

THE METHODIST BOOK OF ORDER

The Laws and Discipline
of the
Methodist Church of Southern Africa

Twelfth Edition

Revised 2016

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Foreword

The Laws and Discipline is an ecclesiastical and organisational tool that is meant to assist in the effective and orderly governance of the Church. It is a blend of history, doctrine, policy, ordinances and guidelines that have been agreed upon by past Conferences. The Laws and Discipline is therefore the official Constitution of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa. It represents the heart and vision of the Methodist people. It is the most current statement of how the people called Methodists agree to live their lives together in this Connexion.

This revised twelfth edition takes effect from 1 August 2016. It is appropriately titled ‘The Methodist Book of Order’, in the true Wesleyan spirit of accountability and methodical conduct. It incorporates all the amendments and new legislation enacted by Conference and/or Connexional Executive since the publication of the 11th edition in July 2007, plus necessary amendments to the 12th edition of 2014.

Effort is made to make it more user friendly by including a detailed index, reorganising the contents, ensuring proper numbering, using inclusive language and eliminating unnecessary repetition. It is hoped that readers would find, as indicated in paragraph 11.1 of this edition, that the *true spirit of Methodist discipline requires that it be exercised in harmony with the grace of Christ, with tenderness, patience and fidelity, seeking rather to win members back to Christ than to discontinue them.*

I extend my deep gratitude and appreciation to the members of the Revision Committee, the General Secretary, Rev Charmaine Morgan, the Human Resources Director, Rev Dr Vukile Mehana and the Office Administrator, Ms Vanessa Peters, who contributed immensely to the writing and editing of this edition.

I am confident that Methodism in Southern Africa will continue to grow as we steadfastly “hold fast...the doctrine, spirit and discipline with which we first set out” to accomplish our vision of *A Christ healed Africa for the healing of nations.*

I pray that this revised twelfth edition of the *Methodist Book of Order* will be a useful resource to guide the church in effective ministry under the direction of the Holy Spirit as together we live and serve our Master.

Ziphozihle D Siwa
Presiding Bishop

Johannesburg
April 2016

Contents

	Page
CHAPTER 1: THE CHURCH	11
Methodism and the Church Universal	11
The Methodist Witness	12
Methodist Origins	12
Doctrine	13
Baptism	13
The Lord's Supper/ Holy Communion	15
The Ministry and Ordination	19
 CHAPTER 2: THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA	 22
Name of the Church	22
Beginnings of the Church	22
Area of Operation	24
 CHAPTER 3: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP	 25
Conditions of Membership	25
The Methodist Ethos	25
Christian Community	25
The Methodist Rule of Life	25
Admission/Public Reception of Members (Confirmation)	26
Class Meetings	27
Transfer of Members	27
Adherents	27
Methodist Discipline	28
 CHAPTER 4: THE MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENTS	 30
Candidates for the Ministry	31
Candidating Procedure	31
Regulations Respecting Candidates	32
Probationers	33
Supervision of Probationers' Studies	34
Regulations respecting Probationer Ministers	35
Ordination and Admission into Full Connexion	36
Transfers from other Churches	37
Transfer to other Churches	38
Appointment and Removal of Ministers	39
Duties of Ministers	41

Supernumerary Ministers	42
Resignation of Ministers	43
Ministers not in Circuit Appointments (Secondments)	43
Leave of Absence	46
Study Leave	46
Disciplining Ministers	46
Ministers seeking Reinstatement	47
Divorce and the Ministry	47
Regulations for Full-time Non-Itinerant Ministers	48
Regulations for Part-time 'Tent Making' Ordained Ministers	50
CHAPTER 5: THE CONNEXION	53
The Conference	53
Membership of Conference	54
Formulation of new Legislation	55
Officers of Conference	56
The Presiding Bishop	56
The Lay President	58
The Presiding Bishop-Elect	58
The General Secretary	59
Connexional Executive	60
Connexional Registrar	62
Pastoral Commissions	62
Legal Proceedings and Status	63
CHAPTER 6: THE DISTRICTS	64
The Synod	64
The District Executive	66
Officers of the Synod	67
The Bishop	67
The Vice-Chairman	69
The District Secretary	70
The Statistical Secretary	70
District Lay Leader	70
District Finances	71
District Treasurer	72
CHAPTER 7: THE CIRCUITS AND SOCIETIES	73
The Circuit Quarterly Meeting	73
Stationing of Ministers	76
The Superintendent Minister	79
The Circuit Stewards	80
Memorials from Circuits	82

Circuit Finances	82
The Society	83
Annual Society Meeting	83
Society Leaders' Meeting	85
Society Stewards	86
Class Leaders	87
Stewards of the Poor Fund	87
Preaching Places	88
CHAPTER 8: UNITS, COMMITTEES AND ORGANISATIONS	89
The Communications Unit	90
Ecumenical Affairs Unit	91
Education for Ministry and Mission Unit.	94
The Finance Unit	95
Human Resources Unit	95
The Mission Unit	96
The Methodist Youth Unit	99
Education – General Regulations	102
CHAPTER 9: THE FINANCE UNIT	103
Administration	103
Finance Unit Executive Committee	103
The General Treasurers	104
The Connexional Assessment Fund	105
Ministers' Children	107
Connexional Removals	107
Long Leave Allowances	108
Ministerial Students' Fund	108
Insurance.	109
General Regulations	110
CHAPTER 10: CHURCH PROPERTY.	123
Vesting and Administration	123
Acquirement and Alienation.	123
Registration of Titles and forms of transfer	124
Borrowing of Money	124
Investment of Money	124
Custody of Deeds	125
Connexional Trust Properties Committee.	125
District Trust Properties Committees	125
Local Trust Properties Committees	127
General Regulations	128

Use of Church Buildings	129
Regulations for purchase, sale, encumbrance or mortgage of landed property	130
Regulations for the erection or alteration of buildings	132
General Regulations	134
CHAPTER 11: DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND MINISTERS	137
The Charge	139
District Disciplinary Committee Procedure	140
Suspension of Ministers	141
Probationers at Seminary	142
Connexional Disciplinary Committee	142
Appeals	143
Appointment and Qualifications of the DDC, District Discipline Registrar and CDC	144
Discontinued Ministers	144
Ministers seeking Reinstatement	144
Pastoral Oversight in the Discipline Process	144
Discipline of Bishops	144
Discipline of Presiding Bishop	145
CHAPTER 12: LOCAL PREACHERS	146
Connexional Committee	146
District Local Preachers' Committee	146
Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting	147
Local Preachers on Note	148
Local Preachers on Trial	148
Local Preachers' Discipline	150
Local Preachers and Divorce	151
CHAPTER 13: METHODIST ORDER OF DEACONS	153
Connexional Committee	153
Convocation	153
Candidates	154
Probation and Ordination	154
Appointment of Deacons	155
Stipends and Allowances	155
Discipline	155
Status of Deacons	155
Administration of Sacraments	156
Leave of Absence	156

CHAPTER 14: ORDER OF EVANGELISM	158
General Committee	158
The Warden	158
Candidating Procedure	158
Process of Candidating	159
Robing of Bible Women and Evangelists.	160
Remuneration	160
General Rules	160

CHAPTER 15: CHAPLAINCY	162
Connexional Chaplaincy Committee (Security Services)	162
Composition of the Committee	162
Procedure for appointing Chaplains	163
Conduct and Obligations of Chaplains	163
Obligations to the MCSA	164
Principal Chaplain and Liaison Chaplains	164
Special Provisions	164

APPENDICES

Appendix 1	The Methodist Church of Southern Africa Private Act, 111/1978	165
Appendix 2	Resolution on Pastoral Work	173
Appendix 3	Rules of a Helper	182
Appendix 4	Rules of Debate	184
Appendix 5	Order of Business for Synods	187
Appendix 6	Order of Business for Youth Synods	194
Appendix 7	Order of Business for Diaconal Order Convocation	196
Appendix 8	Order of Business for Circuit Quarterly Meeting	198
Appendix 9	Order of Business for Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting	200
Appendix 10	Procedure for electing a Presiding Bishop	202
Appendix 11	Procedure for electing a Bishop.	203
Appendix 12	Procedure for electing the Lay President	204
Appendix 13	Procedure for electing the General Secretary	205
Appendix 14	Mediation and Arbitration Process.	206
Appendix 15	Harassment Policy (2015)	209

Miscellaneous Conference Resolutions	217
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CHAPTER 1

THE CHURCH

God ordained and established the Church to call people into communion with Godself and with one another according to the eternal purpose in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son, our Lord.

METHODISM AND THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

- 1.1 The Church is the company of the disciples of Jesus, consisting of those who confess Him as their Saviour and Lord, love one another and unite with those who serve the coming of His Rule on earth. These constitute the family of the redeemed children of God, who in the New Testament are described as ‘Believers’, ‘People of God’, and ‘Christians’.
- 1.2 This Church, the creation of the Holy Spirit, also grows ‘into a sacred temple dedicated to the Lord’ in which the Spirit of God lives and works. ‘Where the Church is’, as Irenæus has truly said, ‘there is the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church and every kind of grace’.
- 1.3 This one flock of Christ is at present gathered in many folds, yet united as one indivisible fellowship ‘in faith and knowledge of the Son of God ... a congregation of the faithful in which the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance’.
- 1.4 Within the Christian Church, ‘one, holy, catholic and apostolic’, which is the Body of Christ, the Methodist Church holds a true place, and cherishes this not alone for itself as an organised community, but for its Members wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ and in obedience to the Spirit.
- 1.5 The Methodist Church throughout the world confesses the Headship of our Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledges the Divine revelation recorded in Holy Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and practice, rejoices in the inheritance of the Apostolic Faith, and loyally accepts the fundamental principles of the historic Creeds and of the Protestant Reformation.
- 1.6 Following also the practice and teaching of the New Testament, the Methodist Church is at once evangelical and sacramental. It recognises and observes two Sacraments, namely Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, as of Divine appointment and perpetual obligation.
- 1.7 In the Providence of God Methodism was raised up to spread Scriptural Holiness throughout the land by the proclamation of the Evangelical Faith. Its order and usages were designed to give expression to an unfaltering resolve to be true to its divinely appointed mission.

THE METHODIST WITNESS

- 1.8 Whilst earnestly coveting fellowship with all those who call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord and love Him in sincerity, the Methodist Church lays particular stress upon certain privileges and duties which belong to the company of all faithful people. These may be briefly stated:
- 1.8.1 the primary vocation and responsibility, in accordance with the value set upon the apostolic ministry in the New Testament and in the early Church, of declaring the universality of the grace of God by preaching the gospel of ‘a free, full, present salvation’ for everyone who repents and believes upon our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - 1.8.2 a change of heart wrought by the grace of God, issuing in a new birth, in a conscious personal experience of the forgiveness of sins, and the spiritual glow of a ‘joy unspeakable and full of glory’ as the present privilege of every believer in Christ.
 - 1.8.3 the necessity of a living fellowship in the realities of the Christian experience in order to nourish the life of God in the soul and to enrich the Body of Christ, so that ‘when each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love’.
 - 1.8.4 the teaching of the possibility, here and now, of Christians being made ‘perfect in love’ through the obedience of faith.
 - 1.8.5 the reaffirmation and consistent exercise of the New Testament truth of the universal priesthood of believers. The Methodist Church, therefore, holds that while certain of its members are called of God and are ordained and separated to the holy office of the Ministry within the Church, these hold no priesthood differing in kind from that which is common to the Lord’s people, and have no exclusive title to the preaching of the Gospel or to the care of souls. These ministries are shared with them by others, men and women. ‘It is one and the same Spirit who does all this; as the Spirit wishes different gifts are given to each person’.

METHODIST ORIGINS

- 1.9 Methodism had its birth in the great work which God performed through the Revival of Religion in the eighteenth century by means of the preaching and apostolic labours of John and Charles Wesley and their fellow helpers. These founders of Methodism were constrained to provide, step by step, in the wisdom God had given to them, for the spiritual needs of a multitude of Christ’s shepherdless sheep which they were gathering in from the wilderness. In making this provision they reproduced many of the modes of Church life indicated in the New Testament. Led thus by the Spirit of God the early Methodist Societies were gradually fashioned into a distinctive Christian Church.

DOCTRINE

- 1.10 The Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place in the Holy Catholic Church, which is the Body of Christ.
 - 1.10.1 The Doctrines of the Evangelical Faith, which Methodism has held from the beginning and still holds, are based upon the Divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The Methodist Church acknowledges this revelation as the supreme rule of faith and practice. These Evangelical Doctrines, to which the Preachers of the Methodist Church, Ministerial and Lay, are pledged, are contained in Wesley's Notes on the New Testament and his Forty-four Sermons.
 - 1.10.2 The Notes on the New Testament and the Forty-four Sermons are not intended to impose a system of formal or speculative theology on Methodist Preachers, but to set up standards of preaching and belief which should secure loyalty to the fundamental truths of the Gospel of Redemption and to ensure the continued witness of the Church to the realities of the Christian experience of Salvation.
 - 1.10.3 Conference is the final authority within the Church with regard to its doctrines and all questions concerning the interpretation of its doctrines.
 - 1.10.4 Christ's ministers in the Church are stewards in the household of God, and shepherds of His flock. Some are called and ordained to this sole occupation, and have a principal and directing part in these great duties.
 - 1.10.5 It is the universal conviction of the Methodist people that the office of the Christian Ministry depends upon the call of God, who bestows the gifts of the Spirit, the grace and the fruit of which indicate those whom God has chosen.
 - 1.10.6 Those whom the Church recognises as called of God, and therefore receives into its Ministry, shall be ordained by the imposition of hands with prayer to the Holy Spirit for authority for the office and work of a Minister in the Church of Christ, thus expressing the Church's recognition of the Minister's personal call.
 - 1.10.7 The Preachers, itinerant and lay, are examined, tested and approved before they are authorised to minister in holy things. For the sake of Church Order and not because of any priestly virtue inherent in the office, the Ministers of the Church are set apart by ordination to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments.

