

# BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, PART B

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## CHAPTER IV

# OFFICIAL BODIES OF THE CHURCH

### E. General Administration

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## PREAMBLE:

¶ **B/449.1 Introduction.** The Word of God is our standard and guide. It is through the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the wisdom that results from seeking God, that clarity of vision and understanding of function emerges. It is through the confirmation of God's people that vision can become a reality and that the prayers of the saints can result in great movements of God in our world.

The call to become an apostolic movement, a movement of God into the harvest fields of the world, will mean:

A church focused on the message of the cross, the resurrection and the Kingdom of God

A church with sound doctrine, integrating faith and learning

A church with a holy passion, surrendered to the purposes of God

A church which reaches and multiplies across all boundaries: religious, ethnic and national

A church that models Jesus

We believe that the local church is God's instrument to transform society. We believe that local leaders are to be entrusted with the privilege and responsibility of fulfilling our Core Values. This, in short, represents the theological and practical basis for the proposals that follow.

¶ **B/449.2 Our Community Culture.** We are a connectional church. We are strengthened most by our relationships based on truthfulness and grace.

We believe our mission drives everything we do.

We proclaim a grace that is free. Jesus said the crowning work of authentic ministry is this: when the poor have the gospel brought to them. Hence, the destitute and disenfranchised of the world deserve our particular care.

We strive to make the message of the gospel relevant to our culture by remaining faithful to God while showing love and sensitivity to the world.

We accept all who come to us, seeing the most desperate sinner with the potential to become a whole and devoted follower of Jesus.

We see smaller groups and cells within the larger Body of Christ as the best environment for the birth, mentoring, encouragement, and care of new believers.

We view our local churches as mission outposts. Our pastors are appointed not just to a local congregation and building, but to the evangelization of whole communities, towns, or cities.

We see ourselves as an apostolic movement. We are a “sent” people, charged with the task of reaching new territories and new populations of people with the gospel.

We are Wesleyan in our doctrine and in our practice. We value the guidance of the scriptures and the consensus of the Church throughout her history.

We are to be a holy people. Our conduct and our teaching are to reflect the holiness and love of God. We seek nothing less than the healing of mind, body, and soul of all who come under our care.

**¶ B/449.3 Our Core Values.** As people of Wesleyan/Arminian persuasion, focused on living holy lives to the glory of God, we will:

“love the Lord our God with all our heart, soul, mind and strength, and love others as much as we love ourselves” (Mark 12:30-31).

“go to the people of all nations and make them disciples of Jesus” (Matthew 28:19).

**¶ B/449.4 Our Purpose.** To know God and to glorify Him by making Him known.

**¶ B/449.5 Our Strategic Priority.** The Strategic Priority of the Free Methodist Church is to multiply godly, competent leaders. Therefore, the Board of Bishops and every other general church department/entity must focus on this priority. We believe that Bishops should function in at least these three ways:

1. invest in the multiplication of godly, competent leaders who mentor and equip others;
2. form and nurture effective Free Methodist networks that enhance the fulfillment of our core values;
3. promote the vision that every church be a healthy church with Spirit-filled leadership working a plan to fulfill our Expected Outcomes.

**¶ B/449.6 Our Expected Outcomes.** Every church a worshiping community; Every church an enfolding congregation producing disciplined, growing, holy people; Every church a reproducing congregation; Every church regularly reaching the lost for Christ; Every church engaged in our world missionary movement; Every church seeking justice and showing

mercy to the poor and disenfranchised; Every church organizing to best accomplish its purpose and mission; Every church characterized by intercessory prayer.

**¶ B/449.7 Our Non-Negotiables.**

We may not live in violation of the Scriptures.

We may not live in violation of the Articles of Religion, the Constitution, the Membership Covenant, or the Mission of the Free Methodist Church.

Our pastors may not live in violation of their ordination vows. Our leaders may not lead the church in ways which detract or divert from our mission.

**¶ B/449.8 Our Leadership Initiatives.** Placing mission ahead of method, our pastors and churches are free to strategize and minister in ways which fulfill our Expected Outcomes.

**¶ B/449.9 Our Vision for the Local Church.** Every church a healthy church with Spirit filled leadership working a plan to fulfill our Expected Outcomes.

**¶ B/449.10 Our Vision for Conferences and the General Church.** Every conference and the General Church creating an environment that equips and supports the church and its leaders to fulfill our Expected Outcomes.

The Free Methodist Church:

A healthy Biblical community

A holy people

Multiplying disciples, leaders, groups, and churches

“But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9, NIV).

## 1. BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

¶ **B/450.** 1. The Board of Administration shall consist of the U.S. bishops, sufficient additional elders to give a total of twelve clergy (equal representation from each U.S. bishop's area), twelve lay persons (equal representation from each U.S. bishop's area) two representatives from the conferences of mission origin elected in the manner prescribed in Paragraph A/444, Section 2. The Board of Administration will select a secretary of the General Conference from outside the membership of the Board of Administration. This person shall also serve as the secretary of the Board of Administration. The secretary shall serve with voice but no vote, unless his/her vote is needed to establish lay-clergy membership balance. Termination of membership in the Free Methodist Church shall automatically terminate membership on the Board of Administration. No General Conference officer other than the bishops and the secretary shall be a member of the Board of Administration. The Board of Administration shall elect its chair and vice chair from among the members.

2. The Board shall provide rules and regulations for the conduct of its business. *Robert's Rules of Order* in the latest edition shall be the standard of parliamentary procedure in the sessions of the Board of Administration.

¶ **B/451.** 1. The Board of Administration shall have general organizational, promotional, policy making, and supervisory powers over all the activities of the church during the interim between General Conference sessions. It shall meet at least annually and whenever the bishops or one-third of the members shall deem it necessary. A majority of the members elected shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

2. The Board of Administration shall have power to accept resignations, fill vacancies, and remove for cause any of its members during the interim between General Conference sessions, subject to the provisions of the *Book of Discipline*.

3. The Board of Administration shall meet immediately at the close of the General Conference and shall have power to organize itself, including the election of its chair, vice chair, and a nominating committee.

A nominating committee of not less than eight persons, consisting of equal number of ministers and laypersons, shall be elected by the Board of Administration to subsequently nominate the members and chairs of the committees of the Board. The committee may consult the Board of Bishops.

The members of the Board of Administration owe their primary duty to the Board and their secondary duty to the committees to which they have been elected.

4. The Board of Administration shall elect the Board of Directors of The Free Methodist Foundation. Directors shall be laypersons and ministers who are active in the life and work of the Free Methodist Church and who are qualified to administer the business of the Foundation. The Board of Directors of the Foundation may suggest names to the nominating committee of the Board of Administration. The number of members, directors, terms, and provisions for staggered terms shall be as provided for in the bylaws of the Foundation.

A written statement of philosophy of operations shall be prepared by The Free Methodist Foundation for periodic review and approval by the Board of Administration.

