. Curates

7.1 Definition

A Curate is an active Member who is commissioned by the Rite of Commissioning as a Curate with delineated responsibility in a specific, missional objective, and serve as a professional deputy of a specified jurisdiction and for a specified time.

7.2 Procedure

A prospective Curacy shall be authorized by the Minister's Fellowship before being endorsed by a Pastor. A person who desires to become a Curate shall have been a Confirmed Member of the local body for at least

six months prior to Curate candidate Blessing and shall be endorsed by a Pastor.

1. An Endorsed Candidate shall be authorized by a local Church to prepare for the Curacy.
2. An Authorized Candidate shall be accepted for the preparatory program by the Minister's Fellowship.
3. The Accepted Candidate shall be trained according to the standards established by Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary.
4. The Trained Candidate shall be commissioned according to the Rite of Commissioning.
5. Candidate Blessing shall be lifted automatically upon withdrawal from training and shall be required for reentry into training.

G-Article 8 Seminarians

8.1 Definition

A Seminarian is an Active member who has answered the call of God to enter the professional Ministry, who shall have the recommendation of an elder of the local Church body, and who has been blessed as a Candidate for professional ministry.

8.2 Candidate Procedure

1. The candidate shall submit the Application from Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary to the local Pastor
2. The local Pastor may or may not sanction the Applicant.
3. If sanctioned, the Pastor shall submit the Applicant for Congregational Authorization.
4. If authorized, the Pastor shall submit the Application with copies of all supplemental documents to Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary. The applicant shall request all academic transcripts to be sent directly to Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary.

5. If accepted as a Seminarian by Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary, the Institute shall inform the Applicant shall inform the Applicant, the local Pastor, and the Local Congregation of the person's acceptance, and the local Pastor shall perform the Rite of Candidate Blessing prior to the beginning of the program.
6. Candidate Blessing shall be considered removed upon withdrawal from training. Repeating the above procedures shall be required for reentry into training.

8.3 *Appeal Process*

1. A rejected Applicant may appeal the decision to the Minister's Fellowship whose decision shall be final.
2. All adjudication shall be done fairly, honestly and duly reported.
3. If rejected, applicant may reapply after one year

8.4 *Licensure Procedure*

1. Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary shall notify the Minister's Fellowship upon the completion of a Seminarian's final educational year with their recommendation regarding licensing.
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall notify the Seminarian, the local Congregation, and the Bishop of their recommendation.
3. All parties may present additional comments or recommendations to the Minister's Fellowship in a timely manner.
4. The decision of the Minister's Fellowship shall be final.
5. If rejected, applicant may reapply after one year.

8.5 *Ordination Procedures*

1. Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary shall notify the Minister's Fellowship upon the completion of the graduation year for the Seminarian.
2. Upon the affirmative recommendation of the Seminary, Pastor, Bishop and Minister[s Fellowship the Rite of Ordination shall be scheduled.

3. The Minister's Fellowship shall notify the Seminarian, the local Pastor, the local Congregation, and the Bishop of their recommendation.
4. All parties may present additional comments for recommendation to the Minister's Fellowship in a timely manner.
5. The decision of the Minister's Fellowship shall be final.
6. If rejected, applicant may reapply after one year.
7. The Minister's Fellowship may extend the License Period at their own discretion.

G-Article 9 Discerning Calling

9.1 Preparation

1. Seminarian shall prepare for one of the following Ministries (or other ministries as identified by the Minister's Fellowship):
 - a. Pastor – The pastoral office is principally focused on spiritual care of the Church of Jesus Christ.
 - b. Evangelist – principal focus on Preaching and Evangelism;
 - c. Worship Ministry - principal focus on leading a worship service, especially in Music.
 - d. Christian Education Ministry – principal focus on Christian Education, Discipleship, and Spiritual Formation and Outreach to potential converts.
 - e. Minister of Administration -

9.2 Examination

1. The Minister's Fellowship shall constitute an Ordination Committee of no less than three persons, at least two should be Ordained Ministers.
2. The Local Bishop shall preside as Moderator of the Ordination Committee. If the Bishop is not available, the Minister's Fellowship shall appoint a Bishop as Chairperson of the

Ordination Committee who shall preside at the Rite of Ordination of a Minister.

9.3 *Special Provisions*

1. The title for licensed and ordained Elders shall be “Reverend” or the abbreviation “Rev”. Although it is recommended that only Pastors and Elders use the title when performing Rites and Sacraments.
2. The Clerical garments of a Pastor may be a normal clerical (clergy) shirt and collar in any color except purple.
3. The color purple shall be reserved for Bishops.
4. Liturgical sacramental garment may include the use of red for the day of Pentecost, Baptism, and Ordination.
5. The Senior Pastor of a Church or Mission shall preach at least three Sundays per month to maintain theological and pastoral perspective and to secure continuity of the proclamation of the Gospel. Exceptions to this principle shall require the authorization of the Bishop.

G-Article 10 Bishops

10.1 *Definition*

A Bishop is an Active Elder of at least 30 years of age who has been consecrated by the Rite of Consecrating a Bishop for the purpose of overseeing a body of Churches and Ministers or other identified Church operation. A Bishop carries the heavy responsibility of spiritual and administrative authority under Jesus Christ—the Head of the Church.

10.2 *Procedure*

1. An Elder may be selected by the Minister's Fellowship for consecration as a Bishop.
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall consecrate a Bishop by the Rite of Consecration of a Bishop at a worship service called for that

purpose by the Minister's Fellowship by the laying on of hands of at least three Ordained Elders, (and other Bishops if available).

3. The Minister's Fellowship shall appoint a Presiding Bishop or Minister who shall preside at the Rite of Consecration.

10.3 Special Provisions

1. The title of a Bishop shall be “The Right Reverend, The Rt. Rev. or Rt. Rev. He or she shall formally be called Bishop or Your Grace.
2. The Clerical Garments of a Bishop may be a normal Clerical (Clergy) Shirt and collar; especially the color purple which is reserved for the Office of Bishop.

G-Article 11 Presiding Bishop

11.1 Definition

The Presiding Bishop is an active Bishop who is selected to be the President of the Minister's Fellowship and Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.

1. The Presiding Bishop is appointed to the position of Presiding Bishop by the vote of the Minister’s Fellowship.

G-Article 12 Status of Licensed and Ordained Individuals

12.1 Authorization for Candidacy

1. To be authorized for Candidacy and Training as a Deacon, Curate, or Seminarian leading to Elder (See also Article 8) the applicant shall be interviewed by the active Licensed and Ordained Staff of the local jurisdiction assembled as an ad hoc Ministerial Relations Committee. In lieu of a local staff, the action shall be pursued before the Minister's Fellowship.

2. It is recommended that, following this interview meeting, there be a season of prayer
3. In a timely manner, the ad hoc committee shall reassemble to conduct a secret ballot vote regarding candidacy. The Pastor/Moderator shall serve as the confidential vote teller.
4. A unanimous vote shall be required for authorization.

12.2 Logical Sequence of Training

1. Confirmed Membership
2. Acolyte/Greeter/Usher
3. Sacristan
4. Deacon blessing for Training after:
 - A. Minimum of six months as an Active Member;
 - B. Minimum of three months as Acolyte;
 - C. Minimum of one month as Sacristan;
 - D. Demonstration of faithful and loyal engagement as a spiritual participant in the congregation, including tithing;
 - E. Licensure upon successful completion of all requirements;
 - F. Ordination by a Bishop after one year of licensure
5. Elder blessing for Training after:
 - a. Minimum of six months as an Ordained Deacon;
 - b. Licensure upon successful completion of all requirements;
 - c. Ordination by a Bishop after one year of licensure and authorization.
6. Seminarian blessing for Training after:
 - a. Minimum of six months as an ordained Elder;
 - b. Seminary Courses may be taken for credit at any time regardless of Blessing, License, or Ordination.

12.3 Deacons

1. A person who answers the call of God by being ordained as a Deacon, remains subject to such a call unless he or she is deconsecrated for cause only by majority vote of the Minister's Fellowship, upon decision made through adequate hearing of the case.
2. Any active licensed or ordained Deacon is eligible to be elected to the Board of Deacons, for a one year term by the Congregation, at a meeting held during the month prior to the General Synod. Newly licensed or ordained Elders and/or replacements to fill unexpired terms may be elected to the Board of Deacons at any Congregational Meeting.
3. Licensure/ordination to Elder shall automatically terminate membership on the Board of Deacons.

12.4 Elders

1. A person who answers the call of God by being ordained as Elder, remains subject to such a call unless he/she is deconsecrated for cause only by majority vote of the Minister's Fellowship upon decision made through adequate hearing of the case.
2. Any active licensed or ordained Elder is eligible to be elected to the Board of Elders, for a one year term, by the congregation, at a Meeting held during the month prior to General Synod. Newly licensed or ordained Elders and/or replacements to fill unexpired terms may be elected to the Board Elders at any congregational meeting.
3. Licensure/ordination to Minister shall automatically terminate membership on the Board of Elders.

12.5 Ministers

1. A Minister is an individual who is an ordained Elder who is installed as (a) Pastor in a local assembly.
2. Every Minister is directly responsible to the Minister's Fellowship

3. Ministers are assigned to their specific charges only by the Minister's Fellowship who shall control such assignments.
 - a. The Pastor is the administrative head;
 - b. Senior Pastor in a Church or Mission with more than one Pastor, the administrative head Pastor;
4. Associate Pastor sharing fully in the pastorate with the Senior Pastor, but subject to the authority of the Senior Pastor; shall have served at least one year as an Assistant Pastor under any adjudicatory;
5. Assistant Pastor assigned to a specific Ministry (such as Minister of Music, Minister of Education, Staff Minister, etc.), and subject to the authority of the Senior Pastor.
6. Under normal circumstances, the Minister's Fellowship shall receive a petition of Call from a congregation or other entity, and shall act thereupon, which action shall be binding.
7. A copy of Petition of Call shall be sent to the Minister being called, and one copy shall be entered in the Book of Registry in the local and national church.
8. The status of every Minister shall be reviewed yearly by the Minister's Fellowship who shall issue a dated Minister License.
9. A person who answers the call of God by being ordained a Minister remains subject to such a call unless he/she is deconsecrated for cause only by a majority vote of the Minister's Fellowship, upon decision made through adequate hearing of the case.
10. Every active Minister is a Member of the General Convocation of Ambassadors of Christ and Minister's Fellowship.
11. A Minister shall notify his/her Bishop and the Minister's Fellowship of intent to submit a resignation of assignment. Resignations shall be submitted to their charge no earlier than five days after the intervening meeting of the Minister's Fellowship.
12. The Bishop shall direct the highest adjudicatory of the Church to appoint a Ministerial Search Committee of no less than five individuals. The recommendations shall be submitted to the Congregation for consideration.

13. In the event that a Pastor/Moderator is not called and assigned by the effective date of the resignation, the Bishop (or the Minister's Fellowship in lieu of Bishop Action) shall appoint a Stated Supply Pastor/Moderator for a stated term, not to exceed six months. Thirty days notice shall be given the Stated Supply of termination of office.
14. There shall be no Co-Pastors assigned.
15. Licensed, but not ordained, Ministers shall have the right to perform all Sacraments and Rites except Ordination of Ministers and Bishops.

12.6 Curates

1. A Curate works in conjunction with his/her Pastor, local Church, the Minister's Fellowship, and Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary to accomplish his/her goal.
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall appoint a Mentor to be responsible for Curate's guidance toward commissioning.
3. Upon being placed under care of a Mentor, the Curate shall be responsible primarily to the Minister's Fellowship through his/her Mentor, and all questions of program, progress and eligibility for commissioning shall remain under the sole authority of the Minister's Fellowship.
4. Every commissioned Curate is directly responsible to the Presiding Officer of the jurisdiction within which he/she serves.
5. Curates are assigned to their specific charges only by the Minister's Fellowship who shall control such assignments by mutual agreement between the Curate and the Presiding Officer of the specified jurisdiction.
6. The status of every Curate shall be reviewed yearly by the Minister's Fellowship who shall issue a dated Commissioning License to each Curate.
7. A Curate who answers the call of God by being commissioned a Curate, remains subject to fulfilling their commissioning until such time as they communicate their desire to terminate their Curacy or

are removed for cause only by a majority vote of the Minister's Fellowship upon decision made through adequate hearing of the case.

12.7 *Seminarians*

1. A Seminarian works in conjunction with his/her Pastor, local Church, Minister's Fellowship and Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary to accomplish his/her goal.
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall appoint a Mentor to be responsible for the Seminarian's guidance toward licensure/ordination.
3. Upon being placed under care of a Mentor, the Seminarian shall be responsible primarily to the Minister's Fellowship through his/her Mentor, and all questions of program, progress and eligibility for licensure/ordination shall remain under the sole authority of the Minister's Fellowship.
4. A Seminarian shall be designated a Pastoral Intern upon completion of the Junior Period of Seminary Training.

12.8 *Bishops*

1. A Bishop may be elected for consecration by the Minister's Fellowship. A petition confirming this election must be signed by a majority of all licensed and ordained Ministers and a majority of all consecrated Bishops.
2. Every Bishop is directly responsible to the Minister's Fellowship
3. Bishops are assigned to their specific charges only by the Minister's Fellowship who shall control each assignments.
4. A Bishop shall always be subject to the same provisions as an Elder in addition to his/her special provisions.
5. A person who answers the call of God by being consecrated Bishop, remains subject to such a call unless he/she is deconsecrated for cause only by majority vote of the Minister's Fellowship upon decision made through adequate hearing of the

case. This action shall be agreed to by all other ordained Bishops before being adopted.

6. Where the Bishop presides for an occasion, he/she shall be considered the principal (such as preacher, celebrant, teacher) of the local Church, Mission or other Subdivision for the duration of the stay. Where the Bishop presides for an occasion, he/she shall be considered the principal (such as preacher, celebrant, teacher) of the local Church, Mission or other Subdivision for the duration of the stay.

12.9 Presiding Bishop

1. The Presiding Bishop shall be elected by majority vote of the Minister's Fellowship.
2. The Presiding Bishop shall be the Moderator of the Minister's Fellowship and the General Convocation.
3. The Presiding Bishop shall always be subject to the same provisions as a Bishop in addition to his/her special provisions.
4. A Presiding Bishop shall hold office until death, retirement, or is determined by a majority vote of the Bishops that the Bishop is unable to act by reason of legitimately established cause.

12.10 Emergency Change of Status

1. An emergency situation shall be communicated to the local Pastor, and/or the Bishop and/or the Minister's Fellowship immediately by the individual or competent representative.
2. In emergency situations the Pastor, and or/ the Bishop, and/or the Minister's Fellowship shall temporarily assume the responsibilities for the individual's duties.

12.11 Ordinary Change of Status

1. Where inactive status is being sought, the request shall be made in writing only to the local Pastor, the Bishop, and the Minister's Fellowship by the individual or competent representative with

documentation by the attending physician or other recognized official being supplied upon request.

2. Where the situation is not an incapacitation emergency, the individual shall be responsible to secure substitutes for their duties.
3. The Bishop shall act upon the request, filling their commissioning until such times as further action is taken, and shall communicate actions to the individual and other affected officials immediately, and follow up in writing on a timely basis.
4. The Canonic standing of an Inactive Licensee or Ordinand person means that they are removed from normal service in an active role on committees, boards, staff functions, service rosters and sacramental duties.
5. The local Pastor or other Adjudicatory Officer may specify:
 - a. Limitations when Inactive status is a disciplinary action;
 - b. Areas where service is restored.
6. It is expected that Inactive Licensees and Ordinands shall comport themselves in a manner that properly reflects their station, as though they were on Active Status.
7. It is expected that Inactive Licensees and Ordinands shall normally maintain regular attendance at Church functions.
8. The guidelines for placing an Ordinand/Licensee on Inactive Status are
 - a. Unwillingness to fulfill obligations for Ordained/Licensed position in the Church;
 - b. Gossiping and other activity bringing discredit upon Christ and His Church, its Pastors, its Members, and the ordained/licensed themselves.
 - c. Automatic placement on a permanent Inactive List after one year of being intentionally Inactive.
9. The guidelines for consideration of reinstatement to Active Status are:
 - a. Three months of active service as Acolyte/Greeter/Usher;
 - b. Three months of active service as Sacristan and House Manager;

- c. Three months of regular attendance on Sunday, and other days established by the local congregation;
 - d. Three months of regular tithing;
10. The guidelines for placing an Ordinand/Licensee on Inactive Status are:
- a. At least three months free from disruptive gossip and other discrediting activity.
 - b. Although the Pastor is normally the determining authority, he/she may designate the Minister's Fellowship to assume this responsibility.
11. Inactive Ordinands/Licensees maintain all Canonical rights to appeal.

12.12 Sabbatical Leave

1. Sabbatical Leaves shall be granted to Licensees or Ordinands for the purpose of study, rest, short term mission project, or any other reasonable and authorized purpose.
2. Sabbatical Leaves shall be mutually agreed upon in advance by the Licensee or Ordinand in consultation with their Pastor or Bishop.
3. Consultation shall be processed at least one month prior to planned Sabbatical Leave, and shall be for a predetermined period.
4. The predetermined period of time shall be discussed and settled during consultation with pastor or bishop.