BAPTISM

- 1.11 The Sacrament of Baptism was given to the Church by Jesus Christ. It is an outward sign of the new life which God offers to all people through the work of Christ and marks the entry of the person baptised into God's family, the Church.

- 1.11.1 Baptism therefore proclaims God's grace and looks forward to life-long growth into Christ in the fellowship of the Church. It calls for the response of faith that is also a life-long process. In the case of believers the initial profession of faith precedes the baptism. In the case of infants, parents and sponsors who are believers promise to provide Christian nurture and to prepare the child for personal profession of faith. In both cases the person baptised will be supported by the faith of the Church.
- 1.11.2 The baptism of a believer may be accompanied by the laying on of hands with prayer. In the case of persons baptised in adulthood laying on of hands may accompany their personal profession of faith.
- 1.11.3 Methodism agrees with most major denominations that so-called rebaptism is inappropriate and may not be practised for the following reasons:
 - (a) Baptism is unrepeatable because it signifies the once-for-all act of Christ and makes the baptised a member of the covenant community;
 - (b) 'Rebaptism' implies that the original baptism was invalid and thus calls into question the practice of infant baptism;
 - (c) It implies that the prevenient grace of God was not active in the original baptism;
 - (d) It makes the response of faith and obedience the most important feature of baptism and obscures its significance as a sign of God's grace.
- 1.12 The Sacrament of Baptism shall, in general, be administered:
 - 1.12.1 by an ordained Minister or probationer Minister duly authorised thereto. It may be administered by a member of the Church only in the exceptional circumstances of impending death when a Minister is not available.
 - 1.12.2 with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It may be by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion.
 - 1.12.3 to a child who is in the care of parents, significant care givers or guardians, among whom one or more are members of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Instruction in the meaning of Baptism and guidance in the nature of the child's faith in Jesus Christ shall be given before and after the Baptism. (See para 1.14) When parents, significant care givers or guardians wish to have a child baptised in a Society other than that which they normally attend, they shall provide the Minister officiating with the written approval of their own Minister.
 - 1.12.4 to older people who have not previously been baptised, and who desire upon profession of their faith in Jesus Christ to become members of the Church. Their preparation for such baptism shall be similar to that for persons being prepared for Public Reception into Full Membership or Confirmation.

- 1.12.5 Baptism shall not be administered to persons who have previously been baptised. If there is doubt about previous baptism, the Minister shall use the words, 'If you are not already baptised, I now baptise you....'.
- 1.12.6 in a Church building in the presence of a congregation either at a worship service, in a Sunday School session, or as specially arranged in consultation with a Society Steward. Where possible, the Sacrament of Baptism shall be conducted at Sunday Services planned at regular intervals. In cases of emergency, and in the case of those persons who reside in places remote from our Church, exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Minister. The Society Leaders' Meeting may be consulted about requests for Baptism. The responsibility for the final decision whether or not to conduct a particular baptism rests with the Minister.
- 1.13 A Certificate of Baptism issued shall be as approved by Conference.
- 1.14 After the Baptism the parents, significant care givers or guardians of the child, or the baptised adult, shall be under the special pastoral care of the Leaders' Meeting through the Sunday School or such other agency as the Leaders' Meeting shall appoint.

THE LORD'S SUPPER

- 1.15 The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, also known as Holy Communion or the Eucharist, is the other Sacrament given to the Church by its Lord, Jesus Christ, who instituted it at the time of His Passion and after His resurrection, and who presides at the meal. It is of vital importance to all of our Members to partake regularly and frequently of this Sacrament, doing so reverently and with faith, for in this Sacrament they are built up and strengthened in their faith and spiritual life.
- 1.16 In Holy Communion the people of God of every time and place become united with God and with each other. They remember the death and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, through which they receive forgiveness for their sins and the salvation of their souls. They enter into the new Covenant of God with God's people – a new dispensation of Grace instead of the old dispensation of Law. They receive a foretaste of the heavenly feast to come and have the earnest of eternal life. God the Holy Spirit comes and makes the crucified and risen Jesus present.
- 1.17 In this Sacrament the people of God offer God their praise, their thanks and their lives, believing that these offerings, though unworthy, will be acceptable in grace to the Father. They join with Jesus Christ in His intercession for the world and participate in His mission to the world.
- 1.18 Holy Communion is administered by an ordained Minister or by a Probationer, duly authorised thereto, to the Members of the Church and to such Members of other Christian Churches as may wish to join with us in this Sacrament.

Non-alcoholic wine shall be used.

- 1.19 The Methodist Church celebrates Holy Communion, also known as The Lord's Supper or Eucharist, in obedience to the command of Jesus "who on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said: 'This is My body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance (anamnesis) of me.' In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me.' (1 Cor. 11:23-25; cf Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20).
- 1.20 Holy Communion is a sacramental meal that by visible signs communicates to us, through the power of the Holy Spirit, God's love in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. It therefore proclaims and celebrates the gift of new life in union with Christ and enables us, through faith, to share in the triumph of His death and resurrection which will be consummated at His coming again.
- 1.21 It is a sacrifice of praise in which the Church gives thanks to God for everything God has accomplished in creation, redemption and the gift of the Holy Spirit; for everything God is accomplishing now in the life of the Church and the world; and for everything God will accomplish in bringing God's Kingdom to fulfilment.
- 1.22 It is the memorial (anamnesis) of the crucified and risen Lord that proclaims and makes effective in the present the one, perfect and sufficient sacrifice by which we are forgiven and reconciled to God. In this memorial the Church is united with the great High Priest as it offers itself in Him to the Father, joins in His continual intercession for the world and proclaims His Word in preaching and in sacrament. By sharing in this way in Christ's sacrifice the People of God are enabled to be servants of forgiveness and reconciliation in the life of the world.
- 1.23 The crucified and risen Christ is present in the Holy Communion in accordance with His promise in the word of Scripture, in the community of the faithful and in the elements of bread and wine. These are the body and blood of Christ not in the sense that they cease to be bread and wine but in that they receive a new meaning as representing the person of Christ who has given Himself on the Cross and now meets with His people. His presence depends upon His own promise; it is discerned and appropriated by the faith of His people.
- 1.24 As we have communion with Christ, so also we have communion with one another. The whole Church is involved in each local celebration. By partaking of the one loaf and the common cup around the same table at the invitation of the same Lord, we are built up as members of His one undivided body, and called to care for, and suffer and rejoice with, all other members in love. Thus Christ joins us together in one new humanity in which the barriers that divide us in this age are broken down. Every celebration of the Lord's Supper is the assurance of the victory of Christ in which we share; it is the occasion

when the future triumph, guaranteed by the death and resurrection of Christ, is celebrated in the present. Thus He sends us forth into all the world to be His witnesses in word and deed.

- 1.25 The Holy Communion has its origin in the saving purpose of God the Father; it is centred in the incarnate Son in whom our release is secured and our sins forgiven; and it is made effective by the power of the Holy Spirit for whom the Church prays to the Father in the Eucharistic liturgy. The Holy Spirit makes real among us the presence of Jesus Christ and makes effective the memorial of His sacrifice once offered. The Holy Spirit inspires the faith that discerns Christ's presence; the sacrifice of praise and prayer that we offer to God; the love which binds us together in Christ and enables us to care for the world; and the hope which confidently affirms that Christ will come again.
- 1.26 Because the Holy Communion is an act of the whole Church, the celebrant is a Minister whose call from God has been recognised by the Church as a whole and who has been set apart by ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. All are welcomed to the Lord's Table who have been baptised and who by faith respond to the grace set forth in their baptism.

Administration of the Sacraments

- 1.27 The Wesleyan tradition affirms that the celebration of the sacraments is an exclusive function of the office to which a Minister is duly ordained.
 - 1.27.1 There is no theological or pragmatic reason why contemporary Methodism should deviate from this tradition.
 - 1.27.2 Clearly it is the right of the Church to decide whom it will ordain for the purpose of administering the sacraments.
 - 1.27.3 If the exigencies of stations, together with our responsibility to evangelise and extend pastoral care, through the administration of the sacraments, indicates that we have insufficient ordained Ministers to exercise a sacramental ministry, then we as a Church must act in accordance with our tradition in meeting this need; that is, we must ordain more people.
 - 1.27.4 An ordained Minister may invite lay persons to assist in the distribution of the elements. A Probationer who has been authorised to administer the sacraments shall first obtain permission from the Superintendent before issuing such invitations.

Dispensation to Probationer Ministers

- 1.28 Conference adopted the following guidelines for granting dispensations to Probationer Ministers to administer the Sacraments:
 - (a) that circumstances in the Circuit concerned clearly require it;
 - (b) that adequate instruction in the doctrine, liturgy and method of administration of the Sacraments be given. (4.36)

Distribution of Holy Communion

- 1.29 Conference resolved that Superintendents may authorise laypersons to distribute the elements as soon as possible after a communion service to persons who are unable through illness or infirmity or for other sufficient reason to be present at that service. Such laypersons shall receive instruction for this ministry. They may read scripture and offer prayer but shall not repeat words of institution and shall make it clear that the communicant is being included in the worship of the congregation.
- 1.30 Conference directs that the elements remaining after a service of Holy Communion be disposed of reverently, and that communion stewards be so instructed.
- 1.31 Conference resolves that if it is necessary to set apart additional bread or wine while the elements are being distributed, the officiating minister shall offer the following or a similar prayer:
 - (a) *Hear us, heavenly Father, and with your Word and Holy Spirit bless this bread/wine that it also may be the sacrament of the precious body/blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who took bread/the cup and said, "This is my body/blood". AMEN.*
- 1.32 Conference draws attention to the fact that The Methodist Church of Southern Africa is in a relationship of reciprocal communion with the other member churches of the Church Unity Commission. Conference therefore affirms that ordained ministers of these churches are permitted to administer the sacraments in Methodist congregations and may be invited to do so, especially when the services of a Methodist minister are not available. Conference resolves that Superintendents consult the Bishop before inviting ministers of churches other than those belonging to the CUC to perform this ministry.
 - (b) *[NB: The member churches of the CUC are the Anglican Church of Southern Africa, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church of South Africa, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, the United Congregational Church of Southern Africa, and the Uniting Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa.]*

Children and Holy Communion

- 1.33 Conference adopted the Statement on Children and Holy Communion:
 - (a) the attitude of Jesus was to include children in His Kingdom;
 - (b) children are able to make a response of faith appropriate to their age and grow in faith by participating in worship;
 - (c) children can make a valid contribution to the life of the Church and should not be separated from their parents in this central act of worship;

- (d) children need to be affirmed and made welcome and to enjoy a greater sense of community in the Church.

1.34 Conference therefore resolves that baptised children who show evidence of faith in Jesus may be admitted to Holy Communion.

Guidelines – Children and Communion

1.35 Conference adopted the following guidelines in respect of the admission of children to Holy Communion:

- (a) the decision as to when a child may receive Communion should be made jointly by the child, the parents, the Leader or Sunday School teacher and the Minister;
- (b) children admitted to Communion are not thereby made Full Members with the right to vote and occupy positions of leadership in the Church. They should be encouraged to prepare themselves to be received as Full Members by the Leaders' Meeting and recognised as such at a service of "Public Reception into Full Membership" or "Confirmation";
- (c) children should be accompanied by a parent or church Leader when they first receive Communion in order to help them to feel at home and to receive the elements appropriately;
- (d) children who do receive Communion should be helped to grow in their understanding and appreciation of the Sacrament. This help should be given by parents and Leaders;
- (e) when a child who has been receiving Communion is transferred to another Society, the Minister should be informed. If Communion is not normally given to children in that Society great sensitivity and patience must be exercised by all the parties concerned;
- (f) some parents do not have their children baptised on the grounds that they cannot make the response of faith but want them to receive Communion. If a child can make the response of faith necessary to receive Communion, that child can also respond in faith to the Sacrament of Baptism and, therefore, should be baptised.

Conference recommends the following reading matter:

"Children and Holy Communion" – British Council of Churches

"Peter and Paula at a Communion Service" – Methodist Division of Education and Youth

"Let the Children Come" – Methodist Publishing House, Cape Town

THE MINISTRY AND ORDINATION

1.36 The source of all ministry is Jesus Christ, who is the true minister (Mark 10:45) and bishop (1 Peter 2:25) and priest (Hebrews 9:11). The Church, as the Body of Christ, carries on Christ's ministry to the world, so that the

Church as a whole is “a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9; Exodus 19:6). The call of God is first and foremost into membership of the Church (1 Peter 2:9, 21; 5:10), so that the Church may glorify God (Ephesians 1:4-6), preach the Gospel (Philippians 1:5, 7) and show the service and love of Christ to all who are in need (John 13:14-16).