- a. The Foundation shall act as trustee for all trusts in which either the Free Methodist Church of North America, or any of its conferences, local churches, ministries, agencies, or departments are designated either as fiduciary or as a beneficiary, as assigned to it from time to time by the Board of Administration, and shall act as trustee of the Pooled Income Fund and all charitable remainder trusts where so designated by the trustor. With respect to all existing trust relationships, the Foundation shall act as the agent for the denomination, and in its place and stead, as trustee, to the extent authorized by the Board of Administration and the Board of Directors of the Free Methodist Church of North America.
- b. Subject to its approved philosophy of operations, the Foundation shall control, carry out, and manage all activities of the denomination relating to estate planning, wills, trusts, estates, and other types of deferred gifts. In this connection, and to the extent permitted by law, it shall have the power to issue charitable annuities.
- c. The Foundation directors shall manage, control, and supervise all investments of the denomination, its departments, subsidiaries, and related agencies, all pension funds, and all other funds which are entrusted to its control for investment and management.
- d. The Foundation shall be the issuer and manager of the Free Methodist Loan Fund. No treasurer of these church funds shall be a member of the Foundation Board of Directors. No member of the Board of Directors shall be eligible to borrow directly or indirectly or to participate in the benefits of any money borrowed from this loan fund. The Free Methodist Foundation shall not invest these funds in any investments except such as are lawful for the investment of trust funds in the state in which

the Free Methodist Foundation may be incorporated.

- e. The Foundation shall report annually to the Board of Administration.

5. The secretary of the Board of Administration shall be nominated by the nominating committee of the Board of Administration. This person shall be the custodian of the General Conference records and journals, and shall keep a record of conscientious objectors reported by the annual conference secretaries. (See Par. A/332, Sec. 3.) It shall be the secretary's duty to make a full report of the proceedings of the Board of Administration to the General Conference.

When the Board of Administration deems it feasible, it shall employ a general church secretary as a denominational executive who shall then assume all the responsibilities and authority of the secretary of the General Conference and other duties as may be assigned by the Board.

6. The Central Area Bishop will serve as the World Ministries Center overseer and as chair of the Operating Committee. This person will give general oversight to the World Ministries Center and other responsibilities as assigned by the Board of Administration, and shall report to the Board.

Executive Directors shall be employed by the church and shall work under the supervision of the World Ministries Center overseer. They shall report to the Board of Administration as to their official duties and shall meet with the committees to which their work has been assigned by the Board of Administration.

The Executive Director of Administration and Finance shall serve as the general church treasurer to administer the finances of the church. This person shall be bonded.

7. The Board of Administration shall employ a certified public accountant firm to audit annually the accounts of the general church treasurer. The auditor will make an annual report in writing to the Board of Administration with recommendations, if any.

8. The proper officers shall publish in the *Yearbook* annually full and detailed statements of the assets, liabilities, net worth, and financial standing of the various general church boards and corporations.

9. Women's Ministries International and Men's Ministries International auxiliaries shall make and file annually their financial statements with the secretary of the Board of Administration.

10. The Board of Administration shall be the Board of Directors of the Free Methodist Publishing House.

11. The Board of Administration shall have advisory supervision of all church property.

12. The Board of Administration shall, if needed, elect a Court of Appeals, whose decision shall be final. Should any member of this court

be absent or disqualified to sit, the place shall be filled pro tem by the Board of Administration from its members, or, if they are disqualified, from a list of members of the church at large approved by counsel for both sides; so that no appeal shall be heard except before a full court. The Court of Appeals shall, if necessary, hold a session once a year, for the purpose of trying all appeals that may be taken thereto by any traveling minister from the decisions of an annual conference. The chair of the Board of Administration shall ordinarily preside over the court; but if absent or disqualified, the Board of Administration shall elect another of its members to preside.

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

14. The Board of Administration shall have power to make such preliminary arrangements for the General Conference as it may deem necessary.

15. The Board of Administration shall set the salaries of the bishops and the executive directors, considering the recommendations from the Budget and Finance Committee.

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

17. The Board of Administration shall be responsible for the general direction of the ministries of the church.

18. The Board of Administration, in consultation with the Board of Bishops, shall see that graded materials are prepared or chosen dealing with the biblical view of human sexuality, preparation for marriage, and marriage. These materials shall be periodically reviewed.

## 2. FINANCE, PENSION, AND ASSOCIATION OF HUMAN SERVICE MINISTRIES

### ¶ B/452. Budget and Finance Committee.

1. The Board of Administration shall elect a Budget and Finance Committee of five members. At least four members of the Budget and Finance Committee shall be members of the Board of Administration. All members, including the chair, shall be elected by the Board with nominations from the nominating committee. The World Ministries Center overseer and the general church treasurer shall be ex officio members of the committee.

2. Terms of service shall be for the interim of general conference. If members must be replaced before their terms are completed, replacements shall be for the balance of the unexpired term. Members may succeed themselves.

3. In selecting persons to serve on the Budget and Finance Committee, representation by geographic area and from conferences of different sizes shall be considered. Persons selected to serve shall be qualified to administer the business. They shall also demonstrate a vital interest in the total mission of the church.

### 4. Role of the Budget and Finance Committee

In consultation with the Executive Director of Administration and Finance, the Budget and Finance Committee will:

- a. Recommend policy to assure good stewardship of church financial assets, assure appropriate levels of financial performance and debt levels, maintain appropriate financial flexibility, select investment managers, negotiate fees, and review performance, and assure proper accounting and reporting of all church financial records;
- b. Recommend to the Board of Administration compensation levels for the bishops and executive staff and set compensation schedules for all other general church personnel;
- c. Provide a careful review and recommend to the Board of Administration the operating budgets of Home Ministries, World Missions, and Light and Life Communications;
- d. Serve as the Audit Review Committee;
- e. Develop the funding model for Home Ministries' support;

5. The Board of Bishops will consult with the chair of the Budget and Finance Committee regarding the Board of Bishops' choice of the Executive Director of Administration and Finance.

### ¶ B/453. United Ministries for Christ Guidelines (effective January 1, 1987).

1. United Ministries for Christ is the approved system for funding of all ministries of the general church.

2. The portion of United Ministries for Christ that pertains to world missions shall be funded by methods and programs devised by the Missions Executive Leadership Team, in consultation with the Missions Committee, and approved by the Board of Administration.

All other general church ministries, including their administrative costs, shall be funded by a fixed amount through goals suggested to each annual conference by the Board of Administration upon recommendation of the Budget and Finance Committee.

3. The Board of Administration may approve projects for promotion that are not included in the United Ministries for Christ budget. The Board of Administration shall develop guidelines for defining, approving, promoting, and administering such projects.

4. Approved projects outside of United Ministries for Christ may be made available to individuals, groups, and organizations outside the Free Methodist Church.

5. Each general church ministry shall cooperate with the Free Methodist Foundation in the matter of annuities, wills, and estate planning.

6. All contributions received at the World Ministries Center except deferred gifts shall be applied to the fixed portion of the United Ministries for Christ budget unless otherwise specifically designated by the donor.

7. The proposed budget of each general church ministry shall be prepared annually by the appropriate executive director, reviewed and approved by the Operating Committee, and presented to the Budget and Finance Committee. The recommended budget shall be submitted by the Budget and Finance Committee to the Board of Administration for approval each year.

