

Article VIII-Section B

TRIALS OF PASTORS OF LOCAL CHURCHES

- 1. A Pastor may be tried for the Commission of the following offenses, to wit**
 - (a) Repeated failure to abide by the laws, rules and regulations of the Church Of God In Christ;
 - (b) Misfeasance, malfeasance or nonfeasance, in office;
 - (c) Conviction of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude in a Court of Law.
 - (d) Espousing doctrines repugnant to the Articles of Faith of the Church Of God In Christ;
 - (e) Personal Misconduct
 - (f) Misappropriation or misuse of the funds of the Church;
 - (g) Conduct unbecoming of a Minister of the Gospel
- 2 The procedure for the trial of a local Pastor shall be as follows:**
 - (a) When a majority of the members of the Church Of God In Christ have documented evidence that a Pastor of a local church has committed any or all of the offenses enumerated hereinabove, they may file charges against such Pastor specifically setting out the acts and things complained of The original copy of the charges shall be filed in the office of the Secretary of the Assembly of the Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction of which the Church and Pastor are a pan, or with which they are affiliated, and copies thereof shall be filed in the office of the General Secretary of the Church Of God In Christ at its National Headquarters in Memphis. Tennessee.
 - (b) The Clerk of the Assembly of said Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction shall submit the charges to the Jurisdictional Bishop who shall appoint an Investigating Committee of not less than three (3), not more than five (5). members to examine the facts and ascertain whether there are reason- able grounds for having the Pastor brought to trial.
 - (c) The Investigating Committee shall report its findings and recommendations to the Jurisdictional Bishop, and if it reports that the charges are without merit the trial shall be dismissed by the Jurisdictional Bishop, and notice of the dismissal shall be sent to all interested parties including the General Secretary.
 - (d) If the Investigating Committee finds and determines that the Pastor should be tried it shall submit its recommendations to the Jurisdictional Bishop,

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who shall refer the case to the Elders Council of the respective Ecclesiastical Jurisdiction and the Secretary of the Elders Council shall give written notices to all principal parties and a copy of said notices shall also be filed in the office of the General Secretary at the National Headquarters, Memphis, Tennessee, and said notices shall be given at least twenty (20) days prior to the time the Elders Council set the matter down for trial.

- (e) The Parties shall have the right to be represented by Counsel, who shall be members of the Church Of God In Christ but said Counsel may be advised by non-members of the Church.
- (f) Decisions of the members of the Elders Council by a majority vote shall be necessary to sustain the charges and find the Pastor guilty of committing the alleged offenses.
- (g) In the event the charges are not sustained, the complaint shall be dismissed. But if the charges are sustained, it shall render its decision or enter a Decree, as follows:
 - (1) It may order that the Pastor be placed on probation; or
 - (2) It may suspend the Pastor for a definite period of time; or
 - (3) It may remove him from office and declare the pulpit vacant; or
 - (4) It may render such other decisions or decrees as justice may demand or as it may determine to be in the best interest of the Church Of God In Christ.
- (h) In the event a Pastor is dissatisfied with the decision or decree of the Jurisdictional Elders Council, he may appeal to the General Council by filing notice of appeal within thirty (30) days from the final decision of the Elders Council of the respective Jurisdiction.
- (i) The General Council shall review the case and render its decision by a majority vote of the delegates and members present and voting
- (j) The Jurisdictional Bishop shall execute the orders and decrees of the General Council