- 1.37 From the beginning certain persons were called and appointed to particular forms of ministry, of various kinds and for various purposes, but all directed towards the up building of the Church (1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 5:11-16). Though the New Testament provides evidence for several possible lines of development, it witnesses to the fact that appointment to office is due both to the call and gift of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Ephesians 4:11) and to the Church itself through its ministerial representatives (Acts 6:6; 14:23; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Timothy 1:6). Persons so appointed are as a result set in a new relationship both with Christ and with the Church, and are representative both of the Church and of Christ Himself.
- 1.38 The development in subsequent centuries of the institutional ministry of the Church, already apparent in Acts and the Pastoral Epistles, was in line with the teaching of the New Testament. In the developed pattern there emerged a threefold order of bishops, presbyters and deacons, in which the bishop was seen as the focus of unity, linking the local church to the Church universal, of which he was the chief minister in each place. In Methodism, as in certain Reformation Churches, the threefold order of ministry was not retained, but we believe our pattern also to be in line with the teaching of the New Testament.
- 1.39 Ordination describes the act by which Christians are authorised by the Church to act in its name and on its behalf in certain ways. By the same act the ordained persons receive the grace of God in response to the prayers of the Church to enable them to fulfil the ministry to which they are ordained. In the Methodist Church they are set apart for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments and the pastoral oversight of the People of God.
- 1.40 Because of its importance the rite of ordination has always been accompanied by certain outward signs, which have always included the laying on of hands with prayer. The ordaining Minister has been the one who best represents the fullness of the universal Church. In episcopal Churches the Minister of ordination has therefore all along been the Bishop. In the Methodist Church the ordination is authorised by Conference that represents the wider Church and is performed on its behalf by the Presiding Bishop and other presbyters. The ordained Minister is recognised as being ordained to the ministry of the Church of God, and not simply of the Methodist Church.
- 1.41 The ordained Minister is one of the outward signs of the unity of the Church in space and time. For this reason ordination is one element among many in the concept of apostolic succession, whereby the Church today is linked to the Church of previous centuries and to the time of the New Testament.

- 1.42 Ordination places ordained Ministers in a new relation both with Christ and with the Church. Under Christ they are the leaders and teachers of the congregation, setting forth in their own life the headship of Christ over themselves and over the Church.
- 1.43 As president at the Holy Communion, the presbyter represents the whole Church and shows the Communion to be the act of the whole Church as it offers unceasing worship of God.
- 1.44 In the life and ministry of the ordained Minister is focused the calling of every member of the people (Laos) of God, so that though the ordained Minister has a different commission and authority from other members of the Laos, the distinction must not be overstressed.

CHAPTER 2

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NAME OF THE CHURCH

- 2.1. The Name of the church shall be The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, formerly named The Wesleyan Church of South Africa.
 - 2.1.1. “All movable and immovable property of any kind or nature, including all interest in and rights to moveable and immoveable property and all Mortgage Bonds, debts, securities, obligations and benefits of all existing contracts shall continue to vest and be owned by and be receivable, recoverable and enforceable by The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, formerly named ‘The Wesleyan Church of South Africa’”.

BEGINNINGS OF THE CHURCH

- 2.2 As part of its missionary activities the Yearly Conference of Great Britain, generally known as the British Conference, commenced work in South Africa in the year 1814 when its first missionary landed in South Africa.

In the course of time the work grew and the Missions spread, and it became increasingly inconvenient and difficult for the Missions to be controlled and directed from England.

Acting therefore under the powers which it possessed, the British Conference, in 1882, constituted a South African Conference with jurisdiction over all Methodist Missions, Churches and Ministers in South Africa, exclusive of the Transvaal Province subject, however, to the stipulations that the South African Conference should be affiliated to it, and that the British Conference should also retain a measure of control as regards the election of the President of, and the legislation by, the South African Conference.

For good and sufficient reasons then prevailing, the Missions in the Transvaal Province, with the Ministers and Churches associated therewith, were excluded from the jurisdiction of the South African Conference, and the British Conference continued to exercise jurisdiction there over.

INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY

- 2.3 The South African Conference exercised its jurisdiction and carried out its functions subject to the stipulations made by the British Conference until

the year 1926 when the South African Conference resolved that it would be in the interests of both that the affiliation and control should cease, and that the South African Conference should become an independent body under the name of 'the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa' having full control over its Members and Properties.

Legislation was necessary to achieve the objects desired, and this was therefore obtained from the Parliament of the Union of South Africa in the passing of the 'Wesleyan Methodist Church (Private) Act 1927', under and by the terms of which the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa became an independent and autonomous body in full control of all its Members and Properties.

INCORPORATION OF THE TRANSVAAL MISSIONS

- 2.4 Provision was made in the Act referred to for the Transvaal Missions to be incorporated with the South African Church and brought under the jurisdiction of the South African Conference at any time that the British and South African Conference should by resolution so decide and in the year 1932, the said Conference having so resolved, the Transvaal Missions were brought into the South African Church and under the South African Conference.

UNION WITH PRIMITIVE METHODIST CHURCH

- 2.5 From the year 1870 the Primitive Methodist Connexion of Great Britain had carried on as a branch of its activities certain Missionary Work in the Union of South Africa, which branch was known as 'The Primitive Methodist Missions', and was administered and controlled by the Conference of the Connexion in England.

In 1930 both the Conference of the Primitive Methodist Connexion of Great Britain and the Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa resolved that it would be in the interests of Methodism in South Africa to unite with the Methodist Church of South Africa, and for the Primitive Methodist Conference in England to cease to carry on and control the work and operations of the Missions and relinquish the same, together with all properties connected therewith, to and in favour of the Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa.

They further resolved that because of the union referred to and the then impending union of the Methodist Churches in Great Britain under the name of 'The Methodist Church', the name of the Church in South Africa should be changed from the 'Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa' to that of 'The Methodist Church of South Africa'.

Legislation was necessary to effect the foregoing objects and this was therefore obtained from the Union Parliament in the passing of 'The Methodist Church of South Africa (Private) Act 1932', under and by the terms of which the union of the Primitive Methodist Missions with the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa was duly effected and the name and designation of the united Church became 'The Methodist Church of South Africa'.

AREA OF OPERATION

- 2.6 The Church is established and carries on work within the boundaries of the Republic of South Africa, and in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland.
 - 2.6.1 Its area of operation may be extended at any time by resolution of the Conference, which also had special power under the now repealed Act of 1978 to unite or amalgamate with any other Church or religious body, whether the same be within or without the limits of the present area of operation.

CHAPTER 3

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

- 3.1. The conditions, privileges and duties of membership in the Methodist Church follow the tradition common to the Methodist People from the beginning. Membership is not conditional upon the profession of theological tenets, or dependent upon traditional authority or ecclesiastical ritual. It is based upon a personal experience of the Lord Jesus Christ, brought about by the Spirit, ranging from the earliest signs of Divine Grace in the soul to its crowning blessedness in the joy of ‘perfect love’, and upon a sharing of such gifts of grace with others seeking or enjoying a similar experience.
- 3.2. All persons are welcomed into membership who sincerely desire to be saved from their sins through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and show the same in life and conduct, and who seek to have communion with Christ Himself and His people by taking up the duties and privileges of the Methodist Church.

THE METHODIST ETHOS

Christian Community:

- 3.3. As the law of love is the law of Christ for all His disciples, the spirit and practice of Christian love is an indispensable condition of faithful membership in the Methodist Church. The spiritual and ethical ideal of this fellowship has always been, and still is, that its members should constantly seek to be made perfect in love – ‘pure love filling the heart and governing all words and actions’. The standard set by the Apostles is the high vocation of the Methodist Church. ‘With all possible wisdom we warn and teach them in order to bring each one into God’s presence as a mature individual in union with Christ’. Sharing in Christian community is therefore incumbent upon every Member of the Church. The distinctive Methodist institutions of the Class Meeting, the Love Feast, and the Covenant Service are based upon the assumption that those who love the Lord Jesus and seek to do His Will shall become helpers one of another. None is excused from this debt of love. The Church owes special and tender care to those who have excluded themselves from the means of grace.

The Methodist Rule of Life:

- 3.4. Upon the same foundation of Christian love rest the social obligations and the sacrificial service for the Kingdom of God, to which those who confess Christ commit themselves after the example of their Lord and Master. No

code of rules can fully contain these obligations. ‘The Rules of the Society of the People called Methodists’, drawn up by John and Charles Wesley in 1743, still enshrines the spirit of fellowship and universal fervour in the new world order of social relations and civic and international responsibilities.

- 3.5. The directions we accept as our rule of life from the early Methodists fall into three principal groups:
 - 3.5.1 that of ‘doing no harm, avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is more generally practiced’. Besides the open and publicly acknowledged sins of life, all doubtful and dissipating pleasures, selfish indulgence, personal ostentation, love of money and covetousness, all gains made to the injury of others by trading upon their ignorance, weakness or necessity, all dishonest evasion of lawful dues or neglect of civic duties, all abuse of public office or influence for private ends, and all foolish, careless or malicious talk come under this condemnation;
 - 3.5.2 that of ‘doing good by being merciful after one’s own power, doing good of every possible sort to the bodies of people as well as to their souls and, as far as possible, to all’. Within this obligation are embraced personal testimony for Christ, sacrificial giving to the work of God, missionary effort, the manifold forms of social and philanthropic service, and the pressing necessity for promoting lasting peace and goodwill among all people. Every Methodist should be an evangelist and in spirit a missionary. The familiar line, ‘O let me commend my Saviour to you’, expresses the true genius of Methodism;
 - 3.5.3 that of ‘attending upon all the ordinances of God’. These include public worship of God, observance of the Lord’s Supper, maintenance of Christian community, private prayer, reading the Scriptures, and habits of self-discipline. The practice of family worship is earnestly commended. The New Testament contemplates families as Christian as well as individuals.

ADMISSION AND PUBLIC RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

- 3.6 Persons falling under the category set out in para 3.2 shall be admitted as Members on Trial to Preparation Classes, also called Confirmation Classes. They shall continue On Trial for not less than three months before the Leaders’ Meeting considers them for admission to membership.
- 3.7 If the Leaders’ Meeting declares any person On Trial to be unfit for membership, the Superintendent shall not admit such person. The guiding principles when the Leaders’ Meeting makes such a decision shall be those set out in para 3.2.
- 3.8 New Members shall be publicly received at a service conducted by the Minister in the presence of the Church, which shall be followed by the administration of the Lord’s Supper. If they have not received Christian Baptism, that

Sacrament shall be administered either before or in the Reception Service.

- 3.9 The Public Reception of new Members, also called Confirmation, in a solemn service of recognition, commitment, prayer and blessing, is in accordance with long-established Christian practice. It emphasises the responsibility being accepted by the candidate, the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the shared life of the Church.
- 3.10 When persons admitted into membership of the Church have been publicly received, the Certificate of Public Reception of Members approved by Conference shall be used.
- 3.11 A Member is a person who has been confirmed in the Society or duly transferred to the Society, and whose membership has not been removed or suspended by due process.
- 3.12 All Members are required to acquaint themselves with and observe the requirements of Church Members, which includes adherence to the Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church.
- 3.13 A Roll of Church Members shall be kept in every Society. The number of Members, and of persons admitted on Trial as taken at the Synods, shall be the number recorded in the annual return of Members.

CLASS MEETINGS

- 3.14 As membership in the Church also involves Christian community it is the duty of all members in the Church to seek to cultivate this in every possible way. The weekly Class Meeting, which includes Home Bible Study and Fellowship Groups, has from the beginning proved to be the most effective way of maintaining true communion in Christian experience. It is intended to provide Christian community and instruction.
- 3.15 Members should have their names entered in a Class Book and be under the Pastoral care of a Class Leader. They are expected, as far as possible, to contribute to the funds of the Church and to do some form of Christian service.

TRANSFER OF MEMBERS

- 3.16 When Members move from one Circuit to another, the Superintendent or resident Minister of the Society from which they move shall give them a signed Note of Removal, and shall send to the Superintendent or deputy of the Circuit into which they remove, a duplicate of this Note of Removal.

ADHERENTS

- 3.17 Adherents are in general all persons linked with the life of the Church who are not Full Members or Members on Trial. This category includes:
 - 3.17.1 children or young people who attend Sunday School or are regularly associated with the youth work of the Church;

- 3.17.2 pre-school or school children of parents who are members or adherents of the Methodist Church and have not themselves joined another denomination;
- 3.17.3 adults who are neither members nor members on trial but who associate with the Methodist Church as:
 - (a) Worshippers;
 - (b) Parents of Sunday School scholars;
 - (c) Persons receiving pastoral care who regard themselves as Methodists;
 - (d) Persons who claim to be Methodist by virtue of confirmation in the past but who are not at present in regular communion with a Society;
 - (e) Members of other Churches who participate in the life of the Methodist Congregation but do not wish to transfer their membership;
 - (f) Members of any organisation associated with the Methodist Church;
 - (g) Contributors to the funds of the Church.

THE METHODIST DISCIPLINE

- 3.18 No member, acting in their personal or official capacity, shall institute legal proceedings against the Church or any Minister or member thereof for any matter that in any way arises from or relates to the mission, work, activities or governance of the Church, unless circumstances require immediate reporting due to statutory requirements. The process and forums referred to in paragraph 5.17 must be used.
- 3.19 In the event of a complaint being lodged against a member the procedures set out in Chapter 11 must be followed.
- 3.20 Members who create or encourage dissension and strife in their own Circuit or any other part of the Church, or who continuously rail against the Doctrine and Discipline of the Connexion and/or of the Church's appointments/representatives/office holders, or who lapse into sin, or who otherwise violate the law of God or of the Church may have a complaint laid against them by another member with the District Discipline Registrar (DDR). This shall be in writing.
- 3.21 *Members who have ceased to meet*
 - 3.21.1 Members of the Church who without sufficient reason persistently absent themselves from the Lords' Supper, from the meetings for Christian fellowship, or from public worship, shall be visited by both the Leader and their Minister in order that through personal persuasion full opportunity may be offered for their return to the fellowship of the Church. The true spirit of Methodist discipline requires that it

be exercised in harmony with the law of Christ and with tenderness, patience and fidelity, seeking rather to win them back to Christ than to discontinue them.