#### ¶ B/461. Conference Claimants' Fund.

The Conference Claimants' Fund was the retirement program of the Free Methodist Church prior to June, 1955. It is still in effect for those retired ministers, missionaries, and others who were covered by the plan. It will be continued for those qualified persons now in the program until all obligations under the plan are fulfilled.

Information regarding the organization, administration, and rules of the plan as they may be amended from time to time by the Board of Administration may be secured by writing to the Executive Director of Administration and Finance, Free Methodist Church of North America, P.O. Box 535002, Indianapolis, Indiana 46253-5002.

**¶ B/461.1. Social Security.**

1. The benefits available under the Federal Old Age and Survivors Insurance (hereinafter called Social Security) Program are a part of the church's plan for support of its retired ministers and retired licensed missionaries, or their widows and orphans, and widows and orphans of ordained ministers and licensed missionaries.

2. It is recommended that each society, pastoral charge, conference, or other organization responsible for a minister's or missionary's salary obligate itself to contribute, in addition to salary, an amount equal to at least one-half of the annual contribution, or assessment, for Social Security as a "self-employed" minister.

**¶ B/461.7. Pension Plan.**

1. The Board of Administration by authorization of the 1964 General Conference has established a defined contribution pension plan which became effective January 1, 1969, and covers ministers, general officers, and other persons as described in the pension plan. On January 1, 1981 a defined benefit pension plan was added.

2. The pension plan was created for the exclusive benefit of employees of the employer and their beneficiaries and shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with its being a qualified pension plan as defined in section 401(a) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as the same may be amended from time to time.

3. The pension plans shall be administered by the Board of Administration serving as the Pension Board, in accordance with the rules and regulations of the plans. The details of this administrative responsibility shall be delegated to the Benefits Committee which is elected by the Board of Administration.

4. The Benefits Committee shall make recommendations concerning the administration of the plans, and shall regularly review the plans and their administration for needed clarification, procedural adjustments, or amendments. The Benefits Committee's work is subject to the approval of the Board of Administration.

**5. Role of the Benefits Committee**

Working with the administration of the World Ministries Center, the Benefits Committee will:

- a. administer and monitor the Free Methodist Church of North America Defined Benefit and Defined Contribution pension plans in a manner consistent with the definition of a qualified pension plan in section 401(a) of the IRC of 1986 as amended;
- b. administer an overall policy regarding enrollments, contribu-

- tions, and retirement benefits that will ensure that all appropriate personnel receive a benefit;
- c. regularly review the Plans' provisions and provide clarification, adjustments, or amendments;
  - d. receive and review annually the Plans' audit and valuation for any possible benefit improvements;
  - e. periodically meet with the Plan actuary to review the Plans' financial profile related to current and future plan participants. Refer issues to legal counsel when appropriate;
  - f. periodically meet with the Free Methodist Foundation to receive and review reports of the Plans' investment performance and fee structure;
  - g. communicate with the Plans' participants on a regular basis regarding plan changes, accrued benefits, and in conjunction with the Free Methodist Foundation, provide retirement financial planning;
  - h. provide any necessary reports and recommendations for the Plans to the Board of Administration which has ultimate responsibility for the Plans' administration.

In addition, as the need arises, work with the administration of the World Ministries Center on benefit issues that are outside of the retirement plans.

6. The pension plans may be amended by the General Conference or the Board of Administration. The text of such amendments shall be communicated to the participants of the plans in writing. No amendment shall abridge or annul the rights of members in respect to their accumulations as of the date of the adoption of such amendment.

7. Each United States church shall contribute to the support of the defined benefit pension plan in accordance with the rules and regulations of the plan. The contribution paid by the church shall be in addition to the pastor's earnings, not a deduction from them.

8. Any qualifying person serving a Free Methodist church in another country shall be granted a leave of absence and shall not forfeit any pension benefits which have accrued.

9. No participant in the pension plans shall have any right to assign, alienate, anticipate, or commute any payments from the plans; and, except as otherwise prescribed by law, no payment shall be subject to the debts, contracts, or engagements of any payee, nor to any judicial process to levy upon or attach the same for the payment thereof.

10. The trustees of the pension plans shall be the Board of Directors of the Free Methodist Church of North America, who shall be responsible for seeing that the plans are administered in accordance with the plan documents.

¶ **B/463.** Association of Human Service Ministries

1. It shall be the duty of the Board of Administration to inspect the institutions of social ministry operating in and receiving support from the Free Methodist Church. No such institution shall be approved until it has been officially recommended by its local conference.

2. The Board of Administration shall determine the financial standing of these institutions, their plans of operation, and the character and amount of work done. The Board shall determine if they qualify for accreditation by the Free Methodist Church.

3. The Board of Administration shall have power to regulate the establishment of new institutions of social ministry so as to avoid the jeopardizing of those already operating as accredited institutions. To this end, the Board shall assign each approved institution its supporting territory.

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

5. The accredited institutions of the Free Methodist Church are:
- Olive Branch Mission, 6310 S. Claremont, Chicago, Illinois 60636.  
Founded in 1875
  - Heritage Village Family of Homes, Inc. (The Gerry Homes), Gerry, New York 14740. Founded in 1880
  - Deaconess Hospital and Deaconess Home (The Home of Redeeming Love), 5501 N. Portland Avenue, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma 73112. Founded in 1900
  - Woodstock Christian Care, Inc., 318 Mansfield Ave., Woodstock, Illinois 60098. Founded in 1903
  - The Life Line Homes, Inc., P.O. Box 12366, Kansas City, Kansas 66112. Founded in 1907. Permanent endowment fund for youth ministries
  - Warm Beach Senior Community, 20420 Marine Drive NW, Stanwood, Washington 98292. Founded in 1967
  - Clawson Manor, New Life, Inc., 255 W. 14th Mile Road, Clawson, Michigan 48017. Founded in 1970
  - The Retirement Village at Copper Lake, 1225 Lakeshore Drive, Edmond, Oklahoma 73013. Founded in 1990
  - The Birth Connection, 4325 A St., Sacramento, California 95819. Founded in 1988

and any others accredited by the Board of Administration.

6. We recommend that each pastor preach on the subject of practical charity and present opportunities for charitable offerings, to be used for the relief of the poor on the pastoral charge where the offering is received

or sent to an accredited institution of social ministry in whose territory the society lies.

7. The pastor shall promote an Easter offering for institutions of social ministry.

8. Each annual conference may appoint among its regular committees a committee on social issues and ministries.

9. The president of the Association of Human Service Ministries shall be an honorary member of the Board of Administration.

### 3. LIGHT AND LIFE COMMUNICATIONS

¶ **B/464.** 1. The Free Methodist Publishing House (known as Light and Life Communications) is a corporation established by the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America for the purpose of producing and circulating wholesome literature. It is incorporated under the laws of the state of Illinois, with headquarters at Indianapolis, Indiana.

2. The Free Methodist Publishing House is the denomination's official publishing agency.

3. The Board of Administration constitutes the corporate membership. The site of the Publishing House can be changed only with the consent of three-fourths of all the members of the Board of Administration present and voting at a regular or specially called meeting.

4. The Board of Administration shall be the Board of Directors of the Free Methodist Publishing House and have general supervision of the publishing interests of the church during the interim between general conferences.