12.13 General Procedures

1. All consecrated Bishop, Licensed Minister and Presbyters shall maintain listed telephone numbers and accessible addresses.
2. For each termination of licensure, three Termination of Licensure documents shall be executed. One shall be given to the licensee, one shall be entered in the Book of Registry of the local and national church.
3. For each deconsecration of ordination, three Deconsecration of Ordination Documents shall be executed. One shall be given to the

licensee, one shall be entered on the Book of Registry of the local and national church.

4. Meeting or portions of meetings of the Minister's Fellowship at which matters of ecclesiastical adjudication, including but not limited to Dissolution of Holy Union and the Status of the Ordained, shall be conducted as closed sessions, excluding all persons except current regents and any such witnesses as may be called into Meeting.

12.12 Sabbatical Leave

1. Sabbatical Leaves shall be granted to Licensees or Ordinands for the purpose of study, rest, short term mission project, or any other reasonable and authorized purpose.
2. Sabbatical Leaves shall be mutually agreed upon in advance by the Licensee or Ordinand in consultation with their Pastor or Bishop.
3. Consultation shall be processed at least one month prior to planned Sabbatical Leave, and shall be for a predetermined period.
4. The predetermined period of time shall be discussed and settled during consultation with pastor or bishop.
5. All entry level candidates for licensure or ordination shall be required to undergo appropriate medical and psychological testing as approved by the Minister's Fellowship to provide a profile to guide administration of appropriate corrective measures.
6. The results of the testing shall remain confidential between the candidate and their mentor, and the administrative agency.
7. All candidates for ordination and all officers of subdivision shall sign an affidavit declaring adherence to all provision of the Canon.

G-Article 13 Ecclesiastical Adjudication

13.1 Adjudicating Differences

1. In all such matters of serious portent that bring about reconcilable differences between Lay and/or Clerical members of the Churches, Missions, and other Subdivision, the matters shall be brought fully

before the Minister's Fellowship formally for arbitration which shall be binding upon all parties concerned.

13.2 Confidentiality

1. All papers and evidence regarding a judicial consideration or case shall be kept in confidential files and not appear in any for in public or in official other than simple notification of action taken.
2. Meeting or portions of meetings of the Minister's Fellowship at which matters of ecclesiastical adjudication, including but not limited to Dissolution of Marriage and the Status the Ordained, shall be conducted as closed sessions, excluding all persons except current Presbyters¹ and any such witnesses as may be called into Meeting.

13.3 Inactive Status of the Ordained

1. DEACONS AND ELDERS: A Pastor may declare an Ordained Deacon or Elder to be inactive for cause, which shall be reported to the Minister's Fellowship. When such a person is restored to active status this shall also be reported. The person shall be apprised of these changes in status. A Deacon or Elder may appeal such actions to the Minister's Fellowship.
2. PRESBYTERS AND BISHOPS: The Minister's Fellowship may declare an Ordained Elder serving as Presbyter or Consecrated Bishop to be inactive for cause. The Minister's Fellowship may also restore such a person to active status. The person shall be apprised these changes of status. An Ordained Elder or Consecrated Bishop may appeal such actions to the Minister's Fellowship which shall give full consideration of such appeal.
3. During the period of inactive status, the person shall not be listed as active in the Church's public roster of Ordained persons.

¹ Presbyters are the officers of the church in any district or region who are part of the Board of Deacons, Board of Elders, and or the representatives of the General Convocation and the Minister's Fellowship

4. For an Ordained person who remains on inactive status, they shall submit to their local Pastor and Bishop a written report at least annually during the month preceding the General Convocation, stating their intentions with regard to their ordination. Copies of all such written reports shall be presented to the Minister's Fellowship by the Bishops.
5. The local Pastor may, at their discretion, recommend to the Bishops the Deconsecration of an inactive Ordained person.
6. Refusal of any inactive Ordained to submit an annual status report shall constitute cause for deconsecration.

13.4 Preliminaries to Deconsecration

1. Procedures as directed by Matthew 18:15-20 in pursuit of the attempt to achieve reconciliation to Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation as Christ's agent in the graces bestowed at ordination:
 - a. The Minister or Presbyterian shall go to the Ordained person to attempt reconciliation;
 - b. The Minister or Presbyterian shall go to the ordained person together with one or two others to attempt reconciliation;
 - c. The Minister or Presbyterian shall bring the Ordained person to the Minister's Fellowship; who represent the Church; to attempt reconciliation.

13.5 Deconsecration of Deacons and Elders

1. An Ordained Deacon or Elder, having submitted themselves by covenant and vow to the authority of God and Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, shall be considered in disobedience of authority if they refuse to fulfill their Ordination vows and/or refuse to obey the doctrinal position as presented in the Canon.
2. The Ordained Deacon or Elder against whom charges of disobedience are being brought shall be placed on inactive status by the local Pastor until the Minister's Fellowship has adjudicated the case.

3. The local Pastor shall notify the Minister's Fellowship in writing of the disobedient action by a Deacon or Elder.
4. The Minister's Fellowship shall prayerfully and deliberately hear the case and adjudicate as inspired conscience dictates under the authority of the Canon.
5. Notification of deconsecration, exoneration, or request for additional information shall be communicated in writing by registered mail within ten days the examination (questioning) of the person in question, the local pastor, and to the following as deemed appropriate by the Minister's Fellowship:
 - a. The Local Board of Elders,
 - b. The Local Board of Deacons,
 - c. The Local District Convocation,
 - d. And/or The Local Congregation.
6. The action of the Minister's Fellowship may be appealed in writing within thirty days by any of those receiving notification under G-Article 13.5.5, above.
7. The Minister's Fellowship shall be limited to conduct one appellate hearing.
8. The decision of the Minister's Fellowship shall be final.

13.6 Affirmation of Ordination

1. A deconsecrated Deacon or Elder may request a local Pastor to submit a Petition for Review of the decision of the Minister's Fellowship to deconsecrate at any time after one year of the date of the Notice of Deconsecration.
2. The Minister's Fellowship and/or the Bishop, and local Pastor shall determine specific requirements for Affirmation of Ordination.
3. Upon formal written decision of the local Pastor and to reinstate a Deacon or Elder, a probationary period of one year shall be required in addition to any other special requirements, which shall include:
 - a. Regular attendance,

- b. Regular Tithing record,
 - c. Absence of all inflammatory behavior during the probationary period
- 4. If the requirements for reinstatement are not met, but the candidate has just and provable reason why he or she was unable to complete their probationary period to the satisfaction of the pastor and other leaders of the congregation, the pastor may at his or her own discretion extend the probationary period ONE TIME for a specific duration. Failure to satisfactorily complete the extended probationary period will result in a rejection of the request of reinstatement.
- 5. However, after the above stated requirements have been met to the satisfaction of the local Pastor, and affirmed in writing to the the Minister's Fellowship, Affirmation of Ordination may then be pursued.
- 6. The Minister's Fellowship shall review probationary performance of the Ordained at the conclusion of probationary period to determine the status of the Ordained.
- 7. In the event that the Minister's Fellowship decides to exfiltrate the Affirmation of Ordination, there shall be no further appeal allowed for a period of no less than three years.

13.7 Deconsecration of Elders

- 1. An Ordained person, having submitted themselves by covenant and vow to the authority of God and Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, shall be considered in disobedience of authority if they refuse to fulfill their ordination vows and/or refuse to obey the doctrinal position as defined in C-Article 6 and C-Article 7 of the Canon. The status of such an Elder shall not be changed.
- 2. The status of an Ordained person shall not be changed except by the Minister's Fellowship.
- 3. Changes against an Ordained person may be brought in writing to the Minister's Fellowship by another Elder, Presbyter, Bishop, a

local Board of Elders, a local Congregation or no less than 3 members of a congregation. Notwithstanding the provisions of these bylaws as stated in other sections a local Board of Elders or a local Congregation shall have the right to meet to consider bringing charges against an Ordained person with their Bishop or, in the absence of a Bishop with another member of the Presbytery currently serving as part of the Minister's Fellowship, serving as Presiding Officer of the Meeting.

4. Copies of charges being brought against an Ordained person shall be given to the following, at the same time as notification is brought to the Ministers Fellowship, by registered letter:
 - a. The Minister in question,
 - b. The Congregation,
 - c. The Board of Elders,
 - d. The Presiding Officer of the Meeting, and/or
 - e. The Local Bishop.
5. The Ordained person in question, the local Bishop and the Presiding officer of the meeting in G-Article 13.3.3 above shall be invited to the adjudication.
6. The Minister's Fellowship shall prayerfully and deliberately hear the case and adjudicate as inspired conscience dictates under the authority of the Canon.
7. Notification of deconsecration, the exoneration or request for additional information shall be communicated in writing by registered mail within ten days to the person in question and the administrative bodies affected in G-Article 13.7.4 above.
8. The action of the Minister's Fellowship may be appealed in writing within thirty days by any of those receiving notification under G-Article 13.7.4 above. The Minister's Fellowship shall be limited to conduct one appellate hearing.
9. The decision of the Minister's Fellowship is binding for the period of one year, following the final decision and appeal.
10. A Petition of Review of the decision of the Minister's Fellowship to deconsecrate may be brought to the Minister's Fellowship at any time after one year from the date of notification of deconsecration.

11. The Minister's Fellowship, in consultation with the local Bishop, shall determine specific requirements for affirmation of Ordination.

13.8 Deconsecration of Bishops

1. All provisions of 13.7 shall apply. Final action shall be affirmed or denied by the General Convocation.

13.9 Automatic Deconsecration

1. Resignation from Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation shall constitute cause for automatic deconsecration.
2. Loss of contact with Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation for one year shall constitute cause for automatic deconsecration.
3. An inactive Ordained who does not supply a report of spiritual activity and reasons for being maintained in Ordination within one year of becoming inactive, shall constitute cause for automatic deconsecration.
4. Notification shall not be required in cases of automatic deconsecration.

13.10 Guidelines for Ministry, Ministry Candidates and Personnel

1. Toward the Church:

- a. You have entered or are preparing to enter the position of Servant to Christ's people. Therefore, expect little gratitude for all that you do. It is for the glory of Christ anyway, so rejoice in the service you render as a gift of love to Christ. You are an example to Christ's people.
- b. Do they see Christ in you?
- c. Will your example lead others to want to serve Christ more fully?

- d. Since you serve for the love of it rather than the glory of it, always keep your eyes and ears open for ways you can be a helper:
 - i. Meeting the needs of the people—great and small
 - ii. picking up a scrap of paper off the floor,
 - iii. being a gracious friend and host even when you feel “yucky.”
 - e. **Be dependable.** When you are forced to miss an obligation for a legitimate reason, be sure YOU have found a substitute...and ALWAYS communicate DIRECTLY and WELL IN ADVANCE with the Pastor regarding every absence. The pastor cannot be responsible for personal schedules.
 - f. **Be loyal.** A divisive leader is no leader at all. Support the team that serves with you. When you have a question, deal with it directly with the individual involved, not through the “grapevine.”
 - g. **Be discrete.** All of what you hear needs to be carefully sorted out...and very little passed along. In the same way that “loose lips sink ships”, Loose Lips Sink Churches, and Weakens the Witness of Jesus Christ. You are being trusted with people's lives and welfare. Use information for your own guidance, not for others enjoyment.
2. ***Toward the Community:***
- a. As a representative of Ambassadors of Christ, you are what others see of Christ's Church. Do they see someone who lives a real life before Christ?
 - b. You have problems...all of us do. Be careful to share those with your most trusted brothers and sisters in Christ and not with someone in the world who does not even acknowledge that Christ is the answer.
 - c. **Be dependable.** Your covenant says to Christ, “I accept Your call to serve and commit myself to it gladly and

willingly. I realize that much has been given and much is expected of me by You and by Your Church.

- d. **Be loyal.** Show everyone (both in the Church and in the World) that a Christian is different.
- e. **Be discrete.** You are being trusted with people's lives and welfare. Use information for your own guidance, not for the enjoyment or entertainment others.

3. *Expectations:*

- a. If you are in training, attend Training Session as scheduled.
- b. Do homework and other assignments or commitments on time.
- c. Attend Midweek programs, including Simple Supper, Bible Study, Prayer, the Lord's Supper, and Staff Meeting.
- d. Attend Christian Education, Worship and Fellowship time.
- e. If you are in training, attend Training Session as scheduled.
- f. Support, as time and calling and desire affords, the other work of the Church. It is your attendance at the regular as well as special activities that sets the pace for others. It is during these times that you have your first line of nurturing opportunity. If you complain, others will follow your lead and your presence through complaining has taken the glory of God and placed it on yourself.
- g. You are a leader...the core of the Church Body. "Let your light shine before others that they will see your good deeds and praise your Father in Heaven".(Matthew 5:16).
- h. Your standard of commitment to Christ and His Church is marked by your faithful tithing (the first ten percent) and by other offerings and gifts to the kingdom work.

4. *Standards of the Kingdom:*

- a. All believers are called to live fully for the Lord. An ordained person is exemplary in their attitudes toward

- living and toward Christ's Church. More than anything else, seeking His Kingdom first and His Righteousness first is the priority of our lives. Other plans, pleasures and desires take second place to serve Christ. Are you willing to make this commitment?
- b. For you, life is no longer a series of "I" statements. It is now a concentrated, consecrated living for others. This spells J.O.Y. which means **J**esus **F**irst, **O**thers **S**econd, **Y**ourself **L**ast.
 - c. Ordination is a sign of passion for Christ and passion for His people. You have accepted a "marriage with the Lamb" where you have crucified your life to be resurrected in Christ as His Ambassador, Servant and Minister.

5. *Consequences:*

- a. When an ordained person has the attitude and motivation of Christ through the power of His Holy Spirit, the consequences are that you increase in effectiveness for Him. You are known by the fruits of your labor. More and more people are drawn to Christ's Church by the light they see in you, More and more people, both in the church and the world, are helped with their hurts, their frustrations and the fulfillment of their hopes and dreams. You are a sweet smelling perfume in the Master's nostrils.
- b. When an ordained person allows Satan to begin the negative attitudes to flow, the staff criticism to begin, and the defiance against Church, Pastor and Christ's purpose to take over, then you are on the road to becoming a loser for Christ. His purposes are not served and people are detracted from their view of Christ. They see selfishness instead of the Love of God (Agapē). You are a stinking sepulcher on the Master's nostrils.
- c. Just as Christ will bless the faithful servant with joys and peace beyond measure (as well as blessing in this

- life), you will also be counted worthy of honor among your peers.
- d. But when a servant breaks their ordination by rebellion and deceit, Christ will measure out His own punishment. Unfortunately, the practical side of discipline is demanded of the Church by Scripture. Recalcitrant Ordinands can be removed from active service. If the defiant attitude persists, they can be deconsecrated or even removed from membership in the Church. Scripture is quite clear on this matter.

6. Preventing Burnout:

- a. When the Holy Spirit fills and refills and fills again, the Christian servant, then they never burn out. They are in a state of constantly burning up from a resource of power and energy that never goes out.
- b. We review again how this is accomplished. The Holy Spirit feeds us by three main sources:
 - i. Constant and fervent prayer;
 - ii. Constant Bible reading and Study;
 - iii. Constant refreshment of the fellowship of your fellow saints.
- c. Every Ordinand should plan time for recreation that does not conflict with above expectations. When the stress of live grow great and additional rest is indicated, then a well thought out program of relief needs to be worked out with the Pastor and the Pastoral Staff.

7. Warning:

- a. Satan is our enemy. He will tempt you away from fulfilling ordination by many means. But remember, “He who is within you is greater than he who is in the world.” (1 John 4:4).
- b. **Lone Rangers:** Has anything ever been so important to you that you could not wait to get out on you own and try

- it? Has anyone been so important to you that you gave up everything in your life just to be with them? Have you ever felt something revealed to you by the Lord (you believe) is so precious that you can not share it with anyone because they might challenge it, or try to discourage you from following that course of action?
- c. If you answered “yes” to even one of these questions, then you have been a “Lone Ranger”. I know this because I have been there, riding what I thought was the spiritual frontier on my own, hidden truths revealed to me and no one else in my saddlebag, keeping me right, I thought, with the Lord. No, not even close partner.
 - d. Listen to advice and accept instruction, and in the end you will be wise. Many are the plans in a person's heart, but it is the Lord's purpose that prevails (Proverbs 19:20-21). We make plans, some designed for our own benefit, but some, honestly, with the kingdom of God and service for the Lord as our chief desire. We make many plans, but Jesus is the only One who knows which plans are ours and which belong to Him. We do not always know, because our plans become so important to us. Some of them we make our whole life. If we make Jesus our whole life, He will then design the plans to suit Him. “Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart.” (Psalm 37: 4). Only if we allow Him to place the desires there and then fulfill them in His timing, can we be sure our plans are in reality His plans.
 - e. Even if we have made Jesus our all in all, centered our lives in Him and His will, we cannot always distinguish between our will and His will. That is why the Word tells us to seek counsel of our Elders and obey them. “Obey your leaders and submit to their authority. They keep

watch over you as people who must give an account. Obey them so that their work will be a joy, not a burden, for that would be of no advantage to you.” (Hebrews 13:17).