- 3.21.2 Failing all efforts, the member shall be regarded as ceased to meet and their names removed from the roll.

Chapter 4

MINISTRY OF WORD AND SACRAMENT

GENERAL

- 4.1. Except where the context indicates otherwise, ‘Ministers’ shall include ordained Ministers, Supernumeraries and Probationer ministers, as well as Candidates who have been accepted and appointed by the Connexional Executive but who have not yet commenced Probation.

Relating to those in training, there are 4 categories:

1. **Candidates** for ministry are those who have applied to become Ministers and have not yet been received by the Connexional Executive.
 2. **Conference-appointed Seminarians** are those received by the church but not titled, not collared, until they exit from Seminary.
 3. **Probationers** who have been collared upon stationing and are preparing for ordination.
 4. **Ordinands** are those approved by Connexional Executive to be ordained in the ensuing Conference.
- 4.2. The Church encourages those who are called of God and who have the qualities of Christian character, evangelical zeal and preaching ability to offer for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. The primary qualifications for the work of the Christian Ministry are the sense of a divine call, spiritual and intellectual gifts, the graces of Christian character, and the fruits of Christian service.
- 4.3. A Minister who is so called has a covenantal relationship but not contractual relationship with the Church. The church provides ministers with the opportunity to practice their calling in or through this covenantal relationship.
- 4.4. The Church recognises its pastoral responsibility to care for the welfare of its Ministers. Nevertheless, notwithstanding any provision contained in the Laws and Discipline or the decisions of Conference or of the Connexional Executive which seem to indicate the contrary, no legally enforceable contract shall exist at any time between the Church or any of its Circuits on one hand and a Minister on the other hand, in respect of the payment of stipends, allowances or any other material benefit, in cash or kind, the provision of a station or any benefit of any kind which may have at any stage accrued to a Minister.

CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY

- 4.5 A Candidate shall be a practicing Christian, committed to Jesus Christ and be a full member in good standing of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for at least two years.
- 4.6 The minimum educational standard of Candidates for the Ministry is the Matriculation Certificate, or an equivalent qualification.
- 4.7 A Candidate shall have the minimum credits as prescribed by EMMU from time to time.
- 4.8 The Superintendent of a married Candidate shall satisfy Synod that the Candidate's spouse has accepted the implications and demands of being married to a Minister.

Candidating Procedure:

- 4.9 A Superintendent who intends to nominate a Candidate shall notify the Director of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit in writing by closing date as stipulated by EMMU from time to time and shall forward to the Director the prescribed documents. The Candidate shall have already been recommended by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.
- 4.10 The Director shall forward the stipulated documents to the Superintendent of a Candidate, to be dealt with as directed.
- 4.11 Successful candidates are expected to pay towards their training.
- 4.12 A Candidate shall be nominated by the Superintendent in the Quarterly Meeting of the Circuit in which the Candidate is a Member and Local Preacher. The Superintendent's recommendation shall include the subjects of age, spirituality, involvement in the life and work of the Church, moral character, suitability for ministry, knowledge of and attachment to our doctrines and discipline, health, freedom from debt, and, where the Candidate is married, the attitude of the spouse to being married to a Minister. The Superintendent shall sign the recommendation.
- 4.13 If a Candidate has not resided for two years continuously in the Circuit, the Superintendent of that Circuit shall obtain a written report concerning the Candidate from the former Superintendent or Superintendents so as to cover the previous two years, and shall present it to the Quarterly Meeting and Synod.
- 4.14 The Quarterly Meeting shall give special attention to the Candidate's suitability as a Minister. If the Meeting approves the nomination, the Candidate shall be admitted to the usual examinations and, if successful, be recommended by the Superintendent to Synod. The character of the voting in the Quarterly Meeting shall be recorded and forwarded immediately to EMMU and Synod together with the Superintendent's written recommendation.

Examinations and Selection:

- 4.15 All Candidates shall be examined according to the syllabus published by the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit.

- 4.16 In each District a Candidates' Screening Committee appointed by the Bishop shall interview Candidates for the Ministry prior to Synod. The Committee shall comprise at least two Ministers, and three lay Members, with the District Supervisor of Studies as convener. The Education for Ministry and Mission Unit shall send delegates from its Connexional Committee. The prescribed form and procedure shall be followed including whatever prior medical and other testing is specified. The Committee shall report its impression of each Candidate and make its recommendations to Synod.
- 4.17 All Candidates shall be examined at Synod respecting their Christian experience, call to the Ministry, belief in Methodist doctrine, and attachment to Methodist discipline. Each Candidate shall be required to give the following undertakings:
- 4.17.1 I will adhere to the Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church;
 - 4.17.2 I will accept and obey the discipline and decisions of Conference and the Connexional Executive;
 - 4.17.3 I will go to whichever Circuit or Station I am appointed;
 - 4.17.4 I will not malign this Church, its Ministers, doctrines or practices;
 - 4.17.5 Should I leave the Ministry of this Church for any reason, I will not conduct another Ministry in the Circuit or area to which I was appointed;
 - 4.17.6 Should I leave this Church, I will not encourage any member or adherent of the Church to follow me;
 - 4.17.7 Should I leave this Church I will accept the decision of the Connexional Executive or of the Presiding Bishop governing the termination of my service and my occupancy of Church property.
- 4.18 Each Candidate who has been recommended by the Screening Committee and has the required academic ability to proceed with candidature shall conduct at least two trial services in the presence of at least two Ministers and two lay Members of the District, to be selected by the Bishop, but excluding the Superintendent who nominated the Candidate. One of these trial services is to be conducted in the Candidate's home Circuit, and one in another Circuit. A report of the services shall be made in Synod and forwarded to EMMU.
- 4.19 The Candidate's marks, the recommendation signed by the Superintendent and the report on the Trial Service shall be entered in the Minutes of Synod.
- 4.20 A Candidate who has satisfied the above requirements is then referred to the Connexional Executive and, if accepted, shall commence probation or training at the beginning of the following year.

Regulations Respecting Candidates

- 4.21 Candidature Process is described annually in the Year Book.

4.22 Re-candidature

Where candidature is unsuccessful and the candidate offers in a subsequent year, the Superintendent shall submit a special report through the Unit to the District Screening Committee and Synod in addition to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting Vote. The candidate shall have to complete all of the required tasks and expectations for candidature each time s/he re-candidates. A person whose candidature has not been accepted for three (3) consecutive years may only recandidature after a period of two (2) years. The same two (2) year rule shall apply to probationers who have been discontinued.

4.23 Candidates from Moçambique

Candidates from the Moçambique Mission may have their examinations conducted in Portuguese.

4.24 Approval of District Screening Committee

Candidates who do not receive the approval of the majority of the District Screening Committee shall not appear before the Synod. Reports must be forwarded to the Bishop and Director of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit.

PROBATIONERS***Length of Probation:***

- 4.25 Notwithstanding any provision contained in this Chapter, the Connexional Executive may determine any Candidate's or Probationer's fitness for Ordination, or Minister from another church's readiness for acceptance into Full Connexion and may dispense with any requirement normally required of a Candidate or Probationer for Ordination.

Synod Examinations:

- 4.26 Probationers shall be examined orally at Synod in the prescribed subjects.

Seminarians

- 4.27 All Conference Appointed Seminarians shall receive theological training from the Seminary as directed by Conference.
- 4.28 A Conference Appointed Seminarian shall answer Synod on behalf of the full complement of Conference Appointed Seminarians when the discipline questions are asked at Synod.
- 4.29 A Conference Appointed Seminarian who must unavoidably be absent for any part of the academic term shall first obtain the permission of the person in authority at the Seminary and the EMMU Director. When necessary, the relevant Bishop/s shall be informed.
- 4.30 Candidates going to the Seminary do not ordinarily fit into the Methodist Joint Removals scheme (MJR). Furnished accommodation is provided at the

Seminary and a minimal amount of belongings which can be transported in the candidate's own vehicle may be taken. Only in exceptional cases, approved by the Finance Unit, will seminarian moves be considered. MJR covers costs pertaining to moves from the seminary when stationed.

SUPERVISION OF PROBATIONERS' STUDIES AND WORK

- 4.31 The Superintendent of each Probationer shall present a written report to Synod on the Probationer's Circuit work.
- 4.32 A Minister in each District shall be appointed by Synod as District Supervisor of Studies who is to meet the following requirements:
 - 4.32.1 A passion for forming persons for the vocation of ministry.
 - 4.32.2 A high level of administrative skill and competency (including Computer literacy, or the availability of an office that can perform such functions as record keeping, typing, email and, or, fax communication).
 - 4.32.3 Own transport and the ability to travel within the District and Connexion when needed.
 - 4.32.4 A pastoral concern for ministers in training, and the training needs of the laity.
 - 4.32.5 The ability to mark/evaluate the work of ministers in training (such assessment includes both academic and vocational competency).
 - 4.32.6 Teaching and facilitation skills.
 - 4.32.7 Impeccable religious and moral character.
 - 4.32.8 A sense of responsibility to the Connexion, the District and the local Circuit.
 - 4.32.9 A clear understanding of the polity of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa as it relates to education and ministerial formation.
 - 4.32.10 An ability to build and oversee the work of a strong District EMMU team.
 - 4.32.11 A willingness to stay current with the training regime of the Church.
 - 4.32.12 A minimum of an honours degree in Theology or obvious suitability for the work, and at least five (5) years post Ordination experience in Ministry.
- 4.33 The District Supervisor of Studies shall present to Synod a written report of the studies of all Probationers.

Probationers in Circuit

- 4.34 The primary purpose of ministerial training is the study of the Scriptures and associated subjects in preparation for the work of the ministry. While Ministers and Probationers are encouraged to follow other courses of study, their training shall not thereby be deflected from its primary purpose.
- 4.35 When a Probationer is first appointed to a Circuit, the Bishop or someone appointed by the Bishop shall hold an Induction Service.

- 4.36 A Probationer may, with the recommendation of the Superintendent and the written endorsement of the Bishop, be granted a Certificate of Authority by the Presiding Bishop to administer the Sacraments according to our established usages. Such Certificate is valid for only the year of issue and only within the Circuit for which it was issued.
- 4.37 Only a duly designated marriage officer may perform any of the legal components of the marriage as stipulated in The Marriage Act.
- 4.38 No Probationer other than a Candidate for Ordination shall be invited to labour in a Circuit.
- 4.39 Before entering upon marriage a Probationer shall consult colleagues and inform the Superintendent, the Bishop and the General Secretary.

REGULATIONS RESPECTING PROBATIONER MINISTERS

General Regulations for Probationers' Examinations

- 4.40 The minimum pass mark for all examinations conducted by the Unit is 50%. The following classes apply:
 - A = Excellent (80% and above)
 - B = Very Good (70%-79%)
 - C = Good (60%-69%)
 - D = Fair (55%-59%)
 - E = Weak (50%-54%)
 - F = Failure (49% and under)

4.40.1 *Failure in Examinations*

Synods shall give serious attention to the examination record and, in the interests of both the Church and the Probationer concerned, shall not condone repeated failure when considering whether Probationers have competent abilities for our work.

The following procedure shall be adopted when Probationers fail in Scripture or in Aggregate for the second time in the course of Probation, with a view to ascertaining whether they have competent abilities for our work:

The Director of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit shall submit to the Synod concerned a detailed record of the Probationer's results and the decisions of Synods and the Connexional Executive in previous years.

The Synod shall consider the above record and make a special investigation of the Circuit work and general ability that shall be reported to the Connexional Executive through the Unit.

4.40.2 *In Service Training*

Probationers who are not at Seminary and all Ordained Ministers On

Trial shall be part of In Service Training. The purpose is to continue the integration of academic studies and practical skills started at Seminary and to afford regular meetings between groups of Probationers and experienced Ministers. These groups should meet for no less than 8 days per annum.

Ordinands will not be part of In Service Training but will attend a pre-ordination retreat and follow a structured program of preparation for Ordination.

4.40.3 *Trial Services*

Probationer Ministers in Circuit shall preach a trial service annually PRIOR TO SYNOD. It shall be standard practice for the Trial Service Committee to meet with the Probationer and give constructive and helpful comments, and for this to take place immediately, or as soon as possible, after the service.

4.40.4 *Synod Oral Examinations*

During Synod each Probationer serving in a Circuit appointment shall be orally examined by a small committee of Synod.

ORDINATION AND ADMISSION INTO FULL CONNEXION

- 4.41 The normal course of Probation is six years of which at least two years shall be spent in Circuit work. The Connexional Executive may defer a Probationer's ordination so that the Probationer may complete two years in Circuit work. Advancement in Probation takes effect from the beginning of the following year. Ordination shall usually take place in the sixth year of probation. However EMMU may, when relevant circumstances demand, recommend to the Connexional Executive/Conference that ordination should occur in any other year as determined by the Connexional Executive or Conference.
- 4.42 Synods may examine and recommend for Ordination and Reception into Full Connexion only such Probationers as were designated Ordinands in the previous year.

Ordinands' Examinations:

- 4.43 Each Candidate for Ordination shall conduct a Trial Service before at least two but preferably three Ministers and one lay Member in the District, who shall give a written report to Synod. The report shall use the approved mark-sheet and contain a brief outline of the sermon and a general description of the service.
- 4.44 Candidates for Ordination are required, in their District, to make a Public Witness of their Conversion, Call to the Ministry, and present Christian experience. The Minister appointed to preside at such a meeting shall report to Synod on the Candidate's witness.