5. The executive director of the Publishing House shall have authority to direct its functions according to policies set by the Free Methodist Publishing House Board of Directors, in consultation with the Communications Committee.

¶ **B/465.** In consultation with the Executive Director of Light and Life Communications, the Communications Committee will:

1. Recommend policy regarding Communications to the Board of Administration assuring effective communications among church leadership, pastors, staff, and members, promotion of the church at large, and doctrinal integrity in church publications;

2. Recommend the Light and Life Communications budget to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Board of Administration;

3. Consult with the Executive Director on Communications vision and strategy;

4. Review the performance of the bookstore and other retail sales entities.

The Board of Bishops will consult with the chair of the Communications Committee and the chair of the Board of Administration regarding the Board of Bishops' choice of the Executive Director of Light and Life Communications.

#### 4. LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

¶ **B/470.** The Board of Bishops, through the World Ministries Center overseer, shall manage matters related to Leadership Development.

¶ **B/471.** Christian Schools, Preschools, and Day Care Programs.

The Free Methodist Church of North America shall encourage and promote the establishing of Christian day schools.

1. It is recommended that such schools be designated Light and Life Christian Schools.

2. The Free Methodist Church of North America shall make available to local churches and annual conferences information concerning existing Christian elementary and preschools.

3. Light and Life Christian Schools are expected to maintain a Christian emphasis and exceed state educational standards.

4. Each annual conference is authorized to establish a Conference Board of Light and Life Christian Schools which shall oversee the work of all Light and Life Christian Schools within the conference in accord with guidelines established by the conference board of administration and the annual conference. The president of the conference shall instruct the nominating committee to exercise care in naming to this board persons competent to serve.

5. Responsibility for the operation of Light and Life Christian Schools shall rest with the local church board of administration, which may elect a board of directors to give specific oversight. If a Light and Life School board of directors is in place, it shall provide financial and statistical reports to the local board of administration at least once each quarter. The Light and Life School board of directors, of whom at least two-thirds shall be members of the Free Methodist Church, shall cooperate with the conference board in accord with the guidelines established by the board and the annual conference.

6. The local board of administration which has responsibility for the operation of a Christian School, Preschool, or Day Care program shall require an annual financial report to be completed by a qualified auditor or accountant.

7. A person shall be employed by a local church to be principal of its school only after meeting the following criteria: (a) the local board of administration has determined that the candidate's educational and spiritual leadership is appropriate; (b) the conference board of ministerial education and guidance, upon examination of the candidate's qualifications, has given employment approval to the local society; (c) the local board of administration approves the candidate for employment; (d) the candidate is, or upon employment will become, a member of the Free Methodist Church.

8. The Board of Administration is authorized to develop a plan for assisting Free Methodist young people attending Free Methodist colleges in preparation for teaching in Light and Life Christian Schools.

9. It is the responsibility of each conference having Christian schools and of the local officials controlling such schools to see that the appropriate trust clause is a part of each deed pertaining to such school property, the same as other church property (see Pars. A/850-859).

10. The "Guiding Principles" of Paragraph B/473 shall apply to Light and Life Christian Schools. Any complaint of violation of any of these principles shall be directed to the board of Light and Life Christian Schools of the conference in which the school is located. Should the complaint be found to be valid, the board shall apply such penalty to the school found guilty as it deems appropriate. Such school, however, shall have the privilege of appeal, with full hearing, to the conference administrative committee.

### Educational Institutions

Educational Institutions are responsible for promoting and helping to maintain adequate opportunity for college and graduate training of the young people of the Free Methodist Church.

#### ¶ B/472. Powers and Responsibilities.

The educational institutions shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

1. provide guidance and assistance to the church-related colleges, secondary schools, elementary and preschools, and their supporting conferences, looking toward an efficient educational program for Free Methodist youth, under the auspices of the church;
2. set standards, academic and otherwise, which Free Methodist schools are expected to maintain. This shall include an emphasis upon achievement of full accreditation as an immediate objective;
3. adopt procedures for assigning and, when need arises, for chang-

ing the boundaries of the supporting areas of any educational institution when it is believed to be for the best interests of the church, the areas, the schools, and the students concerned. Such action may be subject to appeal;

4. take initiative, in cooperation with the various trustee boards, faculties, and administrative officers of the Free Methodist schools, in preserving such policies and objectives as will relate those institutions closely to the church;

5. assist in fostering in these institutions such an atmosphere of Christian dedication, devotion, and service as will encourage both faculty and students to live constantly under the guidance and control of the Holy Spirit and stimulate students through positive personal Christian experience, as well as through academic and biblical studies to give continuing witness to the power of the gospel;

6. encourage in every department of these institutions the highest educational standards and foster in students the understanding that true Christian education centers in Christ;

7. review the financial methods of all educational institutions and recommend improvements which seem to be needed for sound business practice and standard fiscal procedures for institutions of learning;

8. devise ways and means to provide supplementary financial aid to our church schools;

9. establish fellowships on college, university, and other school campuses which are not affiliated with the Free Methodist Church. These fellowships shall be operated in accordance with the constitution approved by the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church. Wherever practical, Free Methodists shall be encouraged to cooperate with other evangelicals in establishing and operating such fellowships;

10. publish annually in the *Yearbook* the following: (a) a list of all approved educational institutions of the Free Methodist Church, (b) the type, or classification, of each school (c) the highest academic accreditation of each school, including the name of the accrediting agency, (d) a list of the conferences assigned to each school. Each annual conference shall publish in its section of the *Yearbook* a list of all Light and Life Christian Schools and preschools designating the levels of instruction offered and the respective enrollments;

11. assist conference boards of Christian education in carrying out their responsibilities with respect to Free Methodist educational institutions within their own conference and assigned geographic area;

12. provide and administer a program of scholarships for students in Free Methodist collegiate, graduate, and theological institutions. This shall include responsibility for setting up the conditions necessary for a student to qualify for a scholarship, for determining methods for distrib-

uting scholarships to the various schools, and for selection of recipients;

13. solicit bequests, money, property, and other securities to be used in providing financial assistance to the various educational institutions, to provide funds for the operation of the department, and to build up the endowment, the scholarship, and the student aid funds consistent with United Ministries for Christ guidelines;

14. make surveys, call and hold conferences, and conduct workshops and seminars having to do with any phase of the schools, their problems and their programs, or related to the church's responsibility in the field of education;

15. prepare and distribute promotional leaflets and other literature throughout the church to interest both youth and adults in attending and supporting our schools;

16. maintain a file of all ministerial students, undergraduate and graduate, who are under the guidance of any Free Methodist conference, and, for those attending a Free Methodist school, maintain a record of earned academic and professional credits as reported by the institution attended;

17. engage such personnel, appoint such committees, and adopt such regulations as are necessary for the discharge of its responsibilities;

18. recommend to institutions of higher education that they provide courses on the biblical perspective of human sexuality.

#### ¶ B/473. Guiding Principles.

The educational institutions of the Free Methodist Church are expected to comply with the following standards and to seek to achieve the objectives proposed below.