- f. If we bring a desire we believe is from the Lord to our Elders, and they believe it is not time or that we are not the agent to fulfill that desire, then we must leave it in God's hands, and accept that as sound confirmation. If we go ahead and carry out that desire, in direct disobedience to our Elders, then we have sinned in disobedience, even if the desire is one that will benefit the kingdom of God. Ride with the troops! Do not be a Lone Ranger.
- g. “Whoever obeys instruction guards their life, but whoever is contemptuous of their ways will die.” (Proverbs 19:16). Ouch! Lone Ranger die! Even The Lone Ranger had his companion. We need to draw from each other, cling to each other, seek each other's gifts and wisdom because that will keep us from “lone rangering” our lives away. (Contributed by Michelle Carmichael).

8. *Additional Considerations:*

- a. Canonic standing of an inactive licensee or ordinand is that they are removed from normal serving in an active role...
 - i. On committees
 - ii. On boards,
 - iii. In staff functions,
 - iv. On service rosters, and,
 - v. In sacramental duty.
- b. The local pastor or other adjudicatory may specify:
 - i. Limitations when inactive status is a disciplinary action,
 - ii. Areas where service is restored,

- c. It is expected that Inactive Licensees and Ordinands shall comport themselves in a manner that properly reflect their station, as though they were on active status.
- d. It is expected that Inactive Licensees and Ordinands shall normally maintain regular attendance at Church functions.

9. *Guidelines for Placing On Inactive Status:*

- a. Unwillingness to fulfill the guidelines for Licensees and Ordinands in the Church,
- b. Gossiping and other activities that brings discredit upon the Church, its Pastors, members, and/or other Licensees and Ordinands.

10. *Guidelines For Reinstatement to Active Status:*

- a. Three months of active service as Acolyte/Greeter/Usher.
- b. Three months of active service as a Sacristan and House Manager.
- c. Three months of regular attendance on Sundays and Mid-Week services.
- d. Three months of regular tithing.
- e. Three months free of disruptive gossip and other discrediting activity.

13.11 *Authority*

- 1. Although the Pastor is normally the determining authority, he/she may destinate a Personnel Committee (Board of Elders) to assume this responsibility.
- 2. Licensees and Ordinands maintain all Canonical rights of appeal.

13.12. A Final Admonition:

1. “Not many of you should presume to be teachers[or leaders], my brothers and sisters, because you know that we who teach [or lead] will be judged more strictly.” (James 3:1).

G-Article 14 The Church Council

14.1 Definition:

1. The Church Council may consist of all Clerics assigned to the Church, all Licensed and Ordained Deacons and Elders, and any other Members appointed by Pastor to conduct the business of the Church.

14.2 Authority

1. A Pastor shall be the Moderator of the Church Council unless the responsibility is delegated to another person at the request of the Pastor.
2. Pastors, Boards of Deacons and Boards of Elders shall reserve their specific domains of authority and responsibility. All matters, on an item by item basis, may be submitted to Church Council in lieu of reserving them for specific action by Pastors, Boards of Deacons or Board of Elders.

14.3 The Church Council in Mission Churches

1. The pastor of a Mission Church shall appoint a Church Council. The decisions of the Church Council shall not be binding except by stated consent of the Pastor on an item by item basis.
2. As Deacons and Elders are Ordained, they shall automatically be Members of the Church Council.
3. The Church Council shall not meet without the Moderator. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall

automatically forfeit Membership, and shall be subject to the Minister's Fellowship disciplinary procedures.

G-Article 15 Ambassadors Fellowship Group

15.1. Definition

1. The Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall be an initial group of Christians, gathered and/or pledge to form an Ambassadors of Christ church in a given locality.

15.2. Procedure

1. The Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall begin with an informal relationship to the Minister's Fellowship established by a Bishop.
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall designate and commission a Council Curate, working under a Bishop, to be the official administrative for Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
3. The group shall identify a Contact Person as their initial liaison to the Bishop
4. The Bishop and the Council Curate shall appoint a Convener to serve as the official provisional leader of the group, to organize and promote the formation of a Mission.

15.3 Authority

1. The Convener of an Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall have authority for the management of said group in consultation with the Minister's Fellowship through the Bishop and the Council Curate, including appointment of a Treasurer other than himself/herself and other officers as may be deemed necessary for proper administration.
2. Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall legally be managed by the Minister's Fellowship through the Bishop, the Council Curate, and the Convener under the corporate entity Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.

3. The Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall meet at least monthly for a business meeting conducted by the Convener, or the Council Curate or the Bishop.
4. The Convener shall conduct services of worship and/or other types of gatherings in consultation with and under the authority of the Bishop
5. Worship Leaders and Sacramental Deacons may be scheduled as needed to assist in conducting worship services.

15.4 Special Provisions

1. Those persons who initially support the formation of the Fellowship Group by pledging themselves financially and by entering Confirmation Classes in preparation for Confirmation shall be known as Adherents.
2. Business meetings shall not be conducted without the Convener, the Council Curate or the Bishop. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit the right to be Confirmed, and shall be subject to the Minister's Fellowship disciplinary procedures as indicated.
3. The Fellowship group shall move expeditiously to become a Chartered Mission.
4. The Fellowship Group shall choose a name which shall include the Words Ambassadors of Christ in its full title.
5. The Minister's Fellowship may open a bank account for the new group.
6. Adherents and Transfers to become Members at the time the Fellowship Group becomes a Chartered Mission shall be known as Charter Members.

G-Article 16 The Chartered Mission

16.1 Definition

A Chartered Mission shall be an Ambassadors Fellowship group of no less than five persons who Petition the Minister's Fellowship for Mission Status.

16.2 Procedure

1. The Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall send a Petition for Mission status to the Minister's Fellowship that has been signed by at least five persons.
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall act upon the Petition for Mission status and assign a Pastor or Moderator to be in charge of such Mission.
3. A copy of the Petition for Mission status shall be entered in the Book of Registry of the local and national congregation.
4. The Mission shall be chartered according to the Rite of Chartering a Mission.

16.3 Authority

1. The pastor/Moderator of a Chartered Mission shall have authority for the management of said Chartered Mission, including the appointment of a Treasurer other than himself/herself and other officers as may be deemed necessary for proper administration.
2. Chartered Missions shall apply for Nonprofit Corporation Status in their local state and adopt substantially the same Articles of Incorporation as Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
3. Chartered Missions shall adopt the following bylaws:

16.4 Bylaw Provisions

1. This Chartered Mission known as (MISSION NAME HERE), covenants to operate as a Subdivision of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation under all provisions of their current and

future Bylaws and as directed by the Minister's Fellowship as constituted by Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.

2. The Chartered Mission, known as, (MISSION NAME HERE) covenants to be managed by the Bishop(s) and the Pastor/Moderator according to the provisions of the Bylaws of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
3. All current or future Articles of Incorporation and proposed Bylaws shall be submitted to the Minister's Fellowship for review and approval before formal application to the State is made.

16.4 Special Provisions

1. The Pastor/Moderator shall convene Congregational Meetings at least quarterly for the purpose of sharing information and any other business as may rightly come before the congregation.
2. The Congregation *shall not* meet without the Pastor/Moderator. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit Membership, and shall be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the Minister's Fellowship.

G-Article 17 The Chartered Church

17.1 Definition

A Chartered Church shall be a Mission of no less than twenty Members, two licensed Elders and two licensed Deacons who petition the Minister's Fellowship for Chartered Church Status.

17.2 Procedures

1. The Chartered Mission shall send a Petition for Church Status to the Minister's Fellowship that has been signed by at least 20 Confirmed Members including at least two licensed Elders and two Licensed Deacons.

2. The Minister's Fellowship shall act upon the Petition for Church Status and appoint or affirm a Pastor/Moderator to be in charge of such Chartered Church.
3. A copy of the Petition for Church Status shall be entered in the Book of Registry of both the local and National Churches.
4. The Church shall be Chartered according to the Rite of Chartering a Church.

17.3 Authority

1. The Pastor/Moderator appointed to the Chartered Church by the Minister's Fellowship shall be the administrative head of the Congregation and shall reserve all rights in matters of worship and theology.
2. When constituted, a Board of Deacons comprised of no less than three Deacons and a Board of Elders, comprised of no less than three Elders, shall have authority in matters coming before them as moderated by the Pastor/Moderator.

17.4 Special Provisions

1. The Pastor/Moderator shall convene Congregational Meetings, Board of Deacons Meetings and Board of Elders Meetings at least quarterly for the purpose of sharing information and any other business as may rightly come before the Congregation.
2. The Congregation and Boards shall not meet without the Pastor/Moderator. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit Membership, and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures established by the Minister's Fellowship.
3. If the Membership of a Chartered Church falls below 20 Members, it shall be the responsibility of the Minister's Fellowship to assess and determine the need for a change of status which shall be properly executed between the Minister's Fellowship and the church, its Pastors, members, and/or other Licensees and Ordinands.

4. Guidelines For Reinstatement to Active Status:
 - a. Three months of active service as Acolyte/Greeter/Usher.
 - b. Three months of active service as a Sacristan and House Manager.
 - c. Three months of regular attendance on Sundays and Mid-Week services.
 - d. Three months of regular tithing.
 - e. Three months free of disruptive gossip and other discrediting activity.

13.11 Authority

1. Although the Pastor is normally the determining authority, he/she may destinate a Personnel Committee (Board of Elders) to assume this responsibility.
2. Licensees and Ordinands maintain all Canonical rights of appeal.

13.12. A Final Admonition:

“Not many of you should presume to be teachers[or leaders], my brothers and sisters, because you know that we who teach [or lead] will be judged more strictly.” (James 3:1).

G-Article 14 The Church Council

14.1 Definition:

The Church Council may consist of all Clerics assigned to the Church, all Licensed and Ordained Deacons and Elders, and any other Members appointed by Pastor to conduct the business of the Church.

14.2 Authority

1. A Pastor shall be the Moderator of the Church Council unless the responsibility is delegated to another person at the request of the Pastor.
2. Pastors, Boards of Deacons and Boards of Elders shall reserve their specific domains of authority and responsibility. All matters, on an item by item basis, may be submitted to Church Council in lieu of reserving them for specific action by Pastors, Boards of Deacons or Board of Elders.

14.3 The Church Council in Mission Churches

1. The pastor of a Mission Church shall appoint a Church Council. The decisions of the Church Council shall not be binding except by stated consent of the Pastor on an item by item basis.
2. As Deacons and Elders are Ordained, they shall automatically be Members of the Church Council.
3. The Church Council shall not meet without the Moderator. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit Membership, and shall be subject to the Minister's Fellowship disciplinary procedures.

G-Article 15 Ambassadors Fellowship Group

15.1 Definition

The Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall be an initial group of Christians, gathered and/or pledge to form an Ambassadors of Christ church in a given locality.

15.2. Procedure

1. The Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall begin with an informal relationship to the Minister's Fellowship established by a Bishop.
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall designate and commission a Council Curate, working under a Bishop, to be the official administrative for Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
3. The group shall identify a Contact Person as their initial liaison to the Bishop.
4. The Bishop and the Council Curate shall appoint a Convener to serve as the official provisional leader of the group, to organize and promote the formation of a Mission.

15.3 Authority

1. The Convener of an Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall have authority for the management of said group in consultation with the Minister's Fellowship through the Bishop and the Council Curate, including appointment of a Treasurer other than himself/herself and other officers as may be deemed necessary for proper administration.
2. Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall legally be managed by the Minister's Fellowship through the Bishop, the Council Curate, and the Convener under the corporate entity Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
3. The Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall meet at least monthly for a business meeting conducted by the Convener, or the Council Curate or the Bishop.
4. The Convener shall conduct services of worship and/or other types of gatherings in consultation with and under the authority of the Bishop.
5. Worship Leaders and Sacramental Deacons may be scheduled as needed to assist in conducting worship services.

15.4 Special Provisions

1. Those persons who initially support the formation of the Fellowship Group by pledging themselves financially and by entering Confirmation Classes in preparation for Confirmation shall be known as Adherents.
2. Business meetings shall not be conducted without the Convener, the Council Curate or the Bishop. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit the right to be Confirmed, and shall be subject to the Minister's Fellowship disciplinary procedures as indicated.
3. The Fellowship group shall move expeditiously to become a Chartered Mission.
4. The Fellowship Group shall choose a name which shall include the Words Ambassadors of Christ in its full title.
5. The Minister's Fellowship may open a bank account for the new group.
6. Adherents and Transfers to become Members at the time the Fellowship Group becomes a Chartered Mission shall be known as Charter Members.

G-Article 16 The Chartered Mission

16.1 Definition

A Chartered Mission shall be an Ambassadors Fellowship group of no less than five persons who Petition the Minister's Fellowship for Mission Status.

16.2 Procedure

1. The Ambassadors Fellowship Group shall send a Petition for Mission status to the Minister's Fellowship that has been signed by at least five persons.

2. The Minister's Fellowship shall act upon the Petition for Mission status and assign a Pastor or Moderator to be in charge of such Mission.
3. A copy of the Petition for Mission status shall be entered in the Book of Registry of the local and national congregation.
4. The Mission shall be chartered according to the Rite of Chartering a Mission.

16.3 Authority

1. The pastor/Moderator of a Chartered Mission shall have authority for the management of said Chartered Mission, including the appointment of a Treasurer other than himself/herself and other officers as may be deemed necessary for proper administration.
2. Chartered Missions shall apply for Nonprofit Corporation Status in their local state and adopt substantially the same Articles of Incorporation as Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation
3. Chartered Missions shall adopt the following bylaw provisions:

16.4 Bylaw Provisions

The following provisions shall be made in the bylaws for a Chartered Mission:

1. This Chartered Mission known as (MISSION NAME HERE), covenants to operate as a Subdivision of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation under all provisions of their current and future Bylaws and as directed by the Minister's Fellowship as constituted by Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
2. The Chartered Mission, known as,(MISSION NAME HERE) covenants to be managed by the Bishop(s) and the Pastor/Moderator according to the provisions of the Bylaws of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
3. All current or future Articles of Incorporation and proposed Bylaws shall be submitted to the Minister's Fellowship for review and approval before formal application to the State is made.

16.4 Special Provisions

1. The Pastor/Moderator shall convene Congregational Meetings at least quarterly for the purpose of sharing information and any other business as may rightly come before the congregation.
2. The Congregation shall not meet without the Pastor/Moderator. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit Membership, and shall be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the Minister's Fellowship.

G-Article 17 The Chartered Church

17.1 Definition

A Chartered Church shall be a Mission of no less than twenty Members, two licensed Elders and two licensed Deacons who petition the Minister's Fellowship for Chartered Church Status.

17.2 Procedures

1. The Chartered Mission shall send a Petition for Church Status to the Minister's Fellowship that has been signed by at least 20 Confirmed Members including a minimum of two Elders and two Deacons.
2. The Minister's Fellowship shall act upon the Petition for Church Status and appoint an Interim Pastor or Moderator to be in charge of such Chartered Church.
3. A copy of the Petition for Church Status shall be entered in the Book of Registry of both the local and National Churches.
4. The Church shall be Chartered according to the Rite of Chartering a Church.

17.3 Authority

1. The Interim Pastor or Moderator appointed to the Chartered Church by the Minister's Fellowship shall be the administrative head of the Congregation and shall reserve all rights in matters of worship and theology until the congregation calls a new Pastor or the interim pastor officially.
2. When constituted, a Board of Deacons comprised of no less than three Deacons and a Board of Elders, comprised of no less than three Elders, shall have authority in matters coming before them as moderated by the Pastor or Moderator.

17.4 Special Provisions

1. The Pastor/Moderator shall convene Congregational Meetings, Board of Deacons Meetings and Board of Elders Meetings at least quarterly for the purpose of sharing information and any other business as may rightly come before the Congregation.
2. The Congregation and Boards shall not meet without the Pastor/Moderator. Any person who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit Membership, and shall be subject to disciplinary procedures established by the Minister's Fellowship.
3. If the Membership of a Chartered Church falls below 20 Members, it shall be the responsibility of the Minister's Fellowship to assess and determine the need for a change of status which shall be properly executed between the Minister's Fellowship and the Congregation.

G-Article 18 The Embassy

18.1 Definition

The Embassy is a church that shall be a Chartered Church which is designated by the Minister's Fellowship to serve as the Pastoral Seat of the Bishop.

18.2 Procedure

1. The Minister's Fellowship shall designate a Chartered Church to be the seat of a Bishop and petition the Congregation to confirm the designation.
2. No further Rite of Consecration shall be required, however, a Service of Commemoration is recommended to mark the assembly's elevation to an Embassy.

3. The Minister's Fellowship shall reserve the right of appointing a specified Bishop to an Embassy.

18.3. Authority

1. The Minister's Fellowship and The Embassy shall place an Ordained Minister to serve as Dean of the Embassy under similar provisions as for appointment of a Pastor for a Mission or Chartered Church
2. The Bishop shall serve as President with the preeminent discretionary authority over the Dean of the Embassy as determined through consultation with the Dean on a timely basis.
3. The Bishop shall reserve the right to serve as Pastor for celebrations of Festival Days in consultation with the Dean.
4. All rites of ordination of Elders and Consecration of Bishops shall be officiated exclusively under the direction of the Bishop.
5. The Dean shall serve as the normative Pastor and Administrator of the Embassy, all Canonic provisions of the pastorate pertaining except as specified for the Bishop.