- 4.45 Each Candidate for Ordination shall be orally examined by Synod as determined by the Connexional Executive and shall reaffirm the undertakings given at Candidature.
- 4.46 Each Ordinand shall be required to give the following undertakings:
- 4.46.1 I will adhere to the Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church;
 - 4.46.2 I will accept and obey the discipline and decisions of Conference and the Connexional Executive;
 - 4.46.3 I will go to whichever Circuit or Station I am appointed;
 - 4.46.4 I will not malign this Church, its Ministers, doctrines or practices;
 - 4.46.5 Should I leave the Ministry of this Church for any reason, I will not conduct another Ministry in the Circuit or area to which I was appointed;
 - 4.46.6 Should I leave this Church, I will not encourage any member or adherent of the Church to follow me;
 - 4.46.7 Should I leave this Church I will accept the decision of the Connexional Executive or of the Presiding Bishop governing the termination of my service and my occupancy of Church property.
- 4.47 Having satisfied all requirements the Candidate may be received into Full Connexion.

Full Connexion:

- 4.48 Full Connexion refers to a Minister's relation to Conference and includes authorisation to perform the work of a Minister in the Circuits and to administer the Sacraments; a Minister in Full Connexion shares the fellowship of other Ministers and, subject to para 4.3, enjoys the care and protection of Conference especially in regard to the provision of opportunities of service in the Circuits. It confers both privilege and responsibility on the Minister.

Ordination:

- 4.49 Candidates for Ordination, before or after they have been received into Full Connexion, are ordained by the solemn imposition of hands at a special public service conducted by the Presiding Bishop and the General Secretary, assisted by other Ministers. If approved by the Presiding Bishop, ordained Ministers from other Christian denominations may be invited to assist.
- 4.50 A Minister so ordained shall receive a Certificate of Ordination signed by the Presiding Bishop, the General Secretary and the assisting Ministers.

TRANSFERS FROM OTHER CHURCHES

- 4.51 An Ordained Minister of another Christian Church who desires to enter the Methodist Ministry shall apply to the District Bishop. The applicant's denomination must be part of the CUC Churches or Traditional Mission churches.

- 4.51.1 The applicant shall provide the Bishop with a letter of recommendation from their Church.
 - 4.51.2 The applicant shall possess the basic education qualification (Std 10/ Grade 12) or equivalent and at least a Diploma or Degree in Theology from a Seminary or University registered with the HED and recognised by EMMU.
 - 4.51.3 The applicant must be able to serve the MCSA for at least ten years, including their years of training as MINISTERS on TRIAL.
 - 4.51.4 No application will be considered from people above 65 years of age who apply to be considered Supernumeraries in the MCSA.
 - 4.51.5 The Bishop shall immediately appoint a Pastoral Commission to listen to the applicant.
 - 4.51.6 The Bishop shall forward such names and respective contact details to the EMMU no later than 31 July each year.
- 4.52 The procedures that apply in respect of Ministers transferring in are available in the annual Year Book.
- 4.53 Ordained Ministers, whose ordination is recognised, may be received as ordained Ministers on Trial, and shall:
- 4.53.1 serve a trial period of not less than two years but no longer than four years;
 - 4.53.2 complete the required studies and in service training within the On Trial period;
 - 4.53.3 in the final year partake in the usual programme and Synod Examination for Ordinands;
 - 4.53.4 be received into Full Connexion at the Annual Conference or Ordination Service.

TRANSFER TO OTHER CHURCHES OR CONFERENCES

Other Methodist Conferences:

- 4.54 A Minister wishing to transfer to another Conference of the Methodist Church shall request permission to negotiate such transfer from the Presiding Bishop through the Bishop.
- 4.55 The Presiding Bishop has discretion to grant such permission and authorise the General Secretary to provide the Conference to which application is being made with such information and documentation as it may require.
- 4.56 When the Conference to which application has been made indicates in writing that it is willing to accept the Minister, the applicant shall be transferred to the relevant Conference as a Minister in good standing.
- 4.57 Such transfers shall take effect at the end of our Connexional year unless arrangements for supply have been made which are satisfactory to all parties.

Other Churches:

- 4.58 A Minister who wishes to transfer to another Church (other than a Conference of the Methodist Church) may request permission from the Presiding Bishop through the relevant District Bishop, to negotiate such transfer. The Presiding Bishop shall appoint a Pastoral Commission to consider the request and to ascertain whether:
- 4.58.1 the application arises from serious doctrinal or disciplinary disagreements with Conference;
 - 4.58.2 the Minister, if already ordained, will be received as an ordained Minister by the Church to which the transfer is to be made.
- 4.59 On receipt of the report of the Pastoral Commission, the Presiding Bishop has discretion to:
- 4.59.1 reserve the matter for decision by the Connexional Executive;
 - 4.59.2 grant permission for the Minister to negotiate such transfer while continuing to serve;
 - 4.59.3 require the Minister to resign and authorise the General Secretary to provide a statement of the Minister's service and standing.
- 4.60 A Minister seeking a transfer to another Church shall give adequate notice to the Bishop and Circuit officials to afford a fair opportunity to fill the resultant vacancy by invitation.
- 4.60.1 when the Minister is to leave at the end of the period of invitation, at least one year's notice shall be given.
 - 4.60.2 when the Minister will not complete the period of invitation, at least two years' notice shall be given.
 - 4.60.3 the Connexional Executive may waive or reduce the requirements in para. 4.60.1 or 4.60.2.

APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL OF MINISTERS

- 4.61 The Connexional Executive reviews all appointments annually and appoints all Ministers, as published in the Annual Directory, for 12 calendar months from the 20th December following their appointment, subject always to the Laws and Discipline. Any invitation of a Minister or recommendation at the instance of the Church about any appointment, shall not derogate from the authority of the Connexional Executive to decide the annual appointments of all Ministers. Before making such annual appointments, notwithstanding any provision contained in the Laws and Discipline or any practice or usage of the Church and without derogating from the Connexional Executive's sole discretion as to the process it may choose to follow before any specific appointment is made, no Minister shall have the right to be heard by the Connexional Executive.
- 4.62 Ministers who are removing shall arrive in their new Circuits not later than the 20th December, from which date their duties shall commence.
- 4.63 No Minister leaving a Circuit shall continue to occupy the Circuit house after

the 19th December or from the date on which the successor is to arrive. Any exception to this provision shall require the approval of the successor, the Superintendent, and the Bishop.

- 4.64 The rules governing the removal of Ministers shall govern the removal of Ministers becoming Supernumeraries.
- 4.65 Ministers shall not perform any official duty in any other Circuit without the approval of the Superintendent of that Circuit.
- 4.66 No Minister may travel outside the Connexion without the approval of the Bishop and advising the Presiding Bishop.
- 4.67 For regulations regarding The Invitation of Ministers refer to Chapter 7 para 15.

Ministers left Without Appointment:

- 4.68 Should the Connexional Executive decide to leave a Minister without appointment to any Circuit or Connexional office for a two (2) year period, it may ask such Minister to resign from the Ministry of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa. If the resignation is not made, the Minister shall be deemed to have resigned on the expiry of such a period.

Ministers 'Without Appointment (Marriage)':

- 4.69 If a suitable appointment is not found for a Minister by reason of circumstances arising from their marriage, such Minister may apply to be classified as 'without appointment (marriage)'. This application is to be made through the Synod of the District in which such Minister is currently stationed and the Minister is expected, as far as possible, to complete the current year of service. If so classified, the Minister's category is to be changed to that of "Non Itinerant and Non Stipendiary." The Minister's name is printed in the Circuit where they reside as 'without appointment (marriage)' but the Minister remains under the discipline applying to Ministers and is expected to give such help to the Circuit as circumstances permit. In appropriate cases the Minister may receive remuneration for duties undertaken by decision of the Quarterly Meeting. The Minister is a member of the Quarterly Meeting.
- 4.70 A Minister who is 'without appointment (marriage)' shall attend Synod and answer the usual Discipline questions.

Maternity Leave:

- 4.71 If a Minister becomes pregnant, the Circuit shall make the best arrangements possible in consultation with the Bishop. Such arrangements include, but are not limited to, requesting the Presiding Bishop:
 - 4.71.1 to relieve the Minister of the duties associated with the appointment;
 - 4.71.2 to appoint a Supply;
 - 4.71.3 to authorise or negotiate equitable arrangements relative to the stipend and allowances.

- 4.72 The following arrangements shall apply if a Minister becomes pregnant:
- 4.72.1 The Minister shall commence maternity leave two months before the birth of the child and shall be entitled to a further six months after the birth. If the Circuit and the Minister are in agreement she may resume duty earlier or start maternity leave earlier.
 - 4.72.2 A Minister commencing maternity leave shall receive her full stipend for three months. She shall also be paid for any annual leave or long leave that is included in her maternity leave.
 - 4.72.3 A Minister on maternity leave is entitled to continue to reside in the Circuit house if such an arrangement is acceptable to the Circuit.
 - 4.72.4 If a change of station is due to take place in the period of maternity leave, both Circuits shall be involved in the arrangements.
 - 4.72.5 A Minister who is pregnant may apply for leave of absence until such time as family responsibilities allow her to resume her calling. In this event, she may be required to vacate the Circuit house but is entitled to the payments referred to in para. 4.72.2.
 - 4.72.6 The Bishop shall ensure that the Minister and the Circuit to which she is appointed are aware of these provisions before she takes up her appointment.

DUTIES OF MINISTERS

- 4.73 Ministers, as those who have been overwhelmed by the saving love of Jesus Christ, are called to proclaim by word and by deed this saving love for all people. As the Lord has accepted all sinners without condition, so Ministers must declare unconditional acceptance and forgiveness for all. A Minister's duty is to use the pulpit to preach this Gospel and this Gospel only, preaching both pastorally and prophetically. Therefore they must faithfully nurture their own spiritual life, they must be diligent in preparation and in studying the Scriptures and other material which will provide equipment for their Calling, and their homes must be led in such a way as to be a witness to the Gospel. Ministers are to be servants of all Christ's people by being pastors to them in their homes and in every other situation. The Minister's duty is to set before the people by precept and example the ideal of Scriptural Holiness, and to instruct people in Christian faith and life.
- 4.74 Ministers are to preach and to perform all acts of Worship, to exercise oversight and to apply the Methodist Discipline, in the churches or other places of worship already erected or to be erected in the Circuit to which they are appointed.
- 4.75 Ministers shall administer the Sacraments but shall not, without the approval of the Bishop, use set forms of worship for the Sacraments other than those that have been authorised by Conference.
- 4.76 Ministers shall observe and implement the provisions of Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church.

- 4.77 Ministers shall use every effort to maintain Class Meetings, directing both public instruction and private pastoral influence toward this object.

Officiating at Ordinations in other Churches:

- 4.78 A Minister may not officiate at the ordination of any person to the Christian Ministry in another Church without the authority of the Bishop.

4.79 General Regulations

4.79.1 Review of Ministry

For accountability purposes, every Minister's work shall be reviewed bi-annually through an interview process (Review of Ministry).

4.79.2 Continuing Ministerial Education in Districts

Bishops shall ensure that all Ministers in their Districts undergo post-Ordination training.

4.79.3 African Language Study

All Ministers are urged to undertake the study of at least 1 (one) African language.

4.79.4 Invitations to Visiting Speakers from Outside

Before inviting a visiting speaker from outside The Methodist Church of Southern Africa to conduct a preaching or teaching mission in any Circuit, the Superintendent shall obtain the approval of the Bishop and, if necessary, the Presiding Bishop.

4.79.5 Marrying Members of another Society

- (a) Ministers, when asked to marry people whose membership is with another Methodist Circuit or Society, should ask them for a letter of approval from their own Minister.
- (b) When one of the partners is a member of another denomination, and chooses to remain a member of that church, that person either brings a letter of approval from the Minister, or if that is not possible, undertakes to advise the Minister.

SUPERNUMERARY MINISTERS

- 4.80 Ministers shall superannuate by the mandatory age of sixty five (65) years.
- 4.81 Ministers desiring to become Supernumerary Ministers (to retire from the full work of the Ministry) shall normally apply through Synod to the Connexional Executive. In special cases the application may be made direct to the Connexional Executive or to the Presiding Bishop.
- 4.82 Supernumeraries belong to the District in which they reside. They shall

attend Synod unless they receive a dispensation allowing them to be absent. They are subject to Synod in all matters of discipline. In case of unavoidable absence from Synod, they shall send to the Bishop, in due time, a statement of their belief in our Doctrine and observance of our Discipline.

- 4.83 Supernumeraries are members of the Quarterly Meeting of the Circuit in which they reside and any ministry they perform in the Circuit is under the direction of the Quarterly Meeting.
- 4.84 Supernumeraries are permitted to supply for another denomination only when suitable opportunity for service cannot be found within the Methodist Church, and only with the written consent of the Presiding Bishop, which is given for one year at a time.
- 4.85 Travelling expenses of Supernumeraries attending Synod are a charge on Connexional funds.

RESIGNATION OF MINISTERS

- 4.86 Ministers who resign their Connexion with Conference shall receive such benefits as are provided for in the Rules of the Methodist Supernumerary Fund. They and their families have no claim on any Church funds.
- 4.87 Ministers who fail to take up their appointment or who abscond from their appointment shall be deemed to have resigned under charges that affect their moral character.
- 4.88 A Minister who takes up a party-political post or any other appointment that Conference or the Connexional Executive considers as compromising the independence of the Church in its witness, shall resign from the Ministry, failing which they shall be deemed to have resigned.
- 4.89 A Minister who resigns, or has been deemed by Conference or the Connexional Executive to have resigned from the ministry ceases to be a Minister of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and may not perform any of the functions of a Minister of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

MINISTERS NOT IN CIRCUIT APPOINTMENTS (SECONDMENTS)

General:

- 4.90 The Methodist Church of Southern Africa trains and ordains its Ministers for the mission, leadership and pastoral care of its congregations as well as for the Ministry of Word and Sacrament. However, the Conference may permit a minister to be seconded to an organisation outside the Church if it is satisfied that the position is in line with the calling and work of a minister and that it clearly needs to be filled by a minister in Full Connexion.
 - 4.90.1 Secondment shall only be granted if the position is considered to be in harmony with the ministry and mission of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. It shall not be granted for positions of a party-political nature, or any appointment which compromises the necessary independence of the Church in its witness to the Gospel in society.