1. In broad yet meaningful concepts it may be said that the educational objectives in a positively Christian institution are: Christian culture, intellectual growth, spiritual maturation, physical development, and vocational preparation. To varying degrees these goals, in an overall effort to help students toward self-realization and the maturing of their relationship to God and society, are valid on all levels of study.

2. Two further objectives of every Free Methodist educational institution are the development in each Free Methodist student of:

- a. an understanding of and a permanent loyalty to the Free Methodist Church; and
- b. a sense of call from God either as a full-time Christian worker in the Free Methodist Church or as a Spirit-guided Christian layperson dedicated to the growth and spiritual progress of the church. Free Methodist schools are open to young people of all faiths who are in harmony with the required standards of

conduct. It is the responsibility of each Free Methodist school to maintain such an atmosphere and to provide such guidance and Christian fellowship that all students in attendance will come to a new appreciation of the Free Methodist Church — its mission, its message, its doctrines, and its standards — and will find their lives becoming increasingly aglow with spiritual vision and victory.

3. All Free Methodist educational institutions shall maintain scriptural standards in modesty of person and attire, in the types of amusement permitted, and in the use of dramatics.

4. The intercollegiate athletic program is a visible, integral part of the total college. One of the major purposes of athletics in Free Methodist colleges is to challenge athletes toward Christian commitment and maturity. Through discipline, training, and a variety of experiences the college will provide a quality competitive program. God's Word is the authority for the coach as he/she disciplines his/her team in the Christian life. This well-developed program will provide the process for the athlete who strives to become a whole person.

The Free Methodist Church disapproves of the scheduling of intercollegiate sports on Sundays by AFMEI schools.

5. The use of tobacco or alcoholic beverages shall be prohibited. Membership in social fraternities shall not be permitted.

6. The board of trustees of each school shall have the primary responsibility, with the cooperation of the president and faculty, for insuring that the school's objectives, instruction, standards, program, and activities, both curricular and extracurricular, are in harmony with the "guiding principles" as herein set forth.

7. Any complaint that an educational institution is in violation of any of these principles shall be directed to the Board of Administration. Should the complaint be found to be valid, the Board of Administration shall apply such penalty to the school found guilty as it deems appropriate. Such school, however, shall have the privilege of appeal, with full hearing, to the general conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America.

## ¶ B/474. Organization and Administration.

### PROLOGUE

From its inception, the Free Methodist denomination evidenced keen interest in Christian higher education. The first school founded was Chili Seminary (now Roberts Wesleyan College) by Benjamin Titus Roberts in 1866, just six years after the denomination was organized.

The formal relationship between the Free Methodist Church of North America and its colleges/ universities began after the schools were founded.

As stated by Leslie R. Marston, “the general church has not established schools but has left that enterprise to groups of individuals and to conferences” (*From Age to Age, A Living Witness*, p.513).

The church recognizes three classifications of affiliation with its colleges, universities, and secondary schools:

1. Denominational institutions — full;
2. Denominational institutions — approved/related;
3. Cooperating institutions.

If an institution seeks a different affiliation, a written request authorized by its board of trustees, signed by its chairman and the president of the institution, shall be presented to the Board of Administration. The Free Methodist Church and each of its affiliated institutions shall undertake a review of their affiliation every second year.

1. Denominational Institutions - Full
  - a. Fifty percent plus one of the members of the board of trustees of the institution shall be members of the Free Methodist Church. Free Methodist trustees may be elected directly by the supporting conferences, or from nominees presented by such conferences, or upon selection by the institution on its own initiative. In cases where trustees are elected by the conferences, if approved by the Board of Administration the above proportion may be reduced to fifty percent plus one.
  - b. The chief executive officer shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church. It is recommended that the area bishop, or designee, be a part of the presidential search process.
  - c. Whenever possible, two-thirds of the full-time faculty members shall be members of the Free Methodist Church, and in no case less than a majority. Where this minimum (a majority) is not achieved, a plan shall be submitted to the Board of Administration outlining plans to move toward this standard.
  - d. All instruction in the several departments shall be in harmony with and in conformity to the teachings of the Scriptures and the standards of the Free Methodist Church as set forth in the Articles of Religion in the *Book of Discipline*.
  - e. (1) The board of trustees of each presently-existing educational institution is requested to give serious consideration to placing the following statement, or its legal equivalent, in its Articles of Incorporation: “This corporation shall be subject to the rules, regulations, and *Book of Discipline* of the Free Methodist Church of North America as from time to time adopted by the General Conference of the Church, insofar as the same do not contravene the laws of the state of incorporation. In the

event of dissolution of this corporation, the property of the same, if any remains after all prior obligations have been discharged, shall become the property of the Free Methodist Church, and the proceeds therefrom shall be used for educational purposes for the benefit of the conferences of the school's assigned area."

(2) No school shall hereafter be established which does not contain the above provision in its Articles of Incorporation.

(3) No institution shall be closed, disposed, or merged with another institution or institutions without the approval of the Board of Administration.

- f. The president of the institution and the chairman of the board of trustees of each Free Methodist school meeting the above conditions, shall be members of the "Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions."
- g. The president of the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions shall be an honorary member of the Board of Administration, and shall report annually to the board. The Board of Bishops will meet annually with the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions.

## 2. Denominational Institutions — Approved/Related

- a. Fifty percent plus one of the members of the board of trustees of the institution shall be members of the Free Methodist Church. Free Methodist trustees may be elected directly by the supporting conferences, or from nominees presented by such conferences, or upon selection by the institution on its own initiative.
- b. The chief executive officer shall be a member of the Free Methodist Church. It is recommended that the area bishop, or designee, be a part of the presidential search process.
- c. At least ten percent (10%) of the full-time faculty members shall be members of the Free Methodist Church. The faculty of the school or department of religion shall be at least two-thirds members of the Free Methodist Church (with a phase-in plan to accomplish this if needed).
- d. All instruction in the several departments shall be in harmony with and in conformity to the teachings of the Scriptures and the standards of the Free Methodist Church as set forth in the Articles of Religion in the *Book of Discipline*.
- e. (1) The board of trustees of each presently existing educational institution is requested to give serious consideration to

placing the following statement, or its legal equivalent, in its Articles of Incorporation: "This corporation shall be subject to the rules, regulations, and *Book of Discipline* of the Free Methodist Church of North America as from time to time adopted by the General Conference of the Church, insofar as the same do not contravene the laws of the state of incorporation. In the event of dissolution of this corporation, the property of the same, if any remains after all prior obligations have been discharged, shall become the property of the Free Methodist Church, and the proceeds therefrom shall be used for educational purposes for the benefit of the conferences of the school's assigned area."

(2) No school shall hereafter be established which does not contain the above provision in its Articles of Incorporation.

(3) No institution shall be closed, disposed of, or merged with another institution or institutions without the approval of the Board of Administration.

f. The president of the institution and the chairman of the board of trustees of each Free Methodist school meeting the above conditions, shall be members of the "Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions."

### 3. Cooperating Institutions.

a. The Free Methodist Church may affiliate with one or more other evangelical denominations in the operation of cooperating educational institutions. Cooperative arrangements shall be based on the following guidelines subject to the approval of the Board of Administration:

(1) The number of members of the Free Methodist Church on the board of trustees shall be at least in equitable proportion to the number of other cooperating denominations.