18.4. Special Provisions

1. The Embassy Center shall provide adequate office space for the Bishop.
2. When serving as the occasional Pastor of the Embassy Center, the Bishop shall be seated prominently to the right of the Gospel side.
3. The Gospel side is on the left side of the sanctuary facing the assembly.
4. The Epistle side is on the right side of the sanctuary facing the assembly.

G-Article 19 Other Subdivisions

19.1. Definition

1. Other Subdivisions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation other than those covered in previous articles may be established by the Minister's Fellowship and shall be operated according to provisions determined by the Minister's Fellowship.

19.2. Districts

1. A District shall be comprised of Fellowship Groups, Missions, Churches and other Subdivisions as deemed appropriate which are located in a defined geographical area, determined by the General Convocation and shall be presided by a Bishop.

19.3 Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary

1. Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary shall be operated as the Commissioned higher educational division of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
2. The Seminary may assist in the preparation, creation and distribution of educational materials for Christian Education ministry of the larger Church, but shall remain independent of the Christian Education Ministry.
3. All preparation for licensure and ordination as Deacons and Elders shall be administered through an online delivery platform and monitored on the local level by instructors who are authorized by the Seminary.
4. The privilege of licensure belongs to the local assembly of membership
5. The Rite of Ordination is reserved for the General or District Convocation.
6. The Seminary does not issue licenses to preach or administer the Rite of Ordination. However, the Seminary does, after careful and

prayerful examination of a Seminarian issue an endorsement for ordained ministry.

7. Officers of The Seminary shall be appointed by the Minister's Fellowship
8. A Ministerial Relations Commission may be appointed by the Minister's Fellowship to administer all aspects of examination for Licensure, Ordination and status.
9. Additional provisions, not already defined shall be set forth Section S of the Canon.

G-Article 20 The Minister's Fellowship

20.1 Definition

The Minister's Fellowship is the Board of Directions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, comprised of the Presiding Bishop serving as the President and Presbyters serving as Directors.

20.2 Presiding Bishop

1. The Rt. Reverend Richard J Lee, who is the successor of the founding Minister of Ambassadors of Christ, shall serve as Presiding Bishop (President/Moderator) of the Minister's Fellowship until death, resignation, or inability to act by reason of legitimately established cause determined by the General Convocation.
2. The successor shall be appointed by the Minister's Fellowship, subject to Article 11.1 of these Bylaws.

20.3 Meetings

1. The Minister's Fellowship shall meet at least quarterly unless it is determined that additional meetings are necessary
2. Within three months preceding the quadrennial General Convocation, the Minister's Fellowship shall meet to consider the following business:

- a. All previous Standing Resolutions shall be reviewed, updated, and entered into the General Synod Agenda.
 - b. Membership of the Minister's Fellowship shall be appointed;
 - c. Membership of the Board of Trustees shall be appointed;
 - d. Ministerial Licenses shall be reviewed and issued;
 - e. Agenda for the quadrennial meeting of the General Synod shall be determined and finalized;
 - f. The annual Membership purges shall be considered.
3. The Minister's Fellowship shall not meet without the Presiding Bishop.
 4. Any Presbyter or Delegate who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit office, and shall be subject to the disciplinary procedures of the Minister's Fellowship.
 5. Meetings or portions of meetings of the Minister's Fellowship at which matters of Ecclesiastical Adjudication, including but not limited to Dissolution of Holy Union; in states where Marriage Equality is not the norm; and the status of the Ordained, shall be conducted as closed sessions, excluding all persons except current Presbyters and any such witnesses as may be called into the closed session.
 6. The Minister's Fellowship may from time to time, according to its judgment and need, waive the requirement for its meeting by unanimous vote of ALL Presbyters currently sitting on the Minister's Fellowship.

20.4 Membership

1. In selecting their successors, the Minister's Fellowship shall maintain a majority of Elders on the Minister's Fellowship insofar as possible.
2. All Bishops shall be Members of the Minister's Fellowship.

3. All Elders of the Church shall be represented on the Minister's Fellowship who shall constitute, together with the bishops, a majority of the total Membership of the Minister's Fellowship.
4. There shall be lay representation of Active Licensed or Ordained Deacons in the Minister's Fellowship.
5. When addressing all members of the Minister's Fellowship, these members shall be called Presbyters.
6. The Minister's Fellowship shall appoint and seat Alternative Presbyters at any given meeting of the Minister's Fellowship to act officially for that given meeting.

20.5 Commission

1. The Minister's Fellowship may establish Commissions to accomplish specific objectives.
2. Commissioners shall be appointed by the Minister's Fellowship to serve for four year terms.
3. Chair-ships of Commissions shall be held by Presbyters.

G-Article 21 The Board of Trustees

21.1 Definition

The Board of Trustees shall be the officials with the oversight and authority on the fiscal dealings of Ambassadors of Christ.

21.2 Organization

1. The board of Trustees shall consist of three appointed Trustees, and the Presiding Bishop and Treasurer of the Minister's Fellowship.
2. The Board shall elect one of the appointed Trustees to serve as its Moderator.

21.3. *Appointment of Trustees*

1. The Minister's Fellowship shall appoint three Trustees to serve staggered terms of three years each.
2. The appointed Trustees shall not hold concurrent positions on the Minister's Fellowship.
3. Vacancies shall be filled by the Minister's Fellowship to finish out the unexpired term of office they fill.
4. Terms of office shall commence and conclude with the conclusion of the official business meeting of the General Convocation.

21.4. *Meetings*

1. The Board of Trustees shall meet at least annually to administer Funds of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation for the purposes designated and directed by the Minister's Fellowship and/or the Canon.
2. The Board of Trustees shall be accountable to the Minister's Fellowship in all matters delegated to them.

21.5. *Agent of Transactions*

The Treasurer of the Minister's Fellowship shall serve as Agent for Transactions regarding funds as recommended by the Board of Trustees and authorized by the Minister's Fellowship.

G-Article 22 The General Convocation

22.1 *Definition*

The General Convocation shall be the gathering of representation from Ambassadors of Christ, normally on a quadrennial basis, or as convened by the Minister's Fellowship, to conduct the business of the Church.

22.2. Representation

1. General Convocation shall consist of the Minister's Fellowship and all active Licensed and Ordained Deacons, Elders and congregational Delegates
2. All members of the General Convocation shall receive all pertinent materials of the Minister's Fellowship on a regular and timely basis.

22.3. Meetings

1. Members of the General Convocation shall meet at least yearly in May (Memorial Day Weekend) to conduct the business of Ambassadors of Christ.
2. Congregations and other Subdivisions may present business before the General Convocation by Overture in writing addressed to the Minister's Fellowship.
3. The Minister's Fellowship shall be solely responsible for the official agenda of the General Convocation Meetings which shall include all Overtures and other such business that properly comes before General Convocation.
4. In all matters before the General Convocation, as at all other levels of Ambassadors of Christ, authority in matters pertaining to Worship and Theology shall be referred to the ordained Clergy
5. The Minister's Fellowship may call a special meeting of the General Synod upon thirty days written notice. No business shall be transacted at such special meeting beyond that which is stated in the notice, unless by the unanimous consent of the official representatives present.
6. In planning General Convocation, all meetings of the Minister's Fellowship shall be scheduled as Plenary Sessions of the General Convocation (Not Including Closed Sessions).

22.4. *Voting*

1. Each official Delegate to General Convocation shall be entitled to one vote per item.
2. All other attendees may record their votes but such voting shall not be official.
3. Seminarians shall be barred from voting on their own credentials.
4. The General Convocation shall not meet without the Presiding Bishop. Any Member who shall participate in any unauthorized meeting shall automatically forfeit office, and shall be subject to the disciplinary procedure of the Minister's Fellowship.

G-Article 23 Properties and Fiscal Policies

23.1 *Purchase and Sale of Real Property*

1. The Minister's Fellowship shall approve the sale, purchase, mortgage, lease, or other encumbrance of the real property in excess of \$1,000.00 of any Church, Mission or other Subdivision, upon the recommendation of the appropriate authority of said institution.
2. Titles shall be held jointly by Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation through the Minister's Fellowship or Board of Trustees (as indicated by State Law) and the local Chartered Mission, Church or other incorporated Subdivision.

23.2 *Loans*

1. All loans to or from any Church, Mission or other Subdivision shall be subject to Approval by the Minister's Fellowship.

23.3 *Accounting and Deposit*

1. All moneys shall be accounted under the Standard Accounting System approved by the Minister's Fellowship.

2. All accounts shall be audited annually and prior to General Convocation.
3. All cash and checks shall be deposited in normal bank accounts from which all disbursements shall be made, including petty cash funds, etc.
4. All accounts shall require the signature of two parties to execute withdraws. In every case, one of the signatories shall be the Pastor/Moderator of the Church, Mission or other Subdivision.
5. It is preferred that all special funds be kept in a separate bank account from the General Fund.
6. Two tellers shall always be used to count and post offerings, which shall be done expeditiously following the service when received.
7. All moneys for Ambassadors Fellowship Groups and Missions shall be received and disbursed, under terms as determining the service when received.

23.4. *Designated Funds:*

1. The purpose of Designated Funds is to establish a receiving vehicle for donations that are given for a specific objective, thereby not being subject to the normal percentage deductions, and not to be construed as a means of circumventing tithing and giving to the General Fund.
2. The establishment of all Designated Funds shall require formal congregational approval.
3. All Designated Funds Gifts shall be so accounted and reported, and shall not be used for any purpose other than the designation for which they were accepted.

23.5 *Budgets*

1. All Churches, Missions, Fellowship Groups and other Subdivisions shall establish budgets based upon stewardship programs or other fund raising activity.

23.6 *Endowment Funds*

1. The Minister's Fellowship, all Churches, Missions and other Subdivisions shall place 2% of income other than designated gifts in an Endowment Fund, managed to receive the highest possible income, the principal of which shall remain intact in perpetuity, and the interest of same to be disbursed by the appropriate officials having such authority in fiscal matters. This amount shall be the first expenditure to be paid out of undesigned income at least monthly.

23.7 *Tithes*

1. All individuals, Churches, Missions and other Subdivisions shall tithe a minimum of 2^{1/2} percent (2.5%) of their annual income other than designated gifts to established funds to the Minister's Fellowship for the operation of work authorized by the Minister's Fellowship. This amount shall be the first expenditure to be paid out of undesigned income annually.

23.8 *Property*

1. Whenever a particular Church, Mission or other Subdivisions is formally dissolved voluntarily or by the Minister's Fellowship, has become extinct by reason of the dispersal of its Membership, the abandonment of its work, or other cause, such property as it may have, both real and personal, shall be held, used, and applied for such uses, purposes and trust as the Minister's Fellowship may direct, limit or appoint, or such property may be sold or disposed of as the Minister's Fellowship may direct, in conformity with the Canon and State laws that apply.
2. Whenever an already organized body associates with Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, its property, both real and personal, shall become subject to all the provisions of the Canon.

23.9 Clergy Expenses

1. It is suggested that the Churches, Missions, and other Subdivisions provide for the expenses of Licensed and Ordained Ministers to the General Convocation.

23.10 Other Funds

1. Funds, other than the Endowment Fund may be established by the Local Congregation.

23.11 Pastor's Salary

1. Every Church, Mission shall pay a monthly salary to its Pastor/Moderator in the amount of at least one third (percentage may be increased at direction of Congregation) of its monthly income, other than designated gifts to established funds, payable the last day of the month of record, until that salary amount reaches \$12,000.00 annually, at which time the Church shall decide the amount of salary, but not to be less than \$12,000.00 annually.

23.12 Debt Guidelines

1. Installment debt, including mortgage, loan, and any local, State or Federal taxes, which have stood for more than 30 days, and any other accounts payable which have stood for more than 60 days, shall be considered Debt, and shall be given primary consideration for pay out.
2. Top priority shall be assigned to avoiding a Debt position in accounts payable.
3. Tithes, as defined in 23.7.1 shall not be in arrears.
4. In retiring Debt, every attempt shall be made to appraise creditors of the Church's position and to work honorably with creditors

toward full payment in a timely manner, for the preservation of the integrity and witness of the Church.

23.13 Property Usage Agreement

1. The Property Usage Agreement shall be used in making contractual agreements with outside groups in using Church Property.

G-Article 24 General Procedures

24.1 Clergy Reports

1. All Clergy shall submit a Pastor's Report reflecting both quantitatively and qualitatively their work each month. These shall be submitted to the Minister's Fellowship on a monthly basis.

24.2 Financial Reports

1. Complete statements of Income and Disbursements, Balance Sheets, and photocopies of all monthly Bank Statements shall be submitted to the Minister's Fellowship on a Monthly basis.

24.3 Quorums

1. The following quorums shall be necessary to conduct business:
 - a. Church Councils – Majority
 - b. Board of Deacons and Elders – Majority
 - c. Congregation – 25% of Active Membership
 - d. General Convocation – Majority of registered delegates
 - e. Minister's Fellowship – Majority
 - f. Less than a quorum may vote to adjourn a meeting from time to time without further notice.

24.4 *Transfer of Ordination*

1. There shall be no automatic transfer of ordination into Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
2. The requirement for recognizing the ordination of a Deacon or Elder who are ordained in a Church of any denomination shall be determined by the Minister's Fellowship.
3. The requirements for recognizing the ordination of Ministers and Bishops who were ordained in another denomination shall be determined by the Minister's Fellowship.
4. It is to be recognized that ordination of any person in Ambassadors of Christ makes transfer of ordination automatically from one church mission or other subdivision to another.
5. Upon request, a letter of transfer of ordination shall be rendered to another Church Body.

24.5 *Nominating Committees*

1. The Minister's Fellowship shall serve as the Nominating committee to present a slate of Officers for consideration to the General Convocation.
2. The Licensed and Ordained staff of the local Subdivision shall appoint a Nominating Committee of not less than three non-staff Members to present a slate of Deacons and Elders to serve on respective local Boards, for consideration at the Congregational Meeting prior to General Convocation.
3. A proposed slate of officers is not binding upon the electorate.
4. The proposed slates shall include names to fill all positions even when they are being re-elected or fulfilling other Canonic requirements.

G-Article 25 Books and Records

25.1 *Registries*

1. The Minister's Fellowship, all Fellowship Groups, Churches, Missions and other Subdivisions shall maintain Official Books of Registry which shall include all such detailed Certificates and other official information as may be applicable:
 - a. Certificates of Incorporation, Articles of Incorporation, and Bylaws.
 - b. Records of Overtures, Official Records of Adjudications, Records of Tangible Gifts received or given;
 - c. Certificates, Records, Rosters and other document as indicated in the Appendix

25.2 *Procedures*

1. Each printed page of official minutes, including agendas reports, rosters and attachments, shall be numbered consecutively, beginning 1 September and ending 31 August each year, with the year of the Church's existence (followed by a dash) preceding the numbers.

25.4 *Minutes*

1. Minutes shall be kept of all proceedings.
2. Minutes taken in a closed session shall remain confidential and shall be released to the parties involved only by written request.
3. When a matter discussed in closed session is perceived as threatening or carries an intent of harm to one's self or others the proceedings shall be reported to the proper authorities.

25.5 Accessibility

1. All books and records may be inspected by any member or his/her agent or attorney for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.

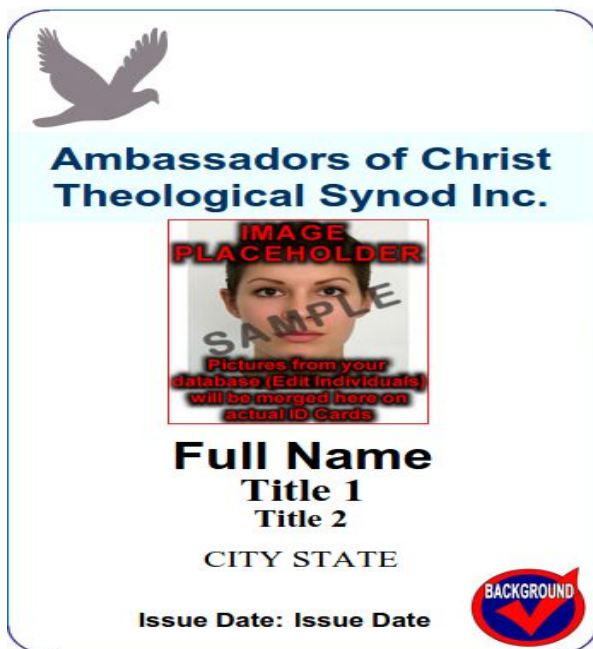
25.6 Identification Cards

1. Definition

In light of the fact that child safety and the security of our members must be taken seriously, Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation have made provisions to protect children and members in our care by requiring permanent identification cards.

2. Permanent Identification Cards shall be issued at General Convocation.
3. Each member shall submit information for a background check prior to recognition as a member of Ambassadors of Christ. Refusal to submit requested information shall end the recognition of the individual as a member.
4. All members shall pay for a background check, and the cost of a badge. The cost of the permanent Identification badge shall be \$16.00 and the cost of the background check shall be \$25.00; for a one time total fee of \$41.00.
5. Each Identification badge shall contain Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, a photo of the member, the full name of the member, the word Member, The name of the Local Congregation, City and State, and Date Issued. It shall also be distinctively marked on the badge if the member is cleared for child care with a red white and blue symbol noting that the background has been checked and cleared.
6. Each Deacon, Elder, Seminarian, Pastor and Bishop and officers of the church shall submit information for a background check prior to recognition as a member of Ambassadors of Christ.

7. All Ministers shall pay for a background check, and the cost of a badge. The cost of the permanent Identification badge shall be \$16.00 and the cost of the background check shall be \$25.00; for a one time total fee of \$41.00.
8. Each Identification badge shall contain Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, photo of the minister, the full name of the minister, the Title of the Ordained, The name of the Local Congregation, City and State, and Date Issued. The Minister's Identification Badge shall contain the certification for his/her ordination.
9. It shall also be distinctively marked on the badge if the member is cleared for child care with a red white and blue symbol noting that the background has been checked and cleared.
10. Identification Card Example—Members



G-Article 26 Amendments

26.1 *Overtures*

1. All motions to repeal, amend or adopt new or additional provisions of the Canon (the bylaws) shall be presented as Overtures to the General Convocation.
2. Overtures shall be presented in formal, written form to the Minister's Fellowship no later than the last meeting prior to General Convocation.
3. Overtures may be presented by any Subdivision of Ambassadors of Christ or by the Minister's Fellowship.

26.2 *Provisional Amendments*

1. Provisional Amendments may be enacted by the Minister's Fellowship in between the quadrennial meeting of the General Convocation, but shall be limited in effect to specific activity and shall be null and void if changed by a majority of those affected by the amendment.
2. Provisional amendments shall be presented as Overtures to the next General Convocation unless it has been voided or vetoed..

26.3 *Veto*

1. The Minister's Fellowship reserves the right to veto any Overture.
2. A veto of the Minister's Fellowship may be overridden only by $\frac{3}{4}$ majority vote of the General Convocation.

G-Article 27 Dissolution

27.1 *Legal Dissolution Clause*

1. In the event of dissolution of the corporation, after settlement of all outstanding debts, its assets shall be distributed to a religious

organization or institution which qualifies for tax exemption under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provisions of any future United States Internal Revenue Code). And which organization or institution can best accomplish the general objective for which this Corporation was organized. Said religious organization or institution shall be selected by a two-thirds vote of the Board of Directors, or in the event the Board of Directors does not make such a selection, then by a court of competent jurisdiction within the State of Illinois.

27.2 *Specific Dissolution*

1. In the event that a specific Church, Mission or other Subdivision is voluntarily or administratively dissolved, the records and Memberships shall be transferred to Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation or another Church, Mission or Subdivision at the discretion of the Minister's Fellowship.

Confessions (C)

C-Article 1 Authority

1.1 General Authority

1. The Book of Confession shall be binding in letter and in spirit on all Churches, Missions and other Subdivisions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, its Members, Licensed and Ordained Clergy, Laity, Officers and Agents.
2. In their jurisdictions, Pastors/Moderators shall reserve all rights in matters of Worship and Theology, subject to review and adjudication by the Ordained Clergy of the Minister's Fellowship. Special attention shall be given to theological representations, that they be in conformity and harmony with Scripture and Ambassadors Systematic Theology as outlined in the Catechism.

1.2 Moral Conduct

1. Any and all activities and places of gathering under the auspices of the Church shall be respected as vehicles of Christian Witness. Therefore, behavior inconsistent with the Christian Witness is prohibited (such as lewdness and foul language, etc.). See Section C-_____.
2. Because of the temptation to those who are in recovery or suffer from addiction, chemical substances, alcoholic beverages and all other drugs are prohibited. All buildings in use by Ambassadors of Christ shall be smoke-free environments.

C-Article 2 Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation

2.1 The Official History

There is a motivating ideal behind the start of any movement. Ambassadors of Christ began as a result of a group of Christians feeling the need to reach out to those who have been marginalized for any number of reasons, including but limited to race, national origin, gender, and so much more. Our inspired need was and is t to reach those whom the “traditional

church” deems unwelcomed with God's message of love. A new Church movement was needed by these people because there were too many obstacles in existing churches that kept attention away from the central message of God's love and the need to share it with others in need. From the very beginning of the Ambassadors of Christ movement, the founders felt a strong sense of the Spirit of God moving them into a new means of reaching others with the message of love and grace. As the movement arrived to make the decision to begin, the idea and formation plans easily came forth from the founders. Resources miraculously were supplied. The Spirit of God was truly working through them.

The very special mission of Ambassadors of Christ has been beyond the feeling that love needed to be shared with people: the drive to reach all people regardless of age, sex, national origin, race, socioeconomic status, handicap, or denominational background. People suffer so much cultural oppression and religious bigotry because they may seem “different.” It is the goal of Ambassadors of Christ to assure everyone that God loves them. This mission also includes an awareness that such oppression tends to make individuals selfish, lonely, and, at times, filled with despair.

In choosing the name Ambassadors of Christ to identify the Church, the focus was consciously being made on on the basis of God's message of love and grace through Jesus Christ who is our atonement for sin and remover of our guilt, and sending the gifts and fruit of the Holy Spirit. Such love cannot be surpassed. By accepting the gift of love from God through faith, individuals humbly enter a new way of living that begins with acceptance by God that leads to a morally fulfilled life.

The first church that became Ambassadors of Christ; and the central hub for the subsequent General Convocation; was founded at a meeting on April 21 1981, and the first worship service was held on May 10, 1981 with 32 people in attendance at the redecorated store-front at 3524 Washington Avenue in St. Louis Missouri; The Rev. William R. Memmott served as Pastor.

The ministry of Ambassadors of Christ began with 2:00 P.M. worship services. This hour was chosen for those with family. The goal and ministry of Ambassadors of Christ is to espouse family time and the extension of that family time culminated in the corporate worship of God with other believers in a central location; namely Washington Avenue.

From this beginning many other programs and services have developed including Bible Studies, Prayer Ministry, Fellowship Activities, newsletter, and so forth. A new means of outreach has been the use of the Internet for news, education, and other forms of ministry.

There are three guiding principles commanded by Jesus: 1. "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and all your mind and with all your soul" (Matthew 22:37) 2. Stated in three ways, "Love your neighbor as yourself" (John 15:12), "Love one another as I have loved you" (Luke 10:27), and "Bear one another's burdens" (Matthew 11:30 and Galatians 6:2) and 3. "Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19-20). These three commands; love God, Love and Care for Neighbor, and the Great Commission to make Disciples; lead us to build a support system for our Brothers and Sisters in the faith that can be relied upon.

Human selfishness, jealousy, and the encroachment of evil can bring difficulties to any group, especially if the will of God is being followed. It is the power of God that overcomes such problems. Where God's love is present, trouble will soon go. Late in the Summer of 1981 some problems arose. After a moving Prayer Vigil conducted at Pere Marquette Park, a wonderful resolution came into being. The result was a formal recognition of Ambassadors of Christ as Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation. The first chartered church was Ambassadors of Christ – Resurrection Church of St. Louis (Resurrection Church)

Ambassadors of Christ Theological Seminary (Formerly ACTS Bible Institute) was founded on October 6, 1981 to train and prepare

individuals for Christian Service and for ordination into the Christian Ministry.

In 1986, following a personal retreat by Pastor Memmott, a new vision for outreach was birthed, resulting in a continuing program of founding new congregations. Some of these have closed. Some have separated as independent congregations. Others continue with us in valuable fellowship. To facilitate this movement of Church planting, Pastor Memmott was consecrated Bishop on October 18, 1987.

In February 1991, a vision was given to charter Member Robert Brown regarding a declaration of Jubilee to forgive more than \$20,000.00 that was thwarting the focus on preaching the Good News. Further, outreach has been made possible by the inauguration of television ministry in 1993.

In the Spring of 2001, another area of controversy arose focusing on the issue of human sexuality. Because of irreconcilable differences, Resurrection Church of St Louis, separated from those under the control of the Board of Regents, and a rechartered church progresses forward once again as reflected in a newly adopted and revised Canon.

After the retirement of Bishop Memmott as Pastor in January 2003, Rev. Richard Lee was called to be the Pastor of the church. Pastor Lee Moderated the Council of the Church until a qualified Bishop was consecrated. This moderation and Council leadership continued until January 2012. After many years of prayer, and the encouragement of the congregations in care with Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, Rev. Lee agreed to allow his name to be included on the slate for the election of the new Bishop. After the votes were counted in the first week of February 2012, Rev. Richard J. Lee was elected to be the Presiding Bishop of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation. In July 2012, Rev. Richard J Lee was publicly consecrated Bishop of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation. Under the direction of Bishop Lee Ambassadors of Christ has grown beyond the boundaries of the United States. The International congregations include assemblies in India, Africa, the Philippines, and many Creative Access areas around the World.

As Ambassadors of Christ, we continue to recall the love of God, love of people and the ministry of discipleship for the Glory of God.

2.2 *Guiding Principles*

1. Ambassadors of Christ, the congregations, missions, and other subdivisions are centers for Worship, where Brothers and Sisters in common faith in Jesus Christ can enjoy the music, the Scripture, the Prayers, the sharing of the Lord's Supper, and the fellowship of being together.
2. Ambassadors of Christ is a support system that provides a sure base of confidence in others who will help, whether it is a short conversation, a Pastoral Care session, a meal, or whatever God calls us to do. Ambassadors of Christ is the Body of Christ (that is, the Church) where all persons can be fully themselves in a wholesome environment; a resource for growing into more fulfilled and happy lives and situations without condemnation or oppression.

C-Article 3 The Official Logo

3.1 *The Logo*

The official logo of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation is shown below. It shall be used to help emphasize the Unity of all Missions, Churches and other Subdivisions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.



C-Article 4 *Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith*

4.1 *Formation*

1. The Ambassadors Affirmation was written in May 1981 by The Rt. Rev. William R. Memmott to advance from a static statement of faith to recognize the dynamic nature and work of the Trinity in our personal lives as led by the work of the Holy Spirit.

4.2 *Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith*

1. God the Father, in the fullness of time, because of His Great love for humankind allowed the Son of Man to be delivered into the hands of sinful people to be crucified, taking upon Himself the sins of the world, and rising the third day in victory over sin and death, that we by faith in Jesus' atoning blood and resurrection, witnessed by confession and sealed by water baptism might be saved from guilt and receive life everlasting;
2. Jesus the Christ, the only begotten of the Father, lived and died as fully human and fully divine, and gave us a new commandment that we love one another as God loved us;
3. Jesus taught us to bear one another's burdens, and gave us the Great Commission to go into all the world and teach all to observe all that God commanded, and baptize in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;
4. The Holy Spirit the enabling power of God, sent to be our Comforter and Guide, has entered us and led us to this moment of new commitment in love. see the acts of the sinful nature abounding even in the Church; but we seek the fruit of the Spirit;
5. We recognize the powerful deceit of Satan destroying; and desire to take on the whole armor of God: truth, righteousness, the gospel

of peace, faith, salvation, and the Sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God, in prayer at all times;

6. We resolve in the power of God, by the Blood of Jesus Christ and in the presence of the Holy Spirit, to forget those things which are behind, to reach forth to those things which are before, to press on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus;
7. We resolve to study love as god's way of life for us; to worship in beauty and in truth; to practice love in deed and word;
8. We resolve that we accept God's Word as the revelation of God's everlasting love and guide for Christian Living; and that God's continuing revelation has been made known anew throughout the tradition of all generations:
9. We resolve to work out our salvation in harmony with the Body of Christ, the Church, and to be faithful to the Holy Sacraments of Bread and The Fruit of the Vine, given by Christ
10. And we resolve to support this work of love and salvation, without compromise to God's Holy Word and Will by commitment to Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation; listening to its message and authority as inspired conscience dictates; for the glory of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
Amen.

4.3 *Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith (Short Form)*

1. God the Father, in the fullness of time, because of His Great love for humankind allowed the Son of Man to be delivered into the hands of sinful people to be crucified, taking upon Himself the sins of the world, and rising the third day in victory over sin and death, that we by faith in Jesus' atoning Blood and resurrection, witnessed by confession and sealed by water Baptism might be saved from guilt and receive life everlasting;

2. Jesus the Christ, the only begotten of the Father, lived and died as fully human and fully divine, and gave us a new commandment that we love one another as God loved us;
3. Jesus the Christ taught us to bear one another's burdens, and gave us the Great Commission to go into all the world and teach all to observe all that God commanded, and baptize in the name of the father, of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit;
4. The Holy Spirit the enabling power of God, sent to be our Comforter and Guide, has entered us and led us to this moment of new commitment in love.

C-Article 5 The Historical Creeds of the Church

5.1 Definition

1. The historical creeds of the Christian Church are The Apostles Creed, The Nicene Creed, and the Athanasian Creed. The most historical creed is the Apostles Creed (250 A. D.) The “Apostolicum” as it was known for emphasizing the Fatherhood of God. The Nicene Creed of 325 explicitly affirms the co-essential divinity of the Son, and the Holy Spirit as worshipped and glorified with the Father and the Son. The Athanasian Creed describes in much greater detail the relationship between Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
2. Whereas, we recognize the historical creeds of the church, and we live according to one Affirmation of Faith, Ambassadors of Christ are not known as a “Creedal” Church.
3. The historical creeds help the church to interpret Scripture on the basis of historical Christian faith.

5.2 The Apostles Creed

1. I believe in God the Father, the Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth;
2. And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord,

3. Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary,
4. Suffered under Pontius Pilate, Crucified, dead and buried,
5. Descended to hell, The third day rose again from the dead,
6. Ascended into heaven, Seated at the right hand of God the Father Almighty,
7. Whence He will come to judge the living and the dead;
8. I believe in the Holy Spirit,
9. A holy universal Christian Church, Communion of Saints,
10. Forgiveness of sins,
11. Resurrection of the flesh,
12. And everlasting life, Amen.

5.3 *The Nicene Creed*

1. I believe in one God, the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and of all things visible and invisible.
2. And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God, Begotten of the Father before all worlds; God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; Begotten, not made, being of one substance with the Father, by whom all things were made.
3. Who, for us men for our salvation, came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Spirit of the virgin Mary, and was made man;
4. And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried;
5. And the third day He rose again, according to the Scriptures; and ascended into heaven, and sits on the right hand of the Father;
6. And He shall come again, with glory, to judge the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.
7. And I believe in the Holy Ghost, the Lord and Giver of Life; who proceeds from the Father [and the Son]; who with the Father and the Son together is worshiped and glorified; who spoke by the prophets.
8. And I believe one holy universal and apostolic Church. I acknowledge one baptism for the remission of sins;

9. And I look for the resurrection of the dead, and the life of the world to come. Amen.

5.4 The Athanasian Creed

1. Whosoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Universal Christian Faith.
2. Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly.
3. And the Faith is this, that we worship one God in Trinity and Trinity in Unity.
4. Neither confounding the Persons, nor dividing the Substance.
5. For there is one Person of the Father, another of the Son, and another of the Holy Ghost.
6. But the Godhead of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Ghost is all One, the Glory Equal, the Majesty Coeternal.
7. Such as the Father is, such is the Son, and such is the Holy Ghost.
8. The Father Uncreate, the Son Uncreate, and the Holy Ghost Uncreate.
9. The Father Incomprehensible, the Son Incomprehensible, and the Holy Ghost Incomprehensible.
10. The Father Eternal, the Son Eternal, and the Holy Ghost Eternal and yet they are not Three Eternals but One Eternal.
11. As also there are not Three Uncreated, nor Three Incomprehensibles, but One Uncreated, and One Uncomprehensible.
12. So likewise the Father is Almighty, the Son Almighty, and the Holy Ghost Almighty.
13. And yet they are not Three Almightyies but One Almighty.
14. So the Father is God, the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God.
15. And yet they are not Three Gods, but One God.
16. So likewise the Father is Lord, the Son Lord, and the Holy Ghost Lord.
17. And yet not Three Lords but One Lord.

18. For, like as we are compelled by the Christian verity to acknowledge every Person by Himself to be God and Lord, so are we forbidden by the Christian Faith to say, there be Three Gods or Three Lords.
19. The Father is made of none, neither created, nor begotten.
20. The Son is of the Father alone; not made, nor created, but begotten.
21. The Holy Ghost is of the Father, and of the Son neither made, nor created, nor begotten, but proceeding.
22. So there is One Father, not Three Fathers; one Son, not Three Sons; One Holy Ghost, not Three Holy Ghosts.
23. And in this Trinity none is afore or after Other, None is greater or less than Another, but the whole Three Persons are Co-eternal together, and Co-equal.
24. So that in all things, as is aforesaid, the Unity is Trinity, and the Trinity is Unity is to be worshipped.
25. He therefore that will be saved, must thus think of the Trinity.
26. Furthermore, it is necessary to everlasting Salvation, that he also believe rightly the Incarnation of our Lord Jesus Christ.
27. For the right Faith is, that we believe and confess, that our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is God and Man.
28. God, of the substance of the Father, begotten before the worlds; and Man, of the substance of His mother, born into the world.
29. Perfect God and Perfect Man, of a reasonable Soul and human Flesh subsisting.
30. Equal to the Father as touching His Godhead, and inferior to the Father as touching His Manhood.
31. Who, although He be God and Man, yet He is not two, but One Christ.
32. One, not by conversion of the Godhead into Flesh, but by taking of the Manhood into God.
33. One altogether, not by confusion of substance, but by Unity of Person.
34. For as the reasonable soul and flesh is one Man, so God and Man is one Christ.

35. Who suffered for our salvation, descended into Hell, rose again the third day from the dead.
36. We are part of God's creation, made in the image of God.
37. To be created in the image of God means that we are free to make choices, to love, to create, to reason, and to live in harmony with creation and with God.
38. From the beginning, human beings have misused their freedom and made wrong choices.
39. Our wrong choices led us to rebellion against God.
40. In our human rebellion we put ourselves in the place of God, and our sin separated humanity from God.
41. Our help is in God.
42. God first helped us by revealing Himself and His will, through nature and history, through many wise and holy persons, through the Prophets of Israel, and especially in the person and work of Jesus Christ.
43. He ascended into Heaven, He sitteth on the right hand of the Father, God Almighty, from whence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.
44. At whose coming all men shall rise again with their bodies, and shall give account for their own works.
45. And they that have done good shall go into life everlasting, and they that have done evil into everlasting fire.
46. This is the Universal Christian Faith, which except a man believe faithfully and firmly, he cannot be saved.

C-Article 6 Statement of Faith

This statement of Faith, together with the Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith, is an outline of our Systematic Theology and not a complete recital of all points of doctrine.

6.1 *Human Nature*

1. We are part of God's creation, made in the image of God.

2. To be created in the image of God means that we are free to make choices, to love, to create, to reason, and to live in harmony with creation and with God.
3. From the beginning, human beings have misused their freedom and made wrong choices.
4. Our wrong choices led us to rebellion against God. In our human rebellion we put ourselves in the place of God, and our sin separated humanity from God.
5. Our help is in God. God first helped us by revealing Himself and His will, through nature and history, through many wise and holy persons, through the Prophets of Israel, and especially in the person and work of Jesus Christ.

6.2 ***God the Creator***

1. We learn that there is one God, the Almighty Father, Creator of Heaven and Earth, of all that is seen and unseen.
2. This means that the universe is good, that it is the work of a single loving God who creates, sustains, and directs it.
3. It means that all people are worthy of respect and honor, because all are created in the image of God, and all can respond to the love of God.
4. This revelation was handed down to us through a community created by a covenant with God.

6.3 ***The Old Covenant***

1. A covenant is a relationship initiated by God, to which a body of people responds in faith.
2. The Hebrew Covenant (Old Testament) is the one given by God to the Hebrew people.
3. God promised that they would be the people of God, the people to bring all nations of the world to God.
4. God required the chosen people to be faithful, to love justice, to do mercy, and to walk humbly with God.

5. The covenant with the Hebrew people is to be found in the books of Scripture called the Old Testament.
6. God's will for us is to be found in the Ten Commandments.

6.4 *The Ten Commandments*

1. The Ten Commandments are the laws given to Moses and people of Israel.
2. We learn two things: our duty to God and our duty to our neighbors.
3. Our duty to God is to love and obey God and bring others to the knowledge of God; To put nothing in the place of God; To show God honor and respect in thought, word, and deed; to remember the Sabbath (Friday at Sundown until Saturday at Sundown) and keep it Holy by regular worship, prayer and study of God's ways.
4. Our duty to our neighbor is to love them as ourselves, and to do to other people as we wish them to do to us; to love, honor, and help our parents and family, to honor those in authority, and to meet their just demands; to show respect for the life that God has given humanity, to work and pray for peace, to bear no malice, prejudice or hatred in our hearts, and to be kind to all creatures that God also created; to use our bodily desires as God intended; to be honest and fair in our dealings, to seek justice, freedom and the necessities of life for all people; and to use our talents and possessions as ones who must answer for them to God; to speak truth, and not mislead others by our silence; to resist temptation; envy; greed and jealousy, to rejoice in other people's gifts and graces.
5. This is our duty to love and serve God, who has called us into fellowship with Himself.
6. The Ten Commandments were given to define our relationship with God and our neighbor.
7. Since we do not fully obey them, we see more clearly our sin and our need for redemption.

6.5 Sin

1. Sin is the seeking of our own will instead of the will of God, this distorting our relationship with God, with other people and with all creation.
2. Sin has power over us because we lose our liberty when our relationship with God is distorted.

6.6 Redemption

1. Redemption is the act of God which sets us free from the power of evil, sin and death.
2. God sent the Prophets to call us back to a full relationship with God, to show us our need for redemption, and to announce the coming of the Messiah.
3. The Messiah is the One sent by God to free us from the power of sin, so that with the help of God we may live in harmony with God, with ourselves, with our neighbors and with all creation.
4. The Messiah or Christ, is Jesus of Nazareth, the only begotten Son of God.

6.7 God the Savior

1. When we say that Jesus is the only Son of God, we mean that Jesus is the only perfect image of God the Father, and shows us the nature of God.
2. The nature of God that is revealed in Jesus is love and grace.
3. When we say that Jesus was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and become incarnate from the Virgin Mary, we mean that God's own act, the divine Son received our human nature from the Virgin Mary, His mother.
4. The divine Son became human, so that in Him human beings might be adopted as children of God, and be made heirs of God's Kingdom.

5. By His obedience, even to suffering and death, Jesus made the offering which we could not make; in Him we are freed from the power of sin and are reconciled to God.
6. By His resurrection, Jesus overcame death and opened for us the way to eternal life.
7. Between Jesus' death and resurrection, He went to the departed who died without hearing of the hope of His coming and He preached to them, offering them also the benefit of redemption.
8. Jesus took our human nature into Heaven where He now reigns with the Father and intercedes for us.
9. We share in Christ's victory when we personally recognize, renounce, and repent of sin and the sinful nature; accept forgiveness of sin by personal faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, the Son of the Living God; witness God's grace through water baptism, signifying and sealing our union with Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit' becoming members of Christ under the New Covenant.

6.7 *The Christian Covenant*

1. The New Covenant is the fulfillment; *not a completion*; of the Old Covenant and is the new relationship with God given by Jesus Christ, the Messiah, to the Apostles and to all who believe in Him.
2. Christ promised to bring us into the Kingdom of God and give us life in all its fullness.
3. Christ commanded us to believe in Him and to keep His commandments.
4. Jesus taught us the Summary of the Law and gave the New Commandment.
5. The Summary of the Law is, You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.
6. This is the first and greatest commandment.
7. And the second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

8. The New Commandment is that we love one another as Christ loved us.
9. What Christians believe about Christ is found in the Scriptures is summarized in the Ambassadors' Affirmation of Faith, and ultimately in the declaration that Jesus Christ is Lord.

6.8 *The Holy Spirit*

1. The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity, God at work in the world and in the Church of Jesus Christ even now.
2. The Holy Spirit is revealed in the Old Covenant as the Giver of Life, the One who spoke through the Prophets.
3. The Holy Spirit is revealed in the New Covenant as the Lord who leads us into all truth and enables us to grow in the likeness of Christ.
4. We recognize the presence of the Holy Spirit when we confess Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and are brought into love and harmony with God, with ourselves, with our neighbors and with all creation; resulting in the receiving of the gift of the Holy Spirit.
5. We recognize the truths to be taught by the Holy Spirit when they are in accord with the Scriptures.

6.9 *The Holy Scripture*

1. The Holy Scriptures, commonly called the Bible, are the books of the Old and New Testaments.
2. The Old Testament consist of books written by the people of the Old Covenant, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to show God at work in nature and in history.
3. The New Testament consist of books written by the people of the New Covenant, under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, to set forth the life and teachings of Jesus and to proclaim the Good News of the Kingdom of God for All people.

4. The Apocrypha is a collection of additional books written by people of the Old Covenant, that are sometimes used in other denominations.
5. We acknowledge the Apocrypha and books of wisdom, but we do not recognize their divine inspiration and therefore reject the Apocryphal books as the Word of God.
6. We call The Holy Scriptures the Word of God because God inspired their human writers and because God still speaks to us through the Bible.
7. We understand the meaning of the Bible by the help of the Holy Spirit, and by the help of the Holy Church, founded by Christ.

6.11 *The Church*

1. The Church is described as the Body of Christ, of which Christ is the Sovereign Head and of which all baptized believers are members.
2. It is called the People of God, a holy nation, a royal priesthood, and the pillar and ground of truth. The Church is one, holy, universal and apostolic body.
3. The Church is one because it is one body, under one Head, our Lord Jesus Christ.
4. The Church is Holy because the Holy Spirit dwells in it, consecrates its members, and guides them to do God's work.
5. The Church is universal; because it proclaims the whole truth to all people, to the end of time.
6. The Church is Apostolic, because it continues in the teachings and fellowship of the Apostles and is sent to carry out Christ's mission to all people.
7. The mission of the church is to restore all people to unity with God and each other in Christ through the work of the Great Commission.
8. The Church pursues its mission as it prays and worships proclaims the gospel, and promotes justice, peace, and love.

9. The Church carries out its mission through the ministry of all its Members.

6.12 *The Ministry*

1. The Ministry of the Church is made up of those persons serving as Members, Curates, Deacons, Seminarians, Elders, and Bishops.
2. The ministry of Members is to represent Christ and His Church, to bear witness to Him wherever they may be, and, according to the gifts given them, carry on Christ's work of reconciliation in the world, and to take their place in the life, worship and governance of the Church.
3. The ministry of Curates is to voluntarily serve in a specific area of ministry for a specified period of time.
4. Deacons are to represent Christ and His Church, particularly as servants of those in need, and to assist Seminarians, Elders and Bishops in the proclamation of the Gospel and the administration of the Rites and Sacraments.
5. The ministry of Elders is to represent Christ and His Church, particularly as spiritual leaders of the people, to teach and exhort in the disciplines of the Gospel, to proclaim the Good News, to share in the ministry of the Rites and Sacraments.
6. As Pastors to the people, Elders share with Bishops in the overseeing of the Church to proclaim the gospel, and to bless and assure pardon in the name of God.
7. The Seminarian is one who has answered the call of God to the Gospel Ministry, and under the direction of the Deacons, Elders and Bishops serves the Church of Jesus Christ, representing Christ and His Church in whatever capacity they are assigned, for the glory of God.
8. The ministry of Bishops is to represent Christ and His Church, particularly as Chief Elder and Pastor to the Pastors, to guard the faith, unity and disciplines of the whole Church, to proclaim the Word of God, to act in Christ's name for the reconciliation of the world and the building up of the Church, and to move in the

authority of Christ setting apart others by the Rite of Laying on of Hands and the Rite of Ordination as a means of continuing Christ's ministry.

9. The duty of all Christians is to follow Christ, to come together regularly for corporate worship, and to work, pray, and give for the spread of the Kingdom of God.

6.13 *Prayer and Worship*

1. Prayer is the interacting with God, by thought and deeds, with or without words.
2. Christian prayer is interacting with God the Father, through Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit.
3. Jesus Christ our Lord gave us the example of prayer known as the Lord's Prayer.
4. From the example of The Lord's Prayer, the principal kinds of prayer are *adoration, praise, thanksgiving, penitence, oblation, intercession, and petition*.
5. Adoration is the lifting up of the heart and mind to God, asking nothing but to enjoy God's presence.
6. We praise God, not to obtain anything, but because God's Being draws praise in love from us.
7. Thanksgiving is offered to God for all blessings of this life, for our redemption, and for whatever draws us closer to God and to our neighbors.
8. In penitence, we confess our sins and make restitution where possible, which the intention to amend our lives.
9. Oblation is an offering of ourselves, our lives and labors, in union with Christ, for the purpose of God.
10. Intercession brings before God the needs of others.
11. In petition, we present our own needs, that God's will may be done.
12. In corporate worship, we unite ourselves with others to acknowledge the holiness of God, to hear God's Word, to offer prayer, and to celebrate the Sacraments.

6.14 The Sacraments

1. Sacraments are outward and visible signs of inward and spiritual grace, given by Christ as sure and certain means by which we receive that grace.
2. Grace is God's favor toward us; unearned and undeserved; by grace, God forgives our sins, enlightens our minds, stirs our hearts, and strengthens our wills.
3. Sacraments are those physical acts that Jesus commanded His followers to continue until He returns.
4. The two Sacraments given by Christ to His Church are Baptism and The Lord's Supper; also called Communion.

6.15 Baptism

1. Baptism is the Sacrament, instituted by the action of Jesus Christ; by which God adopts an individual as children and makes us members of Christ's Body, the Church.
2. Through the water of Baptism Jesus seals the Christian to Himself, and making all Believers Joint-Heirs of God's Kingdom.
3. The outward sign in Baptism is water, in which the person is immersed in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.
4. The inward and spiritual grace of Baptism is union with Christ in Christ's death, burial and resurrection; being born again.
5. By the means of the Holy Spirit, one is born again into God's Family known as the Church.
6. Baptism *represents* the forgiveness of sins, and new life in the Holy Spirit.
7. Baptism is not the end result of salvation, but it is the , it is the public outward testimony of what has happened inwardly by the Holy Spirit.
8. For the one who desires to be baptized it is required that the individual makes a personal confession of faith by accepting Jesus

Christ as Lord, repentance and renunciation of Satan, sin, and the sin nature.

9. Since makes a conscious decision to follow Jesus Christ, infant baptism is not an acceptable means or form of baptism.
10. Children and infants are covered by God's grace in the *Rite of Infant (Child) Dedication or Christening* (See C-Article 6.17-5).

6.16 *The Lord's Supper*

1. The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper (also known as Communion) is a Sacrament commanded by Christ in order to continually remember Jesus' life, sacrificial death, and resurrection, until He comes again.
2. The Lord's Supper is called a sacrifice because it represents the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving.
3. Communion is the way by which the sacrifice of Christ is made present for us, and in which Christ unites humanity and His offering of Himself.
4. The outward and visible sign in Communion is bread and fruit of the vine, given and received according to Christ's command.
5. The inward and spiritual grace in Communion is the Body and Blood of Christ given to His people and received by faith.
6. The benefits received by the Christian in Communion are:
 - a. The refreshment of one's union with Christ;
 - b. The enrichment of one's union with Christ;
 - c. The remembrance of Christ's atonement for the forgiveness of sins;
 - d. The sealing of one's covenant with God in faith, for the strengthening of our union with Christ and one another, and;
 - e. The foretaste of the Heavenly banquet which is our nourishment in Eternal Life.
7. It is required that we should examine our lives, repent of our sins, and be the unity of love and grace with all People of God.

6.17 *Rites*

1. There are other Rites which evolved in the Church include, but are not limited to Confirmation, Ordination, Commissioning, Infant Dedication, Marriage, Ministration at the Time of Death and Burial, Consecration, and Anointing.
2. Although Rites are a means of grace, they are not necessary for all persons, neither are they commanded in the same way as Baptism and Communion.
3. God does not limit activity to these Rites.
4. There are patterns of countless ways by which God uses material things to reach out and connect to people; recounting our present hope and anticipation of future fulfillment.
5. **Confirmation** is the Rite in which we express a mature commitment to Christ by joining ourselves to a corporate body known as a Church, through instruction, examination, penitence, affirmation and confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord.
6. **Ordination** is the Rite in which God give authority and the grace of the Holy Spirit to those being made Deacons and Elders through prayer and the Laying on of hands.
7. **Commissioning** is the Rite in which God give authority and the grace of the Holy Spirit to those being prepared for the Gospel Ministry, and other positions prior to Ordination.
8. The Rite of Commissioning is administered through prayer and the laying on of hands; by which a person is given the practical experience and opportunity to make a mature commitment to service which may be limited in scope and duration.
9. **Infant Dedication or Christening** is the Rite in which infants are covered by God's Grace, whereby their parents and sponsors will bring up, to the best of their ability, the infant within the Church, to come to know for themselves the saving grace of Christ and be able to make his or her own decision to follow Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

10. ***Holy Marriage*** is the Rite in which two persons enter into a lifelong union, make their vows before God and the Church, and receive grace and blessing of God to help them fulfill their vows.
11. ***Ministration at the Time of Death and Burial*** is the Rite in which those who have died are commended to God's eternal grace, confirming their faith in Eternal life, and emphasizing the hope of our resurrection.
12. ***Consecration*** is the Rite in which we set aside that which is common for uncommon or Holy use, and in which God instills outward and visible signs with inward and spiritual grace. This is the Rite in which God places a sacred mantle upon an Ordained Elder for special use as an Overseer (Bishop) of God's Church through prayer and laying on of hands.
13. ***Anointing*** is the Rite of touching the sick with consecrated oil and the laying on of hands by which God's grace is given for the healing of spirit, mind, and body.

6.18 *Christian Hope*

1. Christian Hope is living with confidence in newness and fullness of life.
2. Christian Hope by the unction of the Holy Spirit stirs the heart of the Believer to await Christ's return with anticipation in Glory.
3. Christian Hope is the completion of God's purpose for the world.
4. By the coming of Christ in glory, we mean that Christ will come, not in weakness but in power, and will make all things new, fulfilling completely and finally His role as Messiah and King.
5. By heaven we mean eternal life in our enjoyment of God in the Kingdom of God.
6. The term "hell" is the absence of Christian Hope. Hell then is the second death and those who reject God are annihilated and no longer exist.
7. Christian Hope means that Christ will come in glory and judge the living and the dead.

8. When we say the resurrection of the body, we mean that God will raise those who rest in Him from death to the fullness of our being, that we may live with Christ in the fellowship of the saints.

6.19 Fellowship of the Saints

1. The fellowship of the saints (commonly called the Communion of the saints) is the whole family of God, the living and the dead, bound together in Christ by the Sacrament of The Lord's Supper, and prayer through the Holy Spirit in Jesus Christ's name.
2. The Scriptures describe the Fellowship of the saints as a participation with the following words, "The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread"²
3. The Fellowship of the Saints is one body visible and invisible; living and dead. together in Christ—the One Church.

6.20 Abundant Life

1. Abundant Life is the outcome of God's Sanctifying Grace, wherein we increase in understanding the mind of Christ, to more perfectly serve in full obedience to His will.
2. As one works out his or her salvation and is transformed into the embodiment of the love of God on earth, Christ increases and one's human desires toward sin decreases resulting in Abundant life.
3. The promise of power is revealed in sanctification ever increases peace and joy, healing of the body and mind, and achievement of everlasting life.
4. Everlasting life means a new existence, in which we are united with all the people of God, in the joy of fully knowing and loving God and each other.

² I Corinthians 10:15-17

5. Our assurance as Christians is that nothing, not even death, shall separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, Amen.

C-Article 7 Theological Positions

Position 1: Consecration and Re-consecration

Any system in which offices exist with responsibility and authority must have a sanction for such position. The Christian Church claims authoritative offices more surely than even those offices in governments that exist in the world (it adheres to Scriptural teaching). Secular and Church government have been sanctioned by God (Romans 13:1-5), and Christians are obligated to adhere to such authority (Hebrews 13:17). Acts 15 also indicates that, although we live under grace, the administration of God's grace is invested in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Those called by God to the Gospel Ministry are invested with both office and authority. As seen in Matthew 16:19, the *apostolicum* (person chosen and ordained with office and authority) are invested with authority to both bind covenants and to unbind covenants. In the one case, binding a covenant, it is witnessing and sealing a voluntary vow before the Lord and before His Body, the Church. In the other case, unbinding a covenant, it is unsealing a vow which has been consciously and deliberately violated.

The appropriate office of the Church is “an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer (Romans 13:4).” Deconsecration of Marriage, Deconsecration of Ordination, Deconsecration of Edifices and Sacred Vessels, etc, and Dissolution of Confirmation in the Church are all

rights reserved to the Church and confirmed by theology for twenty plus centuries.

Christ further established the Church's right to consecrate and deconsecrate in His discourse on dealing with sinning persons (Matthew 18:15-20). The wonder of His love and grace is profoundly expressed here, providing due process (one-on-one; two or three-on one; the whole Church-on-one). And, as He further propounds in Matthew 18, deconsecration depends NOT on the authoritative office, but upon the recalcitrance or repentance of the wrongdoer. No deconsecration occurs where the penitent “listens...to the Church.”

The example of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts 5) give us great pause for reflection. Cheating on ones vows brings death; if not physical, at least spiritual. Darkness overcomes spiritual reason. What is theologically right is perverted. It is dangerous to test the Spirit of the Lord (1 Corinthians 10:9).

The Parables of the Sower (Matthew 13) and the Talents (Matthew 25) further expound Christ instructions regarding those who have received a blessing and then have callously put it down. Punishment is then called for by Scripture. Scripture is also clear regarding the validity of one's vows after-the-fact, or challenging the ones accepted standards after-the-fact (Ecclesiastes 5:4-7)

In God's marvelous economy, however, punishment is meted out only to the recalcitrant. Forgiveness and restoration of position are freely

offered to those who repent and return to fulfilling the vows they made voluntarily.

Upon this Scripturally defended theology, the Church affirms its right of consecrate and deconsecrate.

Position 2: Accessibility of Children to Communion

Allowing believing children to come to the Lord's Supper is manifesting their right as believers to the five-fold graces (See C-Article 6.16) offered by Christ at His Holy Table. We remember that the Table of the Lord is not our table, it is His Table.

Glorify God

Christ welcomed children to enter into the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving by quoting Psalm 8:2.

Accessibility to Christ

Christ rebuked the disciples for refusing children access to Himself. He held them up as an example for adults. He reserved the human philosophy of children being like adults, saying that adults should become like little children in accepting the Kingdom of God (Mark 10:13-16).

Level of Understanding

No human being understands fully the mystery of the Lord's Supper. However, any child of God, regardless of age is welcome at the Table of the Holy Supper if they accept that it is a Scripturally ordained gift

of God for the people of God. Such knowledge is given to us regardless of age (II Timothy 3:14-15).

The Gospel Promise for Adults and Children

Full citizenship in the Family of God (repentance, baptism etc) is offered to all regardless of age or ancestry. Those who accept the Gospel message of Jesus Christ are added to the Church for its nurturing and worship experience (Acts 2:38-42).

Accepting the Child as Christ's Example

It behooves the Church to welcome children, indeed, to emulate them in their expression of faith in Christ. Denying them the grace of Communion with Christ is a heinous sin (Matthew 18:2-6).

Parental Responsibility

It is our responsibility as parents and teachers to help our children understand the meaning of what they are doing (as much as they can comprehend at a given age). We are not to frustrate their desire to partake of the Communion of Christ (Ephesians 6:4).

Early Worship Experience

Just as Samuel's mother drew her child into the fullness of worship at a very early age (in this case, probably about age 12), it is our responsibility to encourage early participation in the Sacramental life of the Church. Chronological age is not the issue—Spiritual cognizance is.

Establishing Patterns in Youth

A child should be raised from their youth to observe the fullness of experience in Christ. Their spiritual health in adulthood depends upon their early experience (Proverbs 22:6; Ecclesiastes 12:1).

There is a balance to be struck. A child should not only be instructed by the parents and teachers in the meaning of Communion, but they should be encouraged to enter fully into the Sacraments at an early age. We must remember that depth of intellectual understanding is not required, simply that we “do this in remembrance of Me”. Just as a person's understanding comprehension for a thing of their relationship to God through Christ grows and matures over the years, so will this one portion of experience grow in importance and comprehension for a person as years pass. If a believing has the conscience to accept Jesus Christ as their Savior, they have the conscience to renew their confession of sin, be cleansed anew, and enter into the restorative experience of the Sacraments.

Upon this Scripturally defended theology, the Church affirms its invitation to believing children to come and “break bread together.”

Position 3: The Trinity

Humanity lives in a three-dimensional world. The laws of physics establish that physical objects have a certain height, width, and depth and other properties. One person can look like someone else, or behave like someone else, or even sound like someone else. But a person cannot actually be the same as another person. They are distinct individuals.

God, however, lives without the limitations of physics, and is outside of a three-dimensional universe. He is spirit. And he is infinitely more complex than humans are. That is why Jesus the Son can be different from the Father, and, yet the same.

The Bible clearly speaks of God the Son, God the Father, and God the Holy Spirit. But emphasizes that there is only ONE God. If one uses mathematics, it would not be, $1+1+1=3$. It would be $1 \times 1 \times 1 = 1$. God is a triune God. Thus, the term: "Tri" (meaning three), and "Unity" (meaning one) or Tri+Unity = Trinity. The term Trinity is a way of acknowledging what the Bible reveals to humanity about God—that God is yet three "Persons" who have the same essence of deity.

Some have tried to give human illustrations for the Trinity, such as H₂O being water, ice and steam (all different forms, but all are H₂O). Another illustration is an egg having a shell, egg yolk and egg white, but this egg illustration shows that there would be "parts" to God, which is not the case.

God the Son (Jesus) is fully and completely God. God the Father is fully and completely God. God the Holy Spirit is fully and completely God. Yet there is only one God. In our world, with our limited human experience, it's tough to understand the Trinity. But from the beginning we see God this way in Scripture.

Notice the plural pronouns "us" and "our" in Genesis 1:26 -- Then God said, "Let us make man in *our* image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground."

Although not a complete list, here is some additional Scripture that shows God is one, in Trinity:

- "Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!"
(Deuteronomy. 6:4)
- "I am the LORD, and there is no other; Besides Me there is no God." (Isaiah. 45:5)
- There is no God but one. (1 Corinthians. 8:4)
- After being baptized, Jesus went up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove, and coming upon Him, and behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well-pleased." (Matt. 3:16-17)

- "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 28:19)
- Jesus said: "I and the Father are one." (John 10:30)
- "He who has seen Me has seen the Father." (John 14:9)
- "He who beholds Me beholds the One who sent Me." (John 12:45)
- If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him. (Rom. 8:9)
- "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife; for that which has been conceived in her is of the Holy Spirit." (Matt. 1:20)
- And the angel answered and said to her [Mary], "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; and for that reason the holy offspring shall be called the Son of God." (Luke 1:35)
- [Jesus speaking to His disciples] "And I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may be with you forever; the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it does not behold Him or know Him, but you know Him because He abides with you, and will be in you." ... "If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him, and make Our abode with him." (John 14:16-17, 23)

Upon this Scripturally defended theology, the Church affirms its belief in the Trinity.

Position 4: Doctrine of Divine Presence

The age old question regarding the significance of the bread and the fruit of the vine (grape juice) at the Communion (Lord's Supper, Eucharist) has been a dividing factor for Christians. This ought not to be. It is "communion." That is to say, it is a banquet of unit between believing individuals and their risen Lord. Subsequently, communion is a meal of unity between Christians as they gather around the Lord's Table. The following is a reconciliation of these differences that divide the Body of Christ, and between themselves as they gather around the table. How do we reconcile this difference?

The Roman Catholic Church takes the stand called Transubstantiation. Transubstantiation is understood as the priest officiating at the altar, and the held belief that the bread actually becomes the physical body of Christ. Furthermore, those who hold to the belief of transubstantiation believe that the fruit of the vine actually is transformed into the blood of Christ. Although in essence, this seems true, the reality is that it is not true. There is no molecular change that takes place. The bread and juice or wine remain physically the same.

Martin Luther, who at one time was a Roman Catholic priest, came a little further in his understanding called Consubstantiation. That is that it is "in, by, with, through, and under" the bread that you get the body of Christ. It is not the body, but it represents the body of Christ. The same is true in Luther's view of the juice or wine—it is the representation of the blood of Christ but is not actually the blood of Christ. This does not answer any questions. To the thinking modern mind it only confuses what is already difficult to understand. Zwingli, the Swiss Reformation leader, went a bit too far when he said that the bread and the cup were merely symbols. This is not true either. It is far more than just a symbol.

The key to understanding The Divine Presence is found in the story of Jesus meeting the disciples on the Road to Emmaus on Resurrection Day in the evening (Luke 24). They did not recognize who Jesus was until He broke the bread, blessed the bread, and gave it to them.

How wonderful to be present for the Lord's Supper after the Resurrection with Jesus Himself celebrating! At that moment they recognized Him. Luke says, "Their eyes were opened." The Greek word used is "*epiginosko*" which means to fully perceive or discern. The word also implies a participation in that which is perceived. How wonderfully this coincides with Paul's statement that we participate in Christ's body and blood (1 Corinthians 10). The word Paul uses is "*koinonia*." This means a sharing in the realization of the effects of the broken body and the shed blood. The bread and the juice are the outward sign, that is to say the physical focus point between eternal verities and experienced realities.

It is at this point, always, that our inadequate intelligence must enter the realms of faith. If Christ's body was only killed on the Cross, we would not have redemption because of the broken body. But that physical death is the realization point between things of eternity (redemption) and things of earthly cognition (a dead body). So it is with the bread and juice. They are the realization point between eternity and time. The communion experience could no more take place without the physical bread and juice than could the atonement without the physical body of Jesus, the Incarnate of the Living God dying experientially as well as positionally.

Let us accept these mysteries by faith, as a Realization Doctrine. How it happens is of no significance. The reality is what matters. So, as the sanctification we recognize the Realization of the body and blood of Jesus occurring where the physical materials are the essential means of causation at the point of eternal reality becoming time/space sphere reality.

Where we have always arrived at confusion is when we try to go beyond the mystery that Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ shall come again. What is attempted to be explained humbly is the inward unknowable (in human terms) reality. So, finally, the real questions in one's

personal reflections during communion should be : When engaging in the Lord's Supper, using the bread and fruit of the vine, do you perceive Jesus Christ? Do you participate or commune in the reality of the Divine Presence of Jesus Christ? This is the inward grace for which the outward sign mysteriously participates. This is Christ's body broken for you, and this is His blood shed for you. That is all we have to know, perceive, realize and be connected. Leave the unknowable for those who like to worry about many angels can dance on the head of a pin.

Upon this Scripturally defended theology, the Church affirms its belief in the realization of the bread and fruit of the vine as the body and blood of Jesus Christ.

Book of Worship (W)

W-Article 1 Authority

1.1 General Authority

1. The Book of Worship sets forth the official form and wording for worship which shall serve as a guide for all Fellowship Groups, Churches, Missions and other Subdivisions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation. Licensed and Ordained Elders, Deacons, Seminarians, Curates and Laity, Officers as agents of the Church are subject to the freedom enumerated below:
2. In their jurisdiction, Elders serving as Pastors shall reserve all rights in matters of Worship and Theology, subject to review and adjudication of the Minister's Fellowship.
3. It shall be the discretion of the Elders and Bishops to use alternative forms and wording but with special attention being given to the content and theological representations.

1.2 Extemporaneous Statements

1. Extemporaneous or prepared statements shall be encouraged, to present personal statements reflecting their own understanding and commitments to the vows being taken.

W-Article 2 Liturgical Colors

2.1. General Statements

1. As God has flooded the earth and sky with color, so the Church has sensed the symbolic use of color in Worship.

2. Color helps to emphasize the meaning of the Church seasons, teaching the Gospel through the eye. If a system of Liturgical Colors is used, the following outlines their meanings.

2.2. Liturgical Colors and Meaning

1. **WHITE** is the symbol of purity, joy, and the bright light of truth. It is used in the seasons relating to our Lord, such as Christmas Day, Epiphany and the Resurrection of Christ. It is also used for Baptism, Confirmation, Ordination of Deacons, Marriage, Thanksgiving, Anniversaries, Dedication Festivals, and for Christian Burial.
2. **VIOLET** or **PURPLE** is a symbol of penitence, watching and fasting. It is used in the seasons of Advent and Lent. It is also used in Vigils, Wakes, and Funerary Processions.
3. **RED** is the symbol of Christ's precious blood, and also of the Holy Spirit. It is also used for the common days of Holy Week and Pentecost. It is also used in connection with the Feast Days of the Martyrs, and for the ordination of all Elders, Ministers and Bishops.
4. **GREEN** is the symbol of Hope, Life, and New Growth. It is used for the common seasons following Epiphany and Pentecost.
5. **BLUE**, the color of Christ's Royal Priesthood. It is also a symbol of Divine Authority and the Believer being drawn nigh to the heavenly throne of Christ the King. In our denomination Blue is used for the Festival of Christ the King and the common days following.
6. **BLACK** is the color of our separation from God. It is through this color we are reminded of humankind's fall and our inherent frailty

as Believers. It is used exclusively for Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

2.3. Usage

1. These colors are used for the paraments, or coverings on the Communion Table, the Dorsal or wall hangings behind crosses, the pulpit and/or lectern.
2. Liturgical colors may be worn as stoles by the Elders; and Elders serving as Pastors and/or Bishops and Deacons.
3. Seminarians are not allowed to wear Liturgical colored stoles until they participate in the Rite of Ordination. After the Seminarian has been ordained by the laying on of hands and prayer, the Bishop shall place a red ordination stole over the shoulders of the Seminarian signifying the impartation of authority, responsibility, and accountability of an Elder of the Church of Jesus Christ.
4. Clergy attire such as shirts and robes may be worn by all Elders in any color EXCEPT Purple.
5. The color purple in clergy attire is reserved exclusively for Bishops. There shall be no exception to this rule.

W-Article 3 The Rule and Order of Corporate Worship

3.1 Authority

1. All authority of the Rule and Order of Corporate Worship in the Church rests solely in the Person and work of Jesus Christ, established in the Canon of Scripture.
2. This authority is expressed through unctions and movements of the Holy Spirit (including but not limited to: preaching, teaching, reading Scripture, prayer, drama, music, dancing, and praise).
3. Realization of this authority and Worship Experiences for all members shall be held and conducted by Elders, Deacons, Seminarians, Curates and Bishops.

3.2 General Statements

1. In Corporate Worship we unite ourselves with other like-minded saints to acknowledge the Holiness of God, to hear God's Word, to offer Prayer, and to celebrate the Sacraments and other Rites of the Church.
2. An analysis of the various liturgical forms in use today will reveal a generally universal inclusion of the principal elements established and accepted over the centuries and suggested by Scripture. Whether Worship is constructed in a free (non-liturgical) form, or in a formal (liturgical) form, these elements shall be present in the Corporate worship of the Fellowship Groups, Churches, Missions and other Subdivisions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
3. It is encouraged that each Elder set the tone of worship whether it be formal or free forms of Worship. The tone of shall be the ongoing experience of all Fellowship Groups, Churches Missions and other Subdivisions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation.
4. The supervision of all forms of Worship shall be the express domain of the Elders and Bishops.

3.3 Elements of Corporate Worship

1. Preparation of the Elders for Worship should be done through solidity of prayer in seclusion from the congregation before Worship.
2. Following personal preparation the elements of Corporate Worship include:
 - a. Adoration, Praise and Thanksgiving;
 - b. Reading and Proclamation of God's Word;
 - c. Affirmation of Faith and Testimony;
 - d. Penitence (Confession), Oblation, Intercession, and Petition;
 - e. Sharing of Concerns;

- f. Inclusion of the Sacrament of Believer's Baptism and the other Rites of the Church as appropriate;
- g. The Celebration of the Sacrament of Holy Communion, following the adequate preparation.

3.4 Hymns of Praise

1. Since Psalms, Hymns and Spiritual Songs are essential “handmaidens of the Bride of Christ,” they should be carefully planned with competence and a sense of solemnity insofar as the Holy Spirit dictates.
2. Armatures as well as professionals from the congregation and community should be encouraged to participate in musical talents, congregational singing, readings, and public prayer for it is an essential part of the Worship experience.
3. Any elements of Worship may be sung, in addition to hymns, responses, and anthems, including Cantoring of portions of the Liturgy insofar as the preset Worship tone of the congregation dictates.
4. In addition to the human voice, other instruments shall be used insofar as is possible.

3.5 Records of Worship

1. It is essential that a record be kept of corporate worship in the form of bulletins, outlines, or a registry of worship which is included or maintained with the Book of Registry

3.6 The Principal Liturgy

1. Below is the suggested Order of Worship
2. [*Items in brackets and italicized are comments or refer to a standardized portion of the Worship Service*]
3. Title information may be included following musical items

Celebration in Worship and Praise

The Family of God gathers in Praise and Thanksgiving

(* Indicates Congregation Standing as people are able)

**(For the comfort of latecomers, please reserve the back rows for them
until the hymn of praise)**

*[It is expected that all leaders in the Worship Experience gather with the
Pastor for prayer and Meditation prior to entering the Worship Service]*

Music for Meditation

Let us prepare our hearts, minds and souls for worship in The Spirit of God.

*[Instruments, Tapes, etc., providing an inspirational mood/ or meditative
atmosphere in which worshipers may gather]*

Prelude

*[Specifically focusing worshipers in preparation for their Worship
Experience]*

Welcome

[Greeting Worshipers, welcoming Newcomers and introducing Introit]

Introit

[To be sung by the congregation]

Praise and Worship

**[Music to engage Worshipers in dynamic praise and reflective worship
including contemporary and traditional]**

***Prayer of Blessing**

Bless the Lord, O My Soul,

And All That is within me, Bless His Holy Name

[For The Resurrection Celebration, add: He Is Risen. He Is Risen Indeed!]

*Prayer of Invocation

[A prayer that invokes the blessing of God in our Worship]

*Hymn of Praise

[May be used as a processional Hymn for Elders]

*Psalm

[read by one voice, responsively, or in unison]

*Gloria Patri

The Family of God Affirms Its Faith and Testimony

*Affirmation of Faith

[Traditionally:

First Sunday – Law and Summary of the Law

Second Sunday – Apostle' Creed

Third Sunday – Ambassadors Affirmation of Faith

Fourth Sunday – Nicene Creed

Fifth Sunday – Other Creed]

(Please be Seated)

Special Music

Testimony of the People

[An opportunity for Confession or Intervention]

*Passing of the Peace

Leader: The Peace and Blessing of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you
Always

All: And also With you.

[A time for the congregation to greet one another with a hug, holy kiss, or handshake]

Fellowship Hymn (Chorus Only)

[A time to regather]

The Family of God Listens To God's Word

Old Testament Lesson or First Lesson

[Read by a member of the congregation]

Special Music(or Hymn, or Presentation)

New Testament Lesson or Second Lesson

[Preferably read by a congregation member]

*Hymn

[Reflective of the Lesson]

The Family of God Presents its Offerings

Announcements or Concerns of the People

Receiving of Tithes, Offerings and Gifts

[responsive hymn]

Anthem

[Time for the Choir and Ushers to Move out-of-the-way]

*Doxology

Presentation of Our gifts and the Elements of Holy Communion

*Prayer of Dedication

(Please Remain Standing for the Gospel Lesson)

The Family of God Responds to the Gospel

*Gospel Lesson [Read by Celebrant or Preacher]

Celebrant Concludes: This is the Word of The Lord

Response: Thanks Be To God.

(Children's Ministry recesses to...)

Sermon

_____Preaching

The Family of God Comes in Confessions

Invitation to the Altar

**You are invited to pray silently, to join in prayerful singing, to
acknowledge Christ as your Personal Savior or to come forward for
intercessory Prayer**

Hymns at the Cross

General Confession

[Recitation of the Kyrie]

Lord Have Mercy on Us

Christ, Have Mercy on us

Lord Have Mercy on us.

Assurance of Pardon

The Lord is faithful and just to forgive us our sins.

Unison: By His grace and Precious Blood we are forgiven.

The Family of God Celebrates in Holy Communion

Preparation Hymn

Holy Communion [Article 9]

We Practice an Open Communion. Anyone who accepts Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord is welcome at the Lord's Supper. Church Membership is not required. Grape juice is served to the left. Wafers are served to the Right. Following the directions of the Ushers, please come forward down the center aisle and return to your seat by the side aisles [adjust according to local usage].

The Family of God Departs to Serve in the World

*Closing Hymn

Postlude

W-Article 4 General Confessions*Confession 1*

Almighty and merciful Father; we have erred and strayed from Your ways like lost sheep. We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts. We have offended against Your holy laws. We have left undone those things which we out to have done' and we have done those things which we out not to have done;and there is no health in us. But You O Lord, have mercy upon us, miserable offenders. Spare those, O God, who confess their faults. Restore those who are penitent' according to your promises declared to us in Christ Jesus our Lord. And Grant, O most merciful Father, for His sake, that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous and sober life, to the glory of your Holy Name. Amen.

Confession 2

Almighty God: In Jesus Christ You called us to be a servant people, but we do not do what You command. We are often silent when we should speak, and useless when we could be useful. We are lazy servants, timid and heartless, who turn neighbors away from Your love. Have mercy on us, O God, and, though we do not deserve your care, forgive us, and free us from sin; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Confession 3

Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed; we have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We pray You of Your mercy; forgive what we have been; amend what we are; direct what we shall be; that we may delight in Your Will, and walk in Your ways, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Confession 4

Have mercy upon us, O God, according to Your loving kindness: according to the multitude of Your tender mercies blot out our transgressions. Wash us thoroughly from our iniquities, and cleanse us from our sin, for we acknowledge our transgressions and our sin is ever before us. Create in us clean hearts, O God, and renew a right spirit within us. Cast us not away from Your presence, and take not Your Holy Spirit from us. Amen.

Confession 5

I believe that Jesus Christ is Your only begotten Son, and that He became a human being, shed His blood and died on the Cross to clean away my sin that was separating me from You. I believe that He rose from the dead, physically, to give me now life. Lord Jesus, I invite You to come into my heart. I accept you as my Savior and Lord. I confess my sins, and ask You to wash them away. I believe that you have come and are living in me right now. Thank you, Jesus! Amen.

W-Article 5 The Agapé Hymn

5.1 Origin

The following hymn was inspired by the Holy Spirit and has been used since the first service of Ambassadors of Christ, held on 10 May 1981 in St. Louis Missouri.

5.2 Usage

1. The Agapé Hymn shall be used by all Fellowship Groups, Churches, Missions, and other Subdivisions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation
2. The use of The Agapé Hymn is a symbol of our unity in worship, reflecting the unity we have with Christ, especially as the closing

hymn at the conclusion of the celebration of the Sacrament of
Communion.

5.3 The Agapé Hymn

5.4 Words for Projection

God of glory, holds me now;
God of glory, holds me now;
God of glory, holds me now;
God of glory, holds me now

Jesus saves me, Saves me now;
Jesus saves me, Saves me now;
Jesus saves me, Saves me now;
Jesus saves me, Saves me now;

Spirit fills me, fills me now;
Spirit fills me, fills me now;
Spirit fills me, fills me now;
Spirit fills me, fills me now;

Alle--luia, Alleluia
Alle--luia, Alle-luia
Alle--luia, Alleluia
Alle--luia, Al-le-lu-ia

W-Article 6 The Ordination Hymn

6.1 Origin

The Ordination Hymn was first used at the Rite of Ordination on 11
October 1981.

6.2 Usage

The Ordination Hymn shall be used at all Rites of Licensure and Ordination, and may be spoken or sung.

6.3 The Hymn

6.4 The Hymn for Projection

Holy Spirit, sent of God,
 anoint Your servant now;
 Fill this heart with grace and truth
 as we before You bow.

Word of God impress this mind
 and move these lips to speak;
 Telling boldly, "Blood was shed
 that saves the strong and weak."

Lord of love, Your Kingdom come
 on earth as heav'n above;
 Make us feel Your presence now
 and bless our lives with love.

Shepherd of the shepherds move,
 Your ministers inspire;
 Be in us and stay with us
 and set our wills on fire.

W-Article 7 Official Worship Books

7.1 Scriptures

1. The New Revised Standard Version Bible © 1989 by, Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America, published by Abingdon

Press, Nashville Tennessee shall be the most used Bible translation used by Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, its Churches, Missions, and other Subdivisions

2. Other translations consistent with non-cultist biblical scholarship shall be allowed at the discretion of the Elders.
3. The meaning of this statement is not a dictate of “a true Canon of Scripture” but is the primarily accepted translation used within Ambassadors of Christ Fellowship Groups, Churches Missions, and Subdivisions of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation. Elders are to be sober and watchful to reject texts presented as Scripture but are cultish in nature (Example: Jehovah’s Witnesses, Mormons, The Way International, etc.)
4. To assist Elders and Members in locating good translations of the Bible, Ambassadors of Christ recommend the following list:
 - a. American Standard Version (ASV)
 - b. American King James Version (AKJV)
 - c. Amplified Bible (AMP)
 - d. ArtScroll Tanakh (Old Testament)
 - e. Bible in Basic English (BBE)
 - f. Children's King James Version CKJV)
 - g. Christian Standard Bible (CSB)
 - h. Contemporary English Version (CEV)
 - i. Darby Bible DBY
 - j. Douay–Rheims Bible DRB
 - k. English Standard Version ESV
 - l. Geneva Bible GEN
 - m. Good News Bible GNB
 - n. Holman Christian Standard Bible HCSB
 - o. International Standard Version ISV
 - p. King James Version KJV
 - q. New American Standard Bible NASB
 - r. New English Translation (NET)
 - s. New International Version NIV
 - t. New King James Version NKJV
 - u. New Revised Standard Version NRSV

7.2 Hymnal

1. The Hymnal titled “Hymns for the Family of God,” Paragon Associates, Inc., Nashville TN, 1976 is the primary recommended hymnal of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, its Churches, Missions and other Subdivisions.
2. Other hymnals and songbooks consistent with the Catechism and Statement of Faith may be used in addition to the above at the discretion of the Elders.

7.3 Inclusive Language

1. All publications of Ambassadors of Christ General Convocation, its Churches, Missions and other Subdivisions shall employ inclusive language when referring to humanity, but shall maintain the cultural/linguistic gender language when referring to the persons of the Trinity.

W-Article 8 The Order for The Sacrament of Baptism

8.1 Ordering of Baptism

1. The Candidate for Baptism shall be adequately prepared by an Elder, Leader or Bishop for the Sacrament of Water Baptism.
2. An Elder or Bishop shall preside as Celebrant for this Sacrament.
3. The Sacrament shall be observed in connection with a regular or special Service of Worship, which shall include the Celebration of the Sacrament of Communion; unless the service is held outdoors.
4. In the event that the Celebration of the Sacrament of Baptism is held at a river or other suitable body of water; and weather permits, a picnic lunch should be provided followed by the regular worship service where the Celebration of the Sacrament of Communion will be observed.

8.2 *Unusual Circumstances*

1. Although this Sacrament, as an act of the Church, is ordinarily to be administered with the participation of the full Congregation, there may be circumstances which justify the administration of the Sacrament apart from public worship, particularly to the sick.
2. In such situations, all should remember that the Sacrament is not administered as an “emergency measure to ensure salvation, but as a means of demonstration for the redemptive power of Jesus Christ.
3. If possible, Officers and other Members of the Congregation should be present to manifest the communal nature of the Sacrament.
4. Privately conducted Sacraments of Baptism shall be recognized publicly in an appropriate manner at a regularly scheduled Service of Worship to share the witness of the seal in Christ with the Church and to charge the Family of God to uphold the person in their life in Christ.

8.3 *Registry*

1. For each person entering into the Sacrament of Baptism, three copies of the Certificate of Baptism shall be executed.
2. One shall be given to the person Baptized, one shall be entered in the Book of Registry of the local Congregation and the General Convocation.

8.4. *The Liturgy for the Sacrament of Baptism*

Officiant offers words of welcome

Officiant: Let us pray,

[a prayer is offered by the Officiant]

Oh Lord God, we have come into this place, having been buried with with Jesus in the waters of baptism and raised into new life in Him, by faith in the saving grace of God received in and through Christ Jesus alone, and having been clothed in Christ; we have come together to celebrate with [Candidate's name(s)] to celebrate in the observance of Holy Baptism. Lord, we beseech you to open up Heaven, and pour out Your Holy Spirit upon this testimony of the inward grace of salvation in Christ. By your command we have gathered together in the authority that you have imparted to those who believe to baptize in the Name of God, the Father; God, the Son, and God, the Holy Spirit. Jesus be our special guest as we honor your command, In Jesus' Name, Amen.

Officiant: Will the sponsors for the Candidates for the Sacrament of Holy Baptism please present your Candidate(s).

Sponsor: I present [Candidate's Full Name] to receive the Sacrament of Holy Baptism

Officiant: [To the Candidate(s)] Do you desire to be baptized?

Candidate(s): I do

Officiant: Do you renounce Satan and all the spiritual forces of wickedness that rebel against God?

Candidate(s): I do

Officiant: Do you renounce the evil powers of this world which corrupt and destroy the creatures of God?

Candidate(s): I do

Officiant: Do you renounce all sinful desires that draw you away from the love of God?

Candidate(s): I do

Officiant: Do you accept Jesus Christ as your Savior?

Candidate(s): I do

Officiant: Do you put your whole trust in His grace and love?

Candidate(s): I do

Officiant: Do you promise to follow and obey Him as your Lord?

Candidate(s): I do

Officiant [Addressing the Congregation]: Will you who witness This covenant, do all in your power to support [this/these] Children of God in personally living in Christ?

Congregation: We Will

Officiant: Let us join together in commitment and renewing our own baptismal covenants

All: [In Unison] :

I believe in God, the Omnipotent, Creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord.

He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the
Virgin Mary.

He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried.

He descended to the dead.

On the third day he rose again.

He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of God the Father.

He will come again to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Holy Universal Christian Church, the
Communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body,
and the life everlasting.

I will continue in the Church's teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in the life of prayer.

I will persevere in resisting evil, and, whenever I fall into sin, repent and return to the Lord.

I will proclaim by word and example the Good News of God in Christ.

I will seek to serve all persons in the love of Christ, loving my neighbor as myself.

I will strive for justice and peace among all people, and respect the dignity of every human being.

All this I commit with God's help. Amen.

Officiant: Let us now pray for this (These) person(s) to receive the Sacrament of new birth.

All:

Deliver this/these child(ren) of God, O Lord, from the way of sin and death. Open the eyes of the heart to Your grace and truth. Fill him/her/them with Your Holy and life-giving Spirit. Keep them/him/her in the faith and communion of Your Holy Church. Teach them/him/her to love others in the power of the Holy Spirit. Send them/him/her into the world in witness of Your love. Bring them/him/her to the fullness of Your glorious peace sanctifying grace.

Officiant: Grant, O Lord that all who are baptized into the death of Jesus Christ Your Son, may live in the power of His resurrection and look for His coming again in glory, Who lives and reigns now and forever.

We thank You, O God, for the water of Baptism. In it we are buried with Christ in His death. By it we share in His resurrection. Through it the Holy Spirit seals our rebirth. Therefore, in joyful obedience to Your Son, we bring into His fellowship those who come to Him by faith, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

(While touching the Water)

Now sanctify this water, we pray You, by the power of your Holy Spirit, that those who are here seal; there cleansing from sin and reconciliation to God in Jesus Christ may continue forever in the risen life of our Savior. To him who is enthroned, to You; our Saviour, and to You, Holy Spirit, be all honor and glory, now and forever. Amen.

(Each Candidate is now presented by name to the officiant to be baptized by immersion, saying:

(Candidate's Full Name) I Baptize you in the name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Let us Pray:

God in heaven, we thank you that by water and the Holy Spirit You have bestowed upon this (these) Your servant(s) the seal of the forgiveness of sin, and have raised them/him/her to the new life of grace. Sustain them/him/her/, O Lord, in Your Holy Spirit. Give them/him/her an inquiring and discerning heart, the courage to will and to persevere, a Spirit to know and to love You, and the gift of joy and wonder in all Your works. Amen.

Officiant (with oil- making the sign of the cross,) (Name) You are sealed by the Holy Spirit in Baptism and marked as Christ's own forever. Amen.

EDUCATION