4.90.2 Secondment will only be granted where the minister concerned is competent and acceptable and considered a worthy representative of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

4.90.3 Secondment shall normally be granted to a minister who has served at least five (5) years in Circuit following ordination.

Application Procedure and Process

4.91 A minister desiring secondment or an organisation desiring the services of a minister shall submit a written request with appropriate motivation to the Presiding Bishop.

4.92 The Presiding Bishop shall notify the Bishop of the District in which the Minister resides who shall appoint a Pastoral Commission to investigate the relevant factors, interview the minister and any persons it deems necessary and make a recommendation to the Presiding Bishop.

4.93 The Pastoral Commission shall investigate the following matters:

- (a) the nature of the organisation to which secondment is sought and whether this is in harmony with the mission and ministry of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa;
- (b) the role and function of the Minister in the seconded position and whether it is in line with the calling and work of a minister and the ministry of Word and Sacrament;
- (c) the gifts and training of the Minister and how these relate to the position;
- (d) the motives of the Minister and whether there is any loss of call or other factors which have led to the application;
- (e) how the secondment would affect the Minister's family;
- (f) what payment and other incentives the Minister will receive;
- (g) receive evaluation of his/her work in the Circuit;
- (h) any other matters considered relevant.

4.94 The Pastoral Commission shall also investigate with the District Bishop and the Circuit in which the Minister is stationed whether he/she can be released from the appointment.

4.95 The Presiding Bishop may grant permission for the secondment at any time of the year if satisfied that the application has met the requirements of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

4.96 All applications for secondments must be referred to the Connexional Executive for ratification.

4.97 If a Minister takes up an appointment without the necessary approval, he/she may be considered to have resigned from the ministry. The Minister shall have the right of appeal to the Connexional Executive.

4.98 The initial period of secondment shall be five years unless a shorter period is requested. Extensions shall be for a further five years at a time and shall be applied for in writing to the Presiding Bishop. During the last year of each

five year period the secondment shall be reviewed by a Pastoral Committee appointed by the Presiding Bishop in terms of the applicable criteria in 4.93 above and shall include an assessment of the Minister's performance during secondment. An assessment and recommendation should be obtained from the organisation.

- 4.99 The Bishop shall twice a year initiate a pastoral consultation with each seconded Minister in the District.
- 4.100 Seconded Ministers must accept that they can be recalled at any time by the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to take up an appointment in Circuit. In such a case the Minister would be required to resign from their post in the organisation and take up the appointment required by Conference. At least three months notice should normally be given to the Minister and the organisation.
- 4.101 When a Minister wishes to terminate a secondment and return to a circuit appointment he/she shall advise the Presiding Bishop in writing. The Presiding Bishop shall obtain an assessment and recommendation concerning his/her performance during secondment from the organisation to which he/she has been seconded.

Regulations

- 4.102 Seconded Ministers have responsibilities to both the Church and the organisation to which they are seconded.
- 4.103 They are employees of the organisation to which they are seconded in terms of their contract and in terms of normal labour legislation and are therefore responsible in the first instance to the authority, discipline and requirements of the organisation.
- 4.104 They nevertheless continue to be in a covenantal relationship with the Methodist Church of Southern Africa through their ordination and are subject to its discipline and requirements in order to remain in good standing with the Church.
- 4.105 As representatives of the Church they must not conduct themselves in any way which will bring discredit on the good name of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.
- 4.106 They must remain faithful to the doctrines, mission and values of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, especially in matters of conscience.
- 4.107 Their job description, remuneration, pension and service benefits will be determined and administered by the organisation to which they are seconded.
- 4.108 Their relationship to the funds of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa will be determined in consultation with the Connexional Office.
- 4.109 Whilst recognising that the organisation to which the minister has been seconded has the primary call on his/her time and work, the minister shall also be required:

- 4.109.1 to attend the annual synod of the District in which he/she resides and if possible at least one ministerial retreat a year.
- 4.109.2 to submit a written annual report on his/her work through the Bishop to Synod.
- 4.109.3 to be involved in his/her local Circuit and Society as much as possible under the authority of the Superintendent and Minister concerned.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

- 4.110 No Minister shall be without an appointment or be absent from the Circuit, other than on leave provided for by the Connexional Executive, without being granted Leave of Absence by the Connexional Executive or, in case of emergency, the Presiding Bishop, who shall report on each case to the next Connexional Executive. All applications shall be made through the Bishop.
- 4.111 No Leave of Absence shall be granted unless suitable arrangements for supply have been made by the Minister going on leave and approved by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and the Bishop.
- 4.112 Ministers on Leave of Absence shall attend the Synod of the District in which they reside and answer the Discipline Questions. A Minister on Leave of Absence who resides outside the Connexion shall answer the Discipline Questions to the Presiding Bishop before the 1st May. Any Minister on Leave of Absence who fails to answer the Discipline Questions as required is guilty of not having observed our discipline and may be deemed to have resigned from the Ministry.

STUDY LEAVE

- 4.113 A Minister shall apply for Study Leave to EMMU through the District Bishop motivating reasons for such leave.
- 4.114 The Bishop, before making recommendation to the Connexional Executive or the Presiding Bishop shall assess how the proposed study shall contribute to their effectiveness as a Minister and the witness of the Church.
- 4.115 The Minister applying for such a leave shall show evidence of how study-related costs and other debts (if any) shall be met during the study leave period.
- 4.116 A Minister on study leave shall give a progress report to EMMU signed by the relevant officer/head of the institution. Failure to submit such a report shall result in the review of study leave by a Pastoral Commission appointed by the Bishop.
- 4.117 During the study leave period the Minister and the family shall only be entitled to standard emoluments and benefits, if suitable arrangements are made for the continued payment to the relevant fund.

DISCIPLINING MINISTERS

- 4.118 Any complaint lodged against a minister shall be dealt with in terms of Chapter 11.

MINISTERS SEEKING REINSTATEMENT

- 4.119 A Minister who has resigned or been discontinued and seeks reinstatement shall apply to the Connexional Executive through Synod.
- 4.119.1 The Bishop shall appoint a Pastoral Commission to investigate the application;
- 4.119.2 The Pastoral Commission shall make recommendations to Synod on the application having:
- (a) sought information as to the circumstances of the Minister's leaving of the Church;
 - (b) consulted the District from which such a Minister *last served*, as well as any previous Superintendent who knew the Minister at the time of resignation or discontinuation;
 - (c) obtained a testimonial from the current Superintendent.
- 4.120 A Probationer who has been discontinued shall be required to recandidate.

DIVORCE AND THE MINISTRY

- 4.121 It is permissible in principle, subject to careful scrutiny and safeguards, to admit persons who are divorced, or divorced and remarried, as Ministers in Connexion with The Methodist Church of Southern Africa.
- 4.122 A Minister who institutes divorce proceedings or against whom such proceedings are instituted shall inform the Superintendent, Bishop and the General Secretary immediately after the divorce papers have been served for or against such a Minister. Failure to do so may lead to a disciplinary process against such a Minister.
- 4.123 The Presiding Bishop shall immediately suspend (place on compulsory pastoral leave) any Minister who institutes divorce proceedings or against whom such proceedings are instituted. Such pastoral leave shall not necessarily involve the forfeiture of emoluments and shall be in force until the divorce proceedings are finalised.
- 4.124 A Pastoral Commission of not less than three (3) and not more than five (5) persons who are skilled, knowledgeable and experienced in marriage counselling and divorce shall be constituted by and presided over by the Bishop or a Minister deputed by the Bishop.
- 4.125 The Commission shall interview the parties involved in and/or affected by the divorce proceedings to investigate and assess:
- 4.125.1 the cause of marriage breakdown and whether all reconciliation options have been explored and exhausted;
 - 4.125.2 whether there was any act of misconduct on the part of the Minister that may warrant disciplinary action;
 - 4.125.3 the possible effect of the divorce on children (if any) and what provision has been made to minimise the negative impact on their lives and wellbeing;

- 4.125.4 the fairness of the divorce settlement negotiated by the Minister especially in relation to Medical care, pension benefits, housing etc;
 - 4.125.5 possible damage the divorce may have on the Minister's call, ministry and pastoral oversight;
 - 4.125.6 the impact the divorce may have on the congregation and what remedial measures are necessary.
- 4.126 A Pastoral Commission shall also be appointed on the same lines referred to in para 4.119 with regard to the following instances:
- (a) an application for reinstatement of a former Minister who has been divorced;
 - (b) an application to marry by any Minister who has been divorced;
 - (c) an application by any Minister to marry a person who has been divorced;
 - (d) the candidature of any person who has been divorced or who is married to a divorced person.
- 4.127 The District Pastoral Committee shall report and make a recommendation to Synod that shall recommend to the Connexional Executive.
- 4.128 In the case of a Minister who is suspended (placed on compulsory pastoral leave) in terms of para 4.123, the District Pastoral Committee shall make a recommendation to the Presiding Bishop. If the Committee recommends that the pastoral leave be lifted, the Presiding Bishop may lift the pastoral leave. Otherwise, the Presiding Bishop shall refer the matter to the District Disciplinary Committee that may decide on remedial measures and/or disciplinary procedure.
- 4.129 The Presiding Bishop may approve any application in regard to remarriage, reinstatement, candidature of a divorced person, or marriage to a divorced person, subject to ratification by the Connexional Executive.

REGULATIONS FOR FULL TIME NON-ITINERANT ORDAINED MINISTERS

4.130 *Definition*

These Ministers are persons who are not available for stationing on an itinerant basis. They are in the full-time work of the ministry, being ordained after selection and training. They may be stipendiary or non-stipendiary.

4.131 *Motivation*

The motivation in the original documentation submitted to the Connexional Executive and approved thereafter by Circuit Quarterly Meetings and Synods stated:

“Our present model of ministry makes it difficult to move quickly into new or developing settlements of people. Our existing model forces us to either wait until sufficient Methodists who can pay their way have moved into a

new area or we attach these new areas to existing Circuits which then become more cumbersome and stretched for resources. The result is that while other churches are evangelising and planting churches in such areas, we are often left behind.”

4.132 *Selection*

The selection process for these ministers shall be exactly the same as for the itinerant ministry. Motivation from the Circuit involved indicating that there is both the need and capacity for such a minister in that Circuit must be provided.

4.133 *Training*

They shall serve probation, undergo theological and pastoral training and satisfy all the requirements for ordination as the Conference, Connexional Executive and EMMU shall prescribe.

4.134 *Stations and Removals*

These Ministers shall not be available for stationing and removal in the same way as itinerant Ministers and shall be appointed to labour in terms of the regulations below.

4.135 *Stipend and Allowances*

Stipendiary non-itinerant Ministers shall receive a stipend and allowances and benefits under the same conditions as itinerant Ministers.

Non-stipendiary Ministers in this category shall obviously not receive a stipend nor shall pension contributions be made on their behalf. They shall not be entitled to benefits from the medical aid. Travelling and depreciation allowances may, if necessary, be paid by the Circuit under the same conditions as itinerant ministers.

4.136 *Housing, Furnishing and Equipment*

Stipendiary Ministers shall receive the same allowances and housing benefits as itinerant, stipendiary Ministers.

Non-stipendiary Ministers may, where necessary, be given allowances towards the cost of housing, furnishings and household equipment under the same conditions which apply to stipendiary ministers.

4.137 *Appointment of these Ministers*

(a) *Procedure*

Prospective candidates for the ministry shall follow the normal procedures for candidature except that the application shall include a letter from the Circuit Stewards indicating that the relevant Circuit Quarterly Meeting

has indicated willingness to have such candidate stationed in the Circuit and that the Circuit will reimburse the Connexion for training costs incurred in respect of such minister should a decision be made by the Circuit to rescind the appointment during probation.

(b) *Term of Appointment*

They shall be appointed for one year at a time. The approval of the Connexional Executive via Synod shall be required annually.

4.138 ***Change of Status***

Itinerant ministers who wish to change their status to non-Itinerant shall apply to Synod via the Bishop. Such application must include the motivation stating the reasons as well as the endorsement of the relevant Circuit Quarterly Meeting in this regard.

An application approved by the Synod shall be submitted to the Connexional Executive which shall make the final decision in the matter.

Non-itinerant Ministers wishing to become itinerant should apply through Synod to the Connexional Executive. Should the application be received, normal stationing procedures will apply.

REGULATIONS FOR PART-TIME ‘TENT-MAKING’ ORDAINED MINISTERS

4.139 ***Definition***

These ministers are persons who are in secular employment but who are ordained after selection and training, and are allowed to minister only in the Circuit in which they reside and are appointed.

4.140 ***Training***

The selection process for part-time ministry shall be exactly the same as for full-time ministry.

They shall serve probation, undergo such theological and pastoral training and satisfy all the requirements for ordination as the Conference, Connexional Executive and Education for Ministry and Mission Unit (EMMU) shall prescribe. Should a Non-Itinerant probationer wish to change status to Full-Time-Itinerant, recognition of prior learning will be determined by EMMU.