(2) The number of members of the Free Methodist Church on the faculty and administration shall be at least in equitable proportion to other cooperating denominations.

(3) Provision shall be made for instruction in Free Methodist history and doctrine.

(4) Provision shall be made for official representatives of the Free Methodist Church to have opportunity for contact and conferences with students in the interest of the church.

(5) All instruction in the several departments shall be in harmony with and conformity to the teachings of the Scriptures and the standards of the Free Methodist Church as set forth in the Articles of Religion in the *Book of Discipline*.

(6) A cooperating institution shall include in its Articles of Incorporation a statement which would conform to the following principles: (i) in case of dissolution any residue will be used for educational purposes; and (ii) any such residue shall be distributed equitably to the cooperating denominations.

- b. Cooperative arrangements with other institutions or groups that are not denominationally affiliated, for the purpose of establishing a new institution, may be considered on approval of the Board of Administration with the understanding that the Free Methodist Church is appropriately represented in the governance of the institution, that the doctrine and standards of the church are respected, that Free Methodist youth are given the opportunity to receive instruction and counsel regarding the history and mission of the Free Methodist Church, and that adequate provision be made for the equitable distribution of the residue in the event of its dissolution. The specific terms of such agreement shall be approved by the Board of Administration.
- c. Provision shall be made for the president of a cooperating institution and an official representative of the board of trustees who is a member of the Free Methodist Church to participate in the meetings of the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions. Educational institutions thus represented shall be recognized as associate members having one vote in the association.

4. Educational Foundations. Foundations incorporated under the auspices of the Free Methodist Church which are established for the specific purpose of serving the education needs of Free Methodist youth shall be recognized as approved institutions on the condition that the charters of the foundations are approved by the Board of Administration. The executive officer and the chairman of the governing board of such foundation shall be members of the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions.

#### ¶ B/475. Education Funds.

##### 1. Educational Endowment Fund.

All educational endowment funds, including the permanent endowment fund, allotted by the general church to educational institutions (including John Wesley Seminary Foundation) and such moneys as may be raised or otherwise received for the Educational Endowment Fund, shall be held for safe and proper investment by the Free Methodist Foundation. The income only from the fund shall be distributed annually to Free Methodist schools in the United States according to action taken each year by the Board of Administration. It is understood that the board

is not required to follow a fixed formula year after year, but when determining allotments it may take into account the provisions which appear in Section 2 of this paragraph.

2. Allocation of Funds.

When funds are available for direct financial assistance to educational institutions for their operating budget or for capital outlay, or both, the Board of Administration shall, when determining the appropriation for each school, give due consideration to the following:

- a. actual current needs of the school as shown in carefully prepared reports. These shall set forth total institutional assets, current and fixed liabilities, operating costs, faculty salaries, student enrollment, enrollment of Free Methodist students, etc. This information shall be presented on forms provided by Higher Education and the Ministry;
- b. effectiveness of the ministry of the school as an agency of the church in advancing God's kingdom, both locally and beyond, outside as well as within the Free Methodist Church;
- c. level of accreditation attained by the school and the emphasis being placed upon qualifying for further recognition;
- d. extent of financial support given in recent years to the school by its supporting conferences;
- e. response by the supporting conferences to suggestions for cooperation with Higher Education and the Ministry in improving the work and good name of the school; and
- f. response by the school itself to suggestion from Higher Education and the Ministry for cooperative effort looking toward increasing the school's effectiveness.

¶ B/476. Ministerial Credentialing Services

Ministerial Credentialing Services shall work under the supervision of the World Ministries Center overseer with policy decisions being made by the Board of Bishops. Ministerial Credentialing Services shall have the following responsibilities:

1. maintain accurate files of all ministers in conference relationship with the Free Methodist Church. Files will include application forms, academic records and duplicate copies of ordination parchments;
2. encourage and support schools and colleges in their ministerial training programs;
3. provide regular reports to annual conferences on the progress of each ministerial member toward ordination. These reports are to include those who have been certified, having met the educational and service requirements.

4. Provide information and support for the work of superintendents and Ministerial Education and Guidance Boards and offer encouragement and guidance to those who are preparing for ordained ministry.

5. Oversee correspondence course offerings and, as needed, provide (and support conferences that provide) short-term intensive courses for continuing education credit to meet ordination requirements.

6. Coordinate the itinerant credit program for ministerial students (see Paragraph B/477.5).

#### **B/476.1 John Wesley Seminary**

1. The Free Methodist Church shall maintain a theological seminary for the post-college training of candidates for the ministry and other types of Christian service. This institution shall be known as John Wesley Seminary and shall be incorporated to secure the rights and privileges belonging to such educational institutions.

2. The Board of Administration shall constitute the membership of the John Wesley Seminary corporation.

3. John Wesley Seminary shall be supported by general funds, special appropriations, and solicitations consistent with United Ministries for Christ and approved by the Board of Administration.

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

#### **¶ B/477. Steps to Ordination**

The steps to ordained ministry are as follows:

1. The person who is seriously considering a call to full-time ministry is licensed as a local ministerial candidate by the local board of administration (see Par. A/520). The call is tested by service in the local church where initial training begins.

2. The annual conference may accept the person as a conference ministerial candidate upon recommendation of the local board of administration to the conference board of ministerial education and guidance.

3. Ordination as elder and admission to membership in the annual conference follows upon further course work and itinerant service.

#### **¶ B/477.1. Qualifications for becoming a local ministerial candidate:**

1. is an adult member of the Free Methodist Church;
2. is considering a call to the ordained ministry and has so declared to the official board;

3. has completed a course of study designed by Ministerial Credentialing Services;
4. has been interviewed and licensed by the local board of administration (see Par. A/520, Sec. 2);
5. has appeared before the local congregation and given satisfactory answers to questions (see Par. A/520, Sec. 2);
6. has received a certificate from the pastor, which is to be renewed annually by the local board of administration;
7. has been reported to the conference board of ministerial education and guidance and to Ministerial Credentialing Services. The local ministerial candidate retains membership in the local church; and
8. is counseled by the pastor and/or pastor's cabinet on a continuing basis.

¶ **B/477.2.** Qualifications for becoming a conference ministerial candidate:

1. is a local ministerial candidate;
2. is a high school graduate;
3. has earned a minimum of 30 semester credits in liberal arts courses in an approved accredited college, preferably Free Methodist;
4. has completed three specified courses in college or by correspondence:
  - a. History and Polity of the Free Methodist Church;
  - b. Introduction to Christian Doctrine;
  - c. an inductive Bible study;
5. has been academically certified by Ministerial Credentialing Services;
6. has been interviewed and recommended by the board of ministerial education and guidance;
7. is approved by the annual conference and is admitted as a nonvoting member;
8. is under the guidance of the conference superintendent;
9. retains membership in a local Free Methodist church; and
10. maintains relationship as a conference ministerial candidate by annual recommendation of the board of ministerial education and guidance (see Par. A/530, Sec. 4).

¶ **B/477.4.** Qualifications for elder's orders:

A. TRACKI—Seminary Course

1. is a member of the Free Methodist Church;
2. is a conference ministerial candidate or ordained deacon;
3. is a graduate of an approved accredited seminary with an M.Div.

or equivalent degree; those graduating from a nonaffiliated seminary may be required to take additional courses including a four-semester-credit course in Wesleyan theology;

4. has completed four years of full-time pastoral experience under conference appointment subsequent to becoming a conference ministerial candidate;

5. is certified by Ministerial Credentialing Services;

6. is recommended by the board of ministerial education and guidance to elder's orders;

7. is ordained by the presiding bishop or appointee; and

8. shall file annually a continuing education program with the board of ministerial education and guidance which shall monitor the program.

#### B. TRACK II—College Course

1. is a member of the Free Methodist Church;

2. is a conference ministerial candidate or ordained deacon;

3. is a graduate of an approved accredited college, preferably Free Methodist, with a bachelor's degree and a major in religion. Those without a major in religion and those graduating from non-AFMEI schools must have completed a minimum of 30 semester credits in approved religion courses in college, in seminary, or by correspondence. The credits are to be distributed equally among the three areas: Biblical Studies, Systematic and Wesleyan Theology, and Pastoral Studies.

Those graduating from a non-AFMEI school with a major in religion must earn at least four semester credits in Wesleyan Theology.

4. has completed four years of full-time pastoral experience under conference appointment subsequent to becoming a conference ministerial candidate;

5. is certified by the Ministerial Credentialing Services;

6. is recommended by the board of ministerial education and guidance to elder's orders;

7. is ordained by the presiding bishop or appointee; and

8. shall file annually a continuing education program with the board of ministerial education and guidance which shall monitor the program.

C. TRACK III — Correspondence Course (for those persons for whom obtaining a college degree is impractical, as determined by the conference MEG board):

1. is a member of the Free Methodist Church;

2. is a conference ministerial candidate or ordained deacon;

3. has completed approved courses in college or by correspondence: (Biblical Studies, 4 semester credits; Wesleyan Theology, 3 credits; Church History Survey, 3 credits; Homiletics, 3 credits; Church Administration, 2 credits; Evangelism and Church Growth, 2 credits; Pastoral Care, 2 credits, plus 12 additional semester hours of approved courses);
4. has completed four years of full-time pastoral experience under conference appointment subsequent to becoming a conference ministerial candidate;
5. is certified by Ministerial Credentialing Services;
6. is recommended by the board of ministerial education and guidance to elder's orders;
7. is ordained by the presiding bishop or appointee; and
8. shall file annually a continuing education program with the board of ministerial education and guidance which shall monitor the program.

D. TRACK IV — The Apollos Model (for those persons of unusual giftedness, fruitfulness and experience as determined by the conference board of ministerial education and guidance according to criteria described in the MEG Board Manual):

1. is initially approved by the local church and granted local ministerial candidacy license;
2. is granted conference ministerial candidacy by the conference upon recommendation of the board of ministerial education and guidance after determination of the candidate's satisfaction of the criteria for Track IV;
3. maintains an Ordination Readiness File which collects the data documenting assessments, reports and progress through the process as described in the MEG Board manual;
4. completes the prescribed process of coaching, assignments and assessment under MEG Board guidance;
5. is recommended to the annual conference by the board of ministerial education and guidance for ordination with a report to the Ministerial Credentialing Services;
6. is ordained by the presiding bishop or appointee.

¶ **B/477.5.** Itinerant credit for conference ministerial candidates

1. One of the standard requirements for ordination as elder by the Free Methodist Church is the completion of four years' service as an appointed pastor. This requirement of itinerant service is in addition to the academic and life experience requirements. The annual conference shall determine that the candidate is in agreement with the church in doctrine,

discipline, and government, and also possesses the needed gifts, graces, and promise of usefulness.

At least four years of pastoral experience are required before ordination as elder. A ministerial student, who elects to delay entering the active pastorate to attend an approved seminary, may meet a portion of the itinerant service requirement by earning "Itinerant Credit" while attending seminary.

An individual may earn itinerant credit in an approved college, providing the curriculum followed is one designed for pastoral ministry following the baccalaureate degree and providing the individual also meets the other itinerant credit requirements in this paragraph, B/477.5.

2. Practical service under supervision during a regular seminary program shall be applied toward the itinerant credit requirement for ordination under the following conditions. The candidate:

- a. must have been received as a conference ministerial candidate in an annual conference;
- b. must be under church supervision and report regularly to the board of ministerial education and guidance, which shall carefully examine the candidate regarding call, doctrine, and other qualifications;
- c. must have favorable recommendations from the superintendent and the board of ministerial education and guidance; and
- d. may not earn more than one year of itinerant credit by supervised practical service during seminary / college training.

Ministerial Credentialing Services shall define activities in which practical service may be rendered for itinerant credit, and set up standards for judging accomplishments. Credits must be earned in accordance with these standards.

¶ **B/478.** The board of ministerial education and guidance in conferences with non-English-speaking constituencies shall be authorized to establish educational and other requirements for the ordination of pastors of such churches, taking into account the cultural and educational background of the churches being served. Such provisions are to be developed in consultation with the conference superintendent and the area bishop. Final approval rests with the Board of Bishops.

¶ **B/479.** Continuing Education.

Ministerial Credentialing Services establishes and administers criteria for the continuing education of Free Methodist ministers. Every appointed pastor and active minister is encouraged to earn a minimum of two (2) continuing education units (CEU's) per year, or the equivalent.

## 5. MEN'S MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL

¶ **B/484.** Men's Ministries International of the Free Methodist Church is recognized as an auxiliary of the Free Methodist Church of North America, and is governed by its own constitution and bylaws. The director of Men's Ministries International shall be an honorary member of the Board of Administration.

## 6. FREE METHODIST WORLD MISSIONS

¶ **B/490.** The Free Methodist Church accepts responsibility to obey the Great Commission of Christ (Matthew 28:18-20). Missionaries are sent into all the world to evangelize and make disciples for the Lord, to build them together in His church (1 Peter 2:5; Ephesians 2:20-22), and to engage in ministries of compassion and human development in the name of Christ. The Free Methodist World Missions shall carry the gospel into areas where there is no ministry of the Free Methodist Church and serve in partnership with the national church in evangelization and church planting.

1. The Board of Administration shall constitute the General Missionary Board which has authority over world mission functions.

2. Missions Committee. The Board of Administration shall elect a Missions Committee of up to twelve members. All members, including the chair, shall be elected by the Board with nominations from the nominating committee. The Canadian General Conference shall have a representative on the Missions Committee. Terms of service on the Missions Committee shall be for the interim of general conference.

3. In consultation with the Executive Director of World Missions, the Missions Committee will:

- a. recommend policy regarding World Missions to the Board of Administration;
- b. review the World Missions budget, and send recommendation to the Budget and Finance Committee of the Board of Administration;
- c. consult with the Executive Director regarding World Missions vision and strategy, and their implementation;
- d. advise missions leadership with the intent of increasing ownership and giving within the Free Methodist Church of North America;
- e. review developments in World Missions.

4. The Board of Bishops will consult with the Missions Committee chair and the Board of Administration chair regarding the Board of Bishops' recommendations in the selection and/or termination of the Executive Director of World Missions.

¶ **B/491.** Missions Executive Leadership Team. The Missions Executive Leadership Team includes the Executive Director of World Missions, on site directors, and overseas area directors. They shall, under the leadership of the Executive Director, oversee all missionary work originating in the United States, Canada and the United Kingdom and directed

toward peoples outside of those countries, except for areas which the Board of Administration may assign elsewhere, and shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Finance
  - a. devise methods and programs for funding that portion of the United Ministries for Christ that pertains to Free Methodist World Missions;
  - b. be responsible for receiving and appropriating all moneys allocated for foreign missions to the purpose for which they have been contributed or budgeted;
  - c. prepare the annual budget in consultation with the Missions Committee, the Operating Committee, and the Budget and Finance Committee;
  - d. review and approve a call for funds for special projects; and
  - e. review and approve loan applications from overseas churches to the Free Methodist Loan Fund. The missions administration will co-sign the loans assuring repayment and be responsible for collecting payments from the churches with outstanding loans.
2. Personnel
  - a. recruit, appoint, license, and commission candidates for missionary service;
  - b. appoint all short-term VISA personnel;
  - c. decide the status of missionaries not on their field of assignment for other than a normal furlough.
3. Overseas Church Planting
  - a. encourage and aid church planting outside Canada, the United Kingdom, and the United States among all population groups in cooperation with a national church, whenever possible.
  - b. recognize that in areas not presently served by the Free Methodist Church, the work shall first be a mission district under the jurisdiction of Free Methodist World Missions or of another General Conference before being established as a provisional annual or annual conference.

¶ **B/491.1.** Mission Districts and Provisional Annual Conferences of Mission Origin

1. Missions Districts
  - a. The Missions Executive Leadership Team shall approve all candidates for ordination in mission districts under its jurisdiction.
  - b. A mission district may be approved as a provisional annual

- conference by the missions Executive Director and Area Director, in consultation with the Area Bishop, by adopting in principle the *Book of Discipline* of the Free Methodist Church of North America together with a constitution adapted to its local situation and needs.
- c. Membership in a provisional annual conference does not cancel membership in a full conference. Members of full conferences serving in a provisional annual conference shall, within two years, become members of that provisional annual conference.
2. Annual Conferences of Mission Origin
    - a. When a provisional annual conference has made marked advancement in national leadership, evangelistic outreach, self-government, and self-support, and has reached the stage where it is able to operate satisfactorily under the *Book of Discipline* of the Free Methodist Church of North America, and has a constitution that has been approved by the General Conference, or the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church of North America, it shall be recommended to the area bishop or the president of the conference to be organized into an annual conference as outlined in Paragraph A/591, Section 10:b-c.
    - b. Any changes in constitutions of annual conferences of mission origin shall be considered by the Executive Director, Area Director, and Area Bishop with legal counsel for recommendation to the Board of Administration or General Conference for approval.
    - c. An annual conference of mission origin may submit requests for personnel and finances through the Area Director of World Missions.
  3. General or Provisional General Conference of Mission Origin
    - a. The relationship between a general or provisional general conference and the Free Methodist World Missions is maintained through a mutually approved Memorandum of Agreement covering such items as:
      - (1) ownership of properties;
      - (2) appointment of missionaries; and
      - (3) ownership and use of personal or mission equipment related to the work of the missionary in that country.
    - b. A general or provisional general conference may request the appointment of missionary personnel and /or financial assistance for specific ministries through the Area Director of World Missions.

**¶ B/492.** General Missionary Board.

1. The Board of Administration shall constitute the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America. The General Missionary Board is incorporated and is used for special financial transactions for Free Methodist World Missions.

2. The objects for which this corporation is formed are:

- a. to receive, hold, pay out, or dispose of any property, of whatever nature and situation as allowed by law, that may be obtained in aid of the general missionary work of the Free Methodist Church;
- b. to acquire real estate or personal property and to hold or sell or convey the same as in its judgment may be necessary in the prosecution of its missionary work.

**¶ B/494.** Free Methodist World Missions, Executives.

The Executive Director of Free Methodist World Missions shall be employed by the Board of Bishops, pursuant to the authority in Paragraph A/444, Section 1, with such duties as approved by the Board of Administration.

In consultation with the Board of Bishops and the chairs of the Missions Committee and the Board of Administration, the Executive Director of Free Methodist World Missions shall appoint overseas area directors.

The executive director shall develop and have on file job descriptions for mission executives, including area directors.

**¶ B/495.** Titles to land purchased for missions and institutions under the direction of Free Methodist World Missions shall be in the name of Free Methodist World Missions or deeded to trustees elected or approved by the General Missionary Board. Trustees may be missionaries, nationals, or both.

Such trustees shall hold the property for the benefit and use of the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church of North America. Where property cannot be titled or held in trust for the General Missionary Board, it shall be held for the benefit and use of the Free Methodist Church and its institutions in those countries.

Any sale or disposal of property or use of funds from the sale of such property shall be with the approval and consent of the Missions Executive Leadership Team on behalf of the General Missionary Board of the Free Methodist Church, in consultation with the area bishop of the Free Methodist Church of North America, and ratified by the Board of Administration.

Whenever possible the tenure of the office of the trustees shall be subject to the General Missionary Board and in all cases to the laws and regulations of the country where the property is located.

¶ **B/496.** Responsibilities of Pastors and Local Societies.

1. It shall be the responsibility of every pastor in charge of a local church to promote Free Methodist world missions through a year-round program of missionary emphasis and to direct the establishment of a financial program for the support of the missionary outreach of the church through the United Ministries for Christ.

2. Churches are encouraged to have a local missions coordinator and a missions task force.

¶ **B/497.** The Women's Ministries International of the Free Methodist Church is recognized as an auxiliary of Free Methodist World Missions and is governed by its own constitution and bylaws. The president of Women's Ministries International shall be an honorary member of the Board of Administration.

¶ **B/498.** Missions and Conferences.

All provisional annual conferences of mission origin shall be under the jurisdiction of Free Methodist World Missions, NA through its Missions Executive Leadership Team, except where provisional annual conferences have been organized from an existing annual conference, in which case they shall be administered by the bishop of the originating annual conference. Copies of their constitutions and bylaws may, when adopted by the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church of North America, be secured from the Executive Director of World Missions.

The conferences so recognized are:

*Annual Conferences* — Brazil-Brazilian, Brazil-Nikkei, Chile, Haiti Inland, Hong Kong, Central Malawi, Northern Malawi, Southern Malawi, Mexico, Taiwan, Zimbabwe: Chiredzi, Lundi, Ralph Jacobs; India, India Central, India Southern, India Western; Korea, Nigeria, Philippines: Philippines Northern, Eastern Mindanao, Northern Mindanao, Southern Mindanao. *Provisional Annual Conferences* — Northwest Mexico, Paraguay.

¶ **B/499.** Missionaries' Relationship to Home Conferences.

North American conferences may grant honorary conference membership to those missionaries who are employed by the general church and who were previously full members of a North American conference and are now members of annual conferences of mission origin.