

We, the ministers and members of the Church of God in Christ, who holds the Holy Scriptures as contained in the old and new Testaments as our rule of faith and practice, in accordance with the principles of our faith and government, do hereby amend and modify our By-Laws and Constitution, to-wit: All former Articles and Constitution shall be modified to read as follows:

(Article I, Change of Name)

That the corporate name of the incorporation be changed from the General Board of the Church of God in Christ of America to "CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST."

(Article 2 Senior Bishop)

Nothing in this Constitution shall operate to deprive Elder C. H. Mason, 1121 Mississippi Avenue, Memphis, Tenn., the present Chief Apostle, Founder and Senior Bishop, of the authority he now holds as Chief Apostle of the Church of God in Christ.

(Article 3 Local Churches)

The membership of the local church shall consist of all who have been set in order as a church by those authorized to do so, after having declared their faith in Jesus Christ as their Savior, and their belief in our doctrines, and their willingness to submit to our Government.

Local churches may be set in order by the overseer having jurisdiction, or an Elder authorized by him.

(Article 4 Disorganization of Churches)

When it seems clear to a State Overseer that a church set in order should not continue as such, it may be disorganized by action and formal notice of the board of Bishops. In case a local church becomes disorganized, any such property that exists may in no way be diverted to other purposes, but shall pass to the control of the State Board for the use of the _____ Church at large as the State Board shall direct, and the Trustees holding such property for the disorganized church, shall sell or dispose of the same only on order, and under the direction of the appointed agent or the State Board and turn over such funds to said agent.

No Board of Trustees may divert property from the use of the "Church of God in Christ." No Board of Trustees shall refuse the pulpit or the use of a local "Church of God in Christ," for religious or other purposes to a duly authorized officer of the General Assembly or his representative or representatives.

(Article 5 Withdrawal of Churches)

No local church may withdraw as a body from the "Church of God in Christ or in any way sever its relation thereto, except by provision of the General Assembly.

(Article 6 Credentials of Delegates)

Secretaries of the several State Assemblies, shall furnish certificates] of elections of the delegates severally elected to the General Assembly, and shall also send a certificate of such election to the General Assembly, Secretary of the Church.

(Article 7 The General Assembly)

The General Assembly is the only doctrine expressing, and law-making authority of the Church. The General Assembly shall be composed of the ordained elders, of the General Secretary, of the General Treasurer, and such lay delegation as the General Assembly may prescribe

The General Assembly shall meet annually at the time and place designated by the Board of Bishops.

The General Assembly shall elect by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting, two or more Bishops who shall hold office during good behavior, and shall have general supervision of the Church, and who shall compose the Board of Bishops, provided, however, that Elder C. H. Mason, the present Senior Bishop, shall retain his present power and authority during his life-time but upon his death said authority shall revert to the Board of Bishops.

The General Assembly shall elect a general Board composed of ten members or more who shall be trustees in trust for the Corporation, and shall compose the Board of Home and Foreign Missions, Publications, Church Extension, Education and Ministerial Relief. Said Board shall transact all business affairs of the Church, and any other matters that may properly come before it, subject to the approval of the General Assembly, provided, however that all policies and plans of operation must have the approval of the Board of Bishops.

Said Board shall be presided over by one of the Bishops. The General Assembly shall be presided over by the Bishops jointly and severally, the General Assembly shall elect its other officers, and organize itself for the transaction of its business according to its wisdom and pleasure.

The General Assembly shall elect a General Secretary who shall hold office during good behavior, and who shall be the secretary of the General Assembly and the board of Bishops. The General Assembly shall elect a General Treasurer who shall hold office during good behavior.

The General Assembly shall elect by lot from among the male Elders of the church as many Bishops as it may deem necessary who shall hold office during good behavior, and who shall constitute the board of Bishops, provided, however, that they shall be appointed by the present Senior Bishop during his life time but upon his decease they shall be elected by the General Assembly as provided in this constitution.

(Article 8 Extra Session of The General Assembly)

The Board of Bishops or a majority thereof shall have power to call an extra session of the General Assembly, in case of emergency, and to fix the time and place thereof.

(Article 9 Powers and Restrictions of the General Assembly)

The power and authority of the General Assembly to legislate for the Church, to make such rules and regulations over all the departments as it may deem best, is limited by the following restrictions:

- (1) It shall not set aside or change any of our articles of faith, nor shall it establish any new doctrines contrary to the doctrines that now exist in the church.
- (2) The General Assembly shall not abolish our representative form of government nor the General Superintendency, nor deprive it of any of the authority given it by this Constitution.

[]No person shall be seated in the General Assembly who has not been duly elected as a delegate or an alternate by a recognized State Assembly of the Church of God in Christ.

- (3) The General Assembly shall not deprive our ministers or members of a fair orderly trial if an appeal In case of conviction.

(Article 10 Rules or Order Of The General Assembly)

The General Assembly shall adopt rules of order governing its manner of organization, procedure, committees, and all other matters pertaining to the conduct of its business. It shall be the judge of the elections qualifications of its own members.

(Article 11 Bishops of the Church Of God in Christ)

The Bishops will be appointed by the Senior Bishop and may be removed for cause, by the Senior Bishop or his appointee.

The Bishops shall have general supervision of the Church of God in Christ, in their respective State. The Bishop, jointly and severally shall preside over the General Assembly. One Bishop shall preside over the general board of the church. One Bishop shall preside over each state assembly, or should he be providentially hindered shall make arrangements for such presidency.

The Bishops with such Elders as they shall appoint shall ordain those who have been elected to be Elders. The Bishop presiding over the state Assembly shall assign Pastors to the several charges within the bounds of his jurisdiction.

(Article 11 Continued)

The Bishops may appoint District Superintendents over the several districts within their jurisdiction. The Bishop presiding over the State Assembly shall decide all questions of order, subject to an appeal to the General Assembly, but all questions of law shall be decided by the General Assembly.

(Article 12 Board of Bishops)

The Bishops shall organize as a Board and shall arrange for an assign to the members thereof, the work over which they shall have special jurisdiction. The Board of Bishops shall have supervision of all boards and the plans adopted by any board must have the approval of the Board of Bishops.

The Board of Bishops shall constitute a Board to arrange courses of study for licensed ministers. The Board of Bishops shall have the power to do anything else in the service of the Church not otherwise provided for, according to their wisdom and in harmony with the Constitution of the Church,

(Article 13 The General Board)

The General board shall be composed of members as follows: The General Secretary, General Treasurer, and five or more members elected by the General Assembly to serve until the final adjournment of the next General Assembly. A member of the Board of Bishops shall preside over the General board.

(Article 14 Trustees of Local Churches)

All Trustees of local Church property shall be members of the "Church of God in Christ, " In all cases where the law requires a special mode of election of Church trustees, that mode shall be strictly followed. Where no particular mode or, election is required by law, the trustees shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting of the Church, or a meeting called for that purpose, announcement for such meeting having been given.

Before real estate is purchased for the use of the local church, the trustees shall see that the church in all places where the law will permit is incorporated, and that the Articles of Incorporation shall provide that the local church be subject to the government of the "Church of God in Christ," as from time to time authorized and declared by the General Assembly of said church that the business affairs of the church shall be managed by a Board of Trustees elected and organized according to the provisions of said government.

Such articles shall further provide that such corporation shall have power to acquire, hold, sell and convey property both real and personal. When this is done, all property acquired shall be deeded directly to the church in its corporate name. It is required that all deeds conveying property shall contain the following trust clause.

"In Trust that said premises shall be maintained and disposed of as a place of worship for the ministry and membership of the "Church of God in Christ," subject to the doctrine, laws and usages of said Church as from time to time declared by the

General Assembly of said Church”

In no case may the Trustees mortgage or encumber the real estate to meet the current expenses of the church, and they may in no case transfer the real estate of the church without the written consent of the church, and the written consent of the Bishop, having jurisdiction, for their faithfulness to their trust they shall be amenable to the local church to which they shall make annual report.

(Article 15 Trials)

Deacons of the Local Church shall be appointed and removed by the Pastor. Local churches may be tried and disorganized in the manner as herein after set forth, when charged with any of the following offenses and found guilty:

Persistently violating the provisions of the law enacted by the General Assembly, or refusing to conform to the legal requirements of the constituted authorities of the Church. Sustaining and supporting a Pastor who teaches doctrines contrary to the articles of faith of our church.

Sanctioning immoral practices by members and refusing to take legal steps prescribed by the constitution for the trial of persons charged with the commission of such offenses;

When any local church by official act or declaration or by non-performance of any of the official duties imposed upon it by the government of this church as found in our constitution, by-laws, shall offend in any of the foregoing particulars, any member of such church, with the consent of the Bishop having jurisdiction, may file a complaint with the State Board, charging that such church has committed one or more of the foregoing offenses. Thereupon, the State Board may appoint a court of five Elders to summon witnesses, to hear evidence on behalf of the prosecution and the defense, and to render judgment in the case.

Twenty days before the trial of such church, the time of which shall be fixed by the court, written notice shall be served upon the church board of the Church against which complaint is made; such notice shall give the time and place of such trial, and shall contain a correct copy of the complaint and charges stated therein.

The Church so charged shall have the right to be represented by counsel at the trial, such counsel to be a member in good standing of the “Church of God in Christ” The State Board shall appoint an Elder of the Church to conduct the prosecution.

In case the Church so charged shall be found guilty by the court it shall be disorganized by the board of Bishops and Board, unless it satisfies the members of the Board that it repents of its evil way, and will conform to the government and faith of our Church, and recognize the constituted authorities of the Church.

All members of the churches convicted as above who repent or disclaim their guilt of the offenses for which said church may be disorganized, shall be entitled to

letters in good standing by the Bishop and may unite with other churches of our faith and order.

Members of local churches shall be tried by the Pastor and the local church with the right appeal to the State Board, whose decision shall be final. An ordained Elder shall be tried by the State Board with the right of appeal to the General Council.

All charges against an Elder shall be in writing, signed by his accuser or accusers. He shall be allowed counsel which counsel shall be a member of the "Church of God in Christ". Should the counsel be guilty of improper conduct, the court may refuse to hear him, and also punish him. In case the Elder so accused be found guilty by the unanimous judgment of the Court, after having been tried, according to the rules of evidence, judgment of the court shall be pronounced; such judgment may take the form of expulsion from the church and ministry, or that suspension for a limited time from his membership and ministry.

The trials of a bishop shall be that of an elder with these exceptions; He shall be tried before the General Counsel with the right of the General Assembly. All trials shall be held according to the following scriptures: Deut.17:6; I Tim.5:19; 2nd Cor.13:1.

(ARTICLE 16 LOCAL MINISTERS)

A member of a local church to be licensed to preach must first be recommended to the Bishop having jurisdiction, by his pastor and the church of which he is a member. Only an ordained minister may administer water baptism, or the ordinances of the church.

A licensed minister shall be tried by the pastor and church of which he is a member, with the right of appeal to the Bishop or state board.

(Article 17 Political Governments)

We believe that governments are God given institutions for the benefit of mankind. We admonish and exhort our members to honor magistrates, and the powers that be, and to respect and obey the civil laws.

We hereby and herewith declare our loyalty to the President and the Constitution of the United States, and pledge fidelity to the flag for which the Republic stands but as God-fearing, peace-loving and law-abiding people, we only claim our inheritance as American citizens;-namely: to worship God according to the dictates of our own conscience.

We believe that the shedding of human blood, or the taking of human life, is contrary to the teachings of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, and as a body, we are averse to war in all its forms.

ARTICLE 18 AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION

The provisions of this Constitution may be altered or amended by two-third majority vote of all

the members of the General Assembly, present and voting, with the exception of Sections 1, 2, and 3 of Article of this Constitution. As soon as alterations or amendments shall have been adopted as herein before provided, the result of the vote shall be announced by the General Secretary, whereupon, such alterations or amendments shall have full force and effect.

Approved

C. H. Mason
Senior Bishop

Attest

W. B. Holt
General Secretary

We, the undersigned, comprising the board of directors of the General Board of the Church of God in Christ, of America, apply to the State of Tennessee, by virtue of the general laws of the land, for an amendment to said charter of incorporation.

Witness our hands this 29 day of Dec., 1926.

S. T. Samuel
John H. Lee
James Foster
W. B. Holt
A. B. McEwen

STATE OF TENNESSEE
County of Shelby

Personally appeared before me, E. H. Parr Dep. Clerk of the County Court of said County, the within named W. B. Holt, the bargainer, with whom I am personally acquainted, and who acknowledges that he executed the within instrument for the purpose therein contained and the said W. B. Holt subscribing witness to the signatures subscribed to the annexed instrument being first duly sworn, deposed and said that he is personally acquainted with the within named. S. T. Samuel, John H. Lee, James Foster, A. B. McEwen, bargainers, and they acknowledged same in his presence to be their act and deed for the purposes therein contained upon the date it bears,

This 30 day of Dec., 1926

Ed B. Crenshaw, County Court Clerk
By E. H. (Pope) D. C.

STATE OF TENNESSEE
County of Shelby

Filed for Reparation Dec. 30, 1926 at 11:58 o'clock A.M. and noted in Note Book No. 58. Page 102 and was recorded Dec, 30, 1926 in Record Book No. 32, Page 465, Fee \$3.00 Paid.

Ben F. James, Register
T. A. Lannigan, D. R.

We, the undersigned, comprising the board of Directors of the General Board of the Church of God in Christ of America, apply to the State of Tennessee, by virtue of the general laws of the land, for an amendment to said Charter of Incorporation.

Witness our hands this 29 day of Dec., 1926.

S. T. Samuel
John H. Lee
James Foster
W. B. Holt
A. B. McEwen

State of Tennessee
Shelby County

Personally appeared before me, E. H. Parr, Deputy Clerk of the County Court of said County, the within named W. B. Holt, the bargainor, with whom I am personally acquainted, and who acknowledges that he executed the within instrument for the purposes therein contained, and the said W. B. Holt, subscribing witness to the signatures subscribed to the annexed instrument, being first duly sworn, deposed and said that he is personally acquainted with the within named S. T. Samuel, John H. Lee, James Foster, A. B. McEwen, bargainors, and they acknowledged same in his presence to be their act, and deed for the purposes therein contained upon the date it bears.

This 30 day of Dec., 1926.

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Ben James, Register
By Thomas A. Lanigan, D. R.

I, Ernest N. Haston, Secretary of State, do certify that this amendment to charter with certificates attached, the foregoing of which is a true copy, was this day registered and certified to by me,

This December 31, 1926.

Ernest N. Haston,
Secretary of State