4.141 ***Stations and Removals***

They shall not be available for stationing and removal in the same way as Itinerant Ministers, but may be appointed to labour in terms of regulation 4.148 below.

4.142 *Stipend and Allowances*

They shall neither receive a stipend nor shall pension contributions be made on their behalf. A travelling allowance and depreciation under the same conditions that apply to itinerant ministers, may if necessary, be paid by the Circuit. They shall not be entitled to benefits from the Extra-ordinary Affliction Fund.

4.143 *Housing, Furnishing and Equipment*

They may, where necessary, be given allowances towards the cost of housing, furnishings and household equipment under the same conditions that apply to itinerant ministers.

4.144 *The Work of these Ministers*

They may fulfil all such pastoral, preaching, educative and administrative functions as those performed by an Itinerant Minister except that they may not be appointed as Superintendent of a Circuit, preside over a Circuit Quarterly Meeting or be elected as a District Bishop or Presiding Bishop.

4.145 *The Appointment of these Ministers***(a) *Procedure:***

A prospective part-time Minister shall apply to the April Quarterly Meeting of the Circuit in which he or she resides for a recommendation to be appointed to labour in that Circuit for a period of one year at a time. The application shall include a letter from the Circuit Quarterly meeting indicating their willingness to reimburse the Connexion for training costs incurred in respect of such minister should a decision be made by the Circuit to rescind the appointment during probation.

Such a recommendation, suitably endorsed, shall then be examined by the District Synod. Should the Synod uphold the recommendation, the appointment shall then be made or not made at the final discretion of the Connexional Executive.

(b) *Term of Appointment*

They shall be appointed for one year at a time, without exception. It shall be incumbent upon these Ministers to apply to the April Quarterly Meeting each year for recommendation to be appointed by the Connexional Executive to continue to labour in that Circuit.

In the event that the recommendation, endorsements and appointment are not made or given:

- (i) A part-time Minister who has applied but who has not been granted any or all of such recommendation, endorsements or appointment shall not be eligible to serve in a leadership capacity in the Circuit, be a member

of a Society Leaders' Meeting in the Circuit or the Circuit Quarterly Meeting for the year following the application, whereafter either a new application for recommendation may be made to the Quarterly Meeting, or the Minister may be recorded in the Minutes of Conference as being 'without appointment'.

- (ii) Such a Minister then has no status in the Circuit in which s/he resides distinct from that of any other member, except that the provisions of the Laws and Discipline pertaining to Ministers without appointment shall apply. Such a Minister may, at the discretion of the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting, be included on the Circuit preaching plan and be subject to the discipline of the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting.

4.146 ***Change of Status***

Non-Itinerant Ministers wishing to become full-time Itinerant Ministers may apply for a station through Synod to the Connexional Executive. Should such persons be stationed, they shall thereby be regarded as having become itinerant Ministers.

- 4.147 Following their stationing for the ensuing year, Non Itinerant Ordained Ministers shall be received into Full Connexion at Conference. Probationer Non Itinerant Ministers shall be required to fulfil such residential training as determined by EMMU. Should such persons be stationed, they shall thereby be regarded as having become itinerant Ministers.

CHAPTER 5

THE CONNEXION

The Methodist Connexional Office as established in 1936 operates under the direction of Conference and the leadership, of the Presiding Bishop. It is responsible for the administration, leadership co-ordination and governance of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. The office of the Presiding Bishop has oversight of the work of all the Units and Districts.

THE CONFERENCE

- 5.1 Conference provides direction and inspiration for the Church and is the Church's governing authority and supreme legislative body. Conference is the sole and final authority in respect of the doctrines of the Church and their interpretation.
- 5.2 Conference, at one time affiliated to the British Conference and subject in certain respects to its control, is a completely independent and autonomous body. The Conference has power to alter its Constitution, to make Rules and Regulations for the good governance of the Church and for the due and proper exercise of its jurisdiction and to do all such acts, matters and things as are expedient and necessary for the maintenance, advancement and benefit of the Church and its objects.
- 5.3 Conference shall meet annually, or as it determines.
- 5.4 *The functions, powers and duties of Conference are to:*
 - 5.4.1 give spiritual and missional leadership to the Connexion, this being Conference's primary function;
 - 5.4.2 exercise general oversight over all matters in the Connexion;
 - 5.4.3 decide the general policy and direction of the Connexion;
 - 5.4.4 determine the doctrines of the Church and their interpretation;
 - 5.4.5 delegate to the Connexional Executive the functions in para. 5.12 and any other functions;
 - 5.4.6 delegate whatever powers and functions it may deem necessary to Districts, Committees, Organisations and Units;
 - 5.4.7 elect the Lay President and General Secretary in accordance with Appendixes 12 and 13 respectively as amended from time-to-time;
 - 5.4.8 consider and appoint District Bishops after nomination by the District Synod; (para 6.11.3 and 4)
 - 5.4.9 conduct any other business it deems necessary.

5.5 MEMBERSHIP OF CONFERENCE

Conference comprises the following Ministers and Lay Members, such Lay Members being active members of the Church for at least the past two (2) years:

- 5.5.1 The Presiding Bishop;
- 5.5.2 The immediate past Presiding Bishop for two years after his/her term of office has ended;
- 5.5.3 The Presiding Bishop-elect once that election has taken place;
- 5.5.4 The Lay President;
- 5.5.5 The General Secretary;
- 5.5.6 The Assistant Secretary or Secretaries, if appointed;
- 5.5.7 The Bishops of the Districts;
- 5.5.8 The District Lay Leaders;
- 5.5.9 Three lay representatives from each District elected by Synod. One shall be elected each year and they shall serve for three years;
- 5.5.10 Three ministers from each District elected by Synod. One shall be elected each year and they shall serve for three years;
- 5.5.11 Districts which include member states shall send one additional lay representative, and one additional Ministerial representative from that country, elected by Synod;
- 5.5.12 Districts with fewer than 15 000 members shall be classified as 'small Districts' and shall be represented by two lay representatives and two ministerial representatives elected by Synod;
- 5.5.13 One lay youth representative from each District elected by the Youth Synod, who shall serve for two years;
- 5.5.14 Four Representatives of women's work, one each to be elected by the Women's Association, the Women's Auxiliary, the Women's Manyano and the Young Women's Manyano;
- 5.5.15 Two Representatives of men's work elected by the Young Men's Guild, or, if the Men's League has a registered membership of more than 2 000, by the Young Men's Guild and the Men's League acting together;
- 5.5.16 The Lay General Treasurer and the Director of the Finance Unit;
- 5.5.17 Three representatives of the Mission Unit;
- 5.5.18 Two representatives of the Education Mission and Ministry Unit;
- 5.5.19 The President of the Seminary;
- 5.5.20 Two representatives of the Youth Unit;
- 5.5.21 One representative of the Ecumenical Affairs Unit;
- 5.5.22 Director of the Communications Unit;
- 5.5.23 One representative of the Human Resource Unit;
- 5.5.24 Two representatives of the Local Preachers;
- 5.5.25 One representative of the Connexional Music Association.
- 5.5.26 The Warden of the Order of Deacons;

- 5.5.27 The Warden of the Order of Evangelism;
- 5.5.28 The Convener and one representative of Doctrine Ethics and Worship Committee;
- 5.5.29 Any official of a World Methodist Body residing in the Connexion.

NB:

- Districts should ensure a balanced representation of women, men and youth.
- Each District, Unit, Organisation and Order shall bear the costs of its Representatives.
- If any Representative is unable to attend for the full duration an Alternate may be appointed, by the District or Organisation represented, to attend for the balance or the whole of the time. The Organisation concerned shall bear any additional cost.
- If the Bishop is unable to attend Conference, the Vice-Chairman, failing whom an elected Representative, shall attend. The District may make up the number of its Representatives from among the elected Alternates.

5.6 FORMULATION OF NEW LEGISLATION

Conference or the Connexional Executive may refer any matter to the Synods, the Circuits or other Organisations for their consideration and report through Synod to Conference, with the following provisos:

- 5.6.1 Whilst Conference may consult Districts and Circuits in making decisions which could affect these structures, nothing shall derogate from the authority of Conference to make such decisions;
- 5.6.2 Matters of policy which directly affect the life and mission of the Circuit should, before being decided by Conference, be referred for consultation to Circuit Quarterly Meetings;
- 5.6.3 Matters relating to doctrine, procedures and changes to Laws and Discipline of the Church should normally be processed at District level through Synods and District Executives;
- 5.6.4 No new legislation of a material and important nature introduced by Conference shall come into effect until it has been referred to District Synods, their reports have been considered and such legislation has been confirmed by the next Conference. Such legislation before coming into effect shall be considered by the Revision Committee and the Connexional Executive;
- 5.6.5 If proposed new legislation, which amends the Laws and Discipline, is opposed by more than one-third of the Synods it shall not be authorised by Conference, or by the Connexional Executive, provided that where Synods ignore or do not respond to resolutions, that Synod shall not be taken into account as one of the Synods in determining the “one-third requirement”.

OFFICERS OF CONFERENCE

5.7 The Presiding Bishop:

The Presiding Bishop is the official head and chief pastor of the Church and shall exercise the powers, privileges and authority of that office subject to the directions of Conference and the laws and usages of the Church. The Presiding Bishop shall be a Minister of the Church and be elected according to the provisions of Appendix 10. The Presiding Bishop shall normally assume duty on the 1st January some 18 months after election and shall continue in the office for a five (5) year term, but is eligible for re-election for one (1) further term. He/she shall be inducted by the Presiding Bishop who most recently vacated the office and who is available.

5.7.1 *The powers, duties, privileges and authority of the Presiding Bishop are inter alia to:*

- 5.7.1.1 give spiritual leadership to the Church;
- 5.7.1.2 watch over the interests of the Connexion, give counsel and guidance where necessary, and to promote within the provisions of the Laws and Discipline and Regulations the spiritual advancement of the Church and its general well-being;
- 5.7.1.3 be pastor to the Bishops and the General Secretary and other persons in the Church;
- 5.7.1.4 be a member of and to preside at or depute the power to preside at the Sessions of Conference, the Connexional Executive and all Connexional Committees;
- 5.7.1.5 ensure the observance of the resolutions and directions of Conference and of the Connexional Executive, having authority to permit exceptions or departures;
- 5.7.1.6 approve or otherwise the suspension from office or ministry of any Minister who is the subject of disciplinary procedure;
- 5.7.1.7 appoint when necessary a Committee to consult and make recommendations as to the manner of dealing with questions of public importance;
- 5.7.1.8 in association with the General Secretary, ordain Ministers to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments and Deacons to the Ministry of Word and Service;
- 5.7.1.9 be the Official Trustee and Vestee for the Church of all property, movable and immovable, belonging to or which may be acquired by the Church;
- 5.7.1.10 execute on behalf of the Church, subject to there having been compliance with all of the relevant regulations and requirements, any power of attorney or other document which may be required in connection with the acquisition, alienation, transfer or mortgage of landed property (Chapter 10);

- 5.7.1.11 in conjunction with the General Secretary, represent the Church in all legal proceedings instituted by or against it unless a Registrar has been appointed by the Connexional Executive;
- 5.7.1.12 assist or to depute someone to assist at any Synod if applied to for that purpose by the Bishop or by a majority of the Superintendents in the District;
- 5.7.1.13 visit any Circuit to inquire into its affairs and, in consultation with the Bishop, to redress any grievance;
- 5.7.1.14 exercise all other powers, privileges and authority entrusted by Conference or the Connexional Executive;
- 5.7.1.15 institute such processes as may be deemed necessary for the proper exercise of the Oversight Ministry implicit within the normal duties and responsibilities of the Presiding Bishop;
- 5.7.1.16 be the Chief Public Relations Officer who may issue statements on matters of national or global importance. In matters of public concern s/he may consult the Bishops. (Officers of Connexional Units shall communicate with the Presiding Bishop if needs be on matters which may require consideration).
- 5.7.2 The Presiding Bishop has the privilege and power of two members in all the acts of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.
- 5.7.3 In Conference, the Connexional Executive and all Connexional Committees, the Presiding Bishop shall represent and be charged with the general interests of the Connexion.
- 5.7.4 Should any matter arise in the interval between Conferences or meetings of the Connexional Executive for which no provision is made in Laws and Discipline or in the decisions of Conference or the Connexional Executive, and which cannot be deferred for decision by the next Conference or dealt with by the Connexional Executive without the interests of the Church or individuals concerned being prejudiced thereby, the Presiding Bishop may take any necessary action and such action shall be deemed to be the act of Conference or of the Connexional Executive and to have the full force and effect thereof. When using this power The Presiding Bishop shall at his/her sole discretion only be obliged to consult with or give a hearing to such person or persons as he/she deems necessary.
- 5.7.5 In the event of the death, affliction, impeachment of or inability to serve for any other reason, of the Presiding Bishop:
 - 5.7.5.1 the Presiding Bishop-elect shall temporarily or permanently, as the case may be, assume the office. Such extra term of office shall not be considered part of the Presiding Bishop-elect's first term of office;

- 5.7.5.2 if a Presiding Bishop-elect has not yet been elected, the General Secretary shall as soon as possible convene the Connexional Executive who shall elect an interim Presiding Bishop. The first meeting of the District Synods thereafter shall elect a Presiding Bishop who shall immediately assume the office;
 - 5.7.5.3 the Presiding Bishop shall designate one of the District Bishops as Acting Presiding Bishop during any period of extended absence from the Connexion;
 - 5.7.5.4 a properly appointed or designated substitute shall assume all the duties, powers, privileges and authority of the Presiding Bishop. A certificate by the General Secretary shall be sufficient proof of such substitute's power to act.
- 5.7.6 An accusation made against the Presiding Bishop should be dealt with in terms of Chapter 11.49.

5.8 **The Lay President:**

- 5.8.1 Conference shall elect a Lay President according to the provisions of Appendix 12. The Lay President assumes office on the 1st January after election and holds office for a term of three (3) years, up to a maximum of two (2) terms;
- 5.8.2 The Lay President has no executive power but shall represent the Church on ceremonial occasions either on behalf of or in addition to the Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop may delegate certain duties and tasks to the Lay President;
- 5.8.3 The Lay President shall visit Districts and Circuits to encourage the people and, in consultation with the Presiding Bishop and with the endorsement of the Connexional Executive, may nominate a mission project to pilot while in office;
- 5.8.4 Should the Lay President die, resign or become unfit to continue in office the Connexional Executive shall elect a successor for the remainder of the term;
- 5.8.5 The Lay President is a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

5.9 **The Presiding Bishop-Elect:**

- 5.9.1 The official designation of the Minister elected by Conference for the next term of office is the 'Presiding Bishop-elect', who on election becomes a member of all Connexional Committees upon which the Presiding Bishop serves ex officio;
- 5.9.2 Should the Presiding Bishop-elect die or become unfit to assume office, the incumbent Presiding Bishop shall continue in office until another Presiding Bishop is elected. This shall be done by the Synods

of the following year, operating in terms of Appendix 10. The person so elected by the Synods shall immediately assume the office of Presiding Bishop.

5.10 **The General Secretary:**

5.10.1 The General Secretary shall be a Minister and be elected by the Conference according to the provisions of Appendix 13;

5.10.2 The Secretary shall assume office on the 1st January of the year in which the term begins and continue in office for a five (5) year term, but is eligible once for re-election;

5.10.3 Should the Secretary die or become unfit to hold office, the Connexional Executive shall appoint a substitute for a period to be determined by the Connexional Executive.

5.10.4 *The Secretary's duties are inter alia:*

5.10.4.1 to be a member of Conference, the Connexional Executive and all Connexional Committees;

5.10.4.2 under the direction of the Presiding Bishop, to prepare, organise and conduct the business of Conference and of the Connexional Executive;

5.10.4.3 to obtain and submit to the Connexional Executive all Reports, Statistical Returns, Recommendations, Accounts and other documents;

5.10.4.4 to receive from each District Secretary the Minutes of the Synod and the Draft of Stations in the District;

5.10.4.5 to remit the resolutions of Synods to the Conference, Connexional Executive, appropriate Units or Committees;

5.10.4.6 to prepare the obituaries of deceased Ministers for inclusion in the Connexional Yearbook;

5.10.4.7 to transmit the Resolutions of Conference and of the Connexional Executive and replies to memorials to the persons or bodies concerned;

5.10.4.8 to notify the Bishops of the business to be brought forward at the Synods;

5.10.4.9 to send notification of all matters referred to Quarterly Meetings to every Superintendent as soon as possible after Conference or the meeting of the Connexional Executive;

5.10.4.10 to give official notification to any person appointed by Conference or the Connexional Executive to any position, duty or committee;

5.10.4.11 to prepare for publication the Year Book of the Church containing inter alia the resolutions of Conference and of the Connexional Executive;

- 5.10.4.12 to compile the Draft of Stations for presentation to the Connexional Executive;
- 5.10.4.13 to be associated with the Presiding Bishop and the former Presiding Bishop in the imposition of hands at the Ordination of Ministers and Deacons;
- 5.10.4.14 in conjunction with the Presiding Bishop to represent the Church in all legal proceedings instituted for or against it unless a Registrar has been appointed by the Connexional Executive;
- 5.10.4.15 should the Presiding Bishop-Elect die or become unfit to assume office, to call on the Synods to elect the new Presiding Bishop-Elect;
- 5.10.4.16 to receive and deal with any accusation made against the Presiding Bishop;
- 5.10.4.17 to act on behalf of and instead of the Presiding Bishop in executing any power of attorney, declaration, consent, agreement or other document necessary for the purchase, lease, letting, sale or mortgage of any Church property, subject to due compliance with the relevant regulations and requirements;
- 5.10.4.18 to make such textual amendments to the Laws and Discipline as are rendered necessary by the resolutions of Conference;
- 5.10.4.19 to be the Official Correspondent of the Church;
- 5.10.4.20 to be the Custodian of Connexional Documents;
- 5.10.4.21 to prepare an index of all Connexional documents lodged in the Connexional Strong Room;
- 5.10.4.22 to be the Connexional Registrar of Marriages;
- 5.10.4.23 to discharge such other duties as Conference, the Connexional Executive or the Presiding Bishop may direct;
- 5.10.4.24 Conference may elect such Assistant Secretary or Secretaries as it deems necessary. Such person or persons become members of that Conference.

CONNEXIONAL EXECUTIVE

- 5.11 There shall be a Connexional Executive which may meet whenever necessary, but at least once a year to prepare for Conference. 80% of its membership shall constitute a quorum. The membership shall comprise:

- 5.11.1 The Presiding Bishop;
- 5.11.2 The Presiding Bishop-elect once elected;
- 5.11.3 The Bishops;
- 5.11.4 The Lay President;

- 5.11.5 The General Secretary;
- 5.11.6 The past-Presiding Bishop, for two years immediately after leaving office;
- 5.11.7 The Lay General Treasurer;
- 5.11.8 The Director of the Finance Unit;
- 5.11.9 The Lay Leader of each District, elected by Synod;
- 5.11.10 A Local Preachers' representative;
- 5.11.11 A Representative each of Women's work and Men's work in rotation, to be decided in consultation between the various Organisations;
- 5.11.12 A Youth Representative elected by the Connexional Youth Consultation;
- 5.11.13 The Director of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit;
- 5.11.14 The Director of the Mission Unit;
- 5.11.15 The Director of the Ecumenical Affairs Unit;
- 5.11.16 The President of the Seminary;
- 5.11.17 The Director of Human Resources Unit.
- 5.11.18 The Warden of the Order of Deacons.
- 5.11.19 The Warden of the Order of Evangelism,
- 5.11.20 The Director of Communications.

5.12 *The functions and duties of the Connexional Executive include:*

- 5.12.1 such functions as are delegated to it by Conference;
- 5.12.2 general oversight of the administration and management of the Connexion acting on behalf of Conference, especially implementing the lead and direction set by Conference for the Connexion;
- 5.12.3 appointing annually a Revision Committee, which shall include the General Secretary, to maintain and ensure the integrity of Laws and Discipline, and to publish revised editions from time to time. The Revision Committee shall report to The Conference through The Connexional Executive. The Revision Committee shall only be an advisory committee;
- 5.12.4 processing amendments to Laws and Discipline on behalf of Conference;
- 5.12.5 referring matters to Districts, Circuits, Units, Organisations, Committees or individuals for consideration and, if necessary, action;
- 5.12.6 accepting Candidates for the Ministry;
- 5.12.7 progress of Ministers on Probation;
- 5.12.8 approving Candidates for Ordination;
- 5.12.9 matters related to Supernumeraries;
- 5.12.10 acting as the Connexional Stationing Committee and finalising the

stations of ministers and appointment of Superintendents of each Circuit for the following year;

- 5.12.11 receiving and considering such reports as may be required from Districts, Circuits, Organisations and Institutions in the Connexion;
- 5.12.12 receiving reports on matters dealt with by the Connexional Disciplinary Committee;
- 5.12.13 serving as a Court of Appeal in respect of a charge laid against the Presiding Bishop;
- 5.12.14 dealing with memorials from the Circuits and passing on those which need to be referred to Conference;
- 5.12.15 appointing the Connexional Registrar;
- 5.12.16 appointing the Connexional Marriage Registrar and, when necessary, the General Secretary;
- 5.12.17 may co-opt or consult and may appoint ad hoc task forces;
- 5.12.18 shall deposit the minutes of its meetings with the Cory Library.

5.13 **THE CONNEXIONAL REGISTRAR**

- 5.13.1 The Conference may from time to time appoint a Registrar who shall be a member in good standing and an attorney of the High Court and who shall:
 - 5.13.1.1 represent the Church in all legal proceedings;
 - 5.13.1.2 initiate or defend legal proceedings on behalf of the Church only with the agreement of the Presiding Bishop in conjunction with the General Secretary.

5.14 **Pastoral Commissions:**

- 5.14.1 A Pastoral Commission may be instituted to investigate any circumstance of a minister and /or member(s) that seems to the Bishop to merit such investigation.
- 5.14.2 The Presiding Bishop or a Bishop may determine the membership (Ministerial and/or lay, all of whom must be members of the Church) and terms of reference of a Pastoral Commission and convene it for any matter which arises from or relates to the mission work, activities or governance of the Church.
- 5.14.3 The Commission should conduct its proceedings in a pastoral and constructive manner. It is not to arrive at a verdict about a dispute but should submit recommendations or findings to the Bishop and/or the Presiding Bishop. The findings of the Commission may be communicated to the person who is under consideration, at the discretion of the Bishop or Presiding Bishop.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AND STATUS

- 5.15 The Church shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession.
- 5.16 The Church shall be capable in law of suing and being sued, and of acquiring, holding and alienating movable and immovable property, borrowing and of doing and performing such other acts as bodies corporate may lawfully do and perform.
- 5.17 All legal proceedings and legal actions by or against the Church shall be instituted in the name of the Presiding Bishop and/or the General Secretary for the time being or in the name of The Registrar if such appointment has been made by the Conference for and on behalf of the Church. These persons shall sue and be sued in their representative capacity.
- 5.18 Acting in their official capacity, no person holding any office in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and no Organisation, Society, Circuit or Synod in the Church shall institute legal proceedings for or against the Church, save as provided for in paragraph 5.17.
- 5.19 No legal proceedings shall be instituted by any formal or informal structure or grouping of the Church or any Minister or any member of the Church, acting in their personal or official capacity, against the Church or any formal or any informal structure or grouping of the Church, Minister or Member thereof for any matter which in any way arises from or relates to the Mission work, activities or governance of the Church.
- 5.20 The Mediation and Arbitration processes and forums prescribed and provided for by the Church for conflict dispute resolution (Appendix 14) shall be used by all Ministers and Members of the Church.
- 5.21 If a matter is referred to Arbitration, the finding of the Arbitrator shall be final and binding on all Ministers and Members of the Church subject to the provisions of the Arbitration Act, 1965.
- 5.22 Any Member or Minister who refers a dispute to arbitration on the nomination of Bishops or elections of District Lay Leaders, Lay President, or any other election, appointment or decision of the Connexional Executive or Conference, also who challenges a decision of any of the structures of the Church and ultimately is unsuccessful, that unsuccessful Member or Minister be held liable for all the expenses incurred by the MCSA arising from the Arbitration.
- 5.23 The conduct of the Arbitrator may be subject to review.
- 5.24 Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in these paragraphs, the provisions thereof do not apply to the Presiding Bishop in conjunction with the General Secretary or the Registrar, if such an appointment has been made, when acting in their official capacity in the interest of the Church.
- 5.25 The Church fully indemnifies the Presiding Bishop, General Secretary and Registrar, if such an appointment has been made, for all losses and expenses they may sustain in consequence of any action or proceeding instituted by or against them when acting for and on behalf of the Church.

CHAPTER 6

THE DISTRICTS

6.1 THE DISTRICTS

The area under the jurisdiction of Conference is divided into Districts that are associations of local Circuits as determined by Conference.

6.2 THE SYNOD

6.2.1 In each District an annual Synod shall be held, whose chief function is to provide mission leadership as well as spiritual direction and inspiration for the District.

6.2.2 A Special Synod may be called by the Bishop for the purpose of dealing with mission issues/emergency situations in the District. Fourteen days' notice shall be given. The membership shall be those who attended the last annual Synod and 80% of the membership shall constitute a quorum.

6.3 The rules and procedures of Synod are laid down in the Synod Order of Business (Appendix 5) and the Rules of Debate (Appendix 4).

Membership:

6.4 Synod comprises the following Ministers and Lay Members who reside in the District, such Lay Members having been members of the Church for at least the past 2 years:

6.4.1 all Ministers and Deacons, (including Supernumerary and Probationer Ministers and Deacons), except those who are at Seminary. Dispensation may be granted by Synod in case of illness or other reasonable cause;

6.4.2 One Conference appointed Seminarian; (4.28)

6.4.3 one Representative of each Mission Group appointed by Synod;

6.4.4 one Circuit Steward from each Circuit;

N.B: The Circuit Stewards alternate in attending Synod. If a Circuit Steward is unable to attend, the other Circuit Steward should attend.

6.4.5 three other Representatives of each Circuit;

6.4.6 one additional Representative of each Circuit with between 1 000 and 2 000 Full Members, or with 3 or 4 Ministers or Probationer Ministers (excluding Supernumerary Ministers);

- 6.4.7 one further Representative of each Circuit with more than 2 000 Full Members, or with 5 or more Ministers or Probationer Ministers (excluding Supernumeraries);
- 6.4.8 the Alternates for those Representatives and Circuit Stewards who cannot attend;
- 6.4.9 the Convener of the District Disciplinary Committee;
- 6.4.10 the District Treasurer;
- 6.4.11 the District Statistical Secretary;
- 6.4.12 the District Treasurers of Connexional Funds;
- 6.4.13 any Ministerial or Lay Connexional Official;
- 6.4.14 the General Presidents of the Men's League, Local Preachers Association, Women's Association, Women's Auxiliary, Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano or Young Men's Guild, where they reside in the District, if the registered membership of the Organisation in the Connexion exceeds 2 000;
- 6.4.15 the District President and the District Secretary, or their authorised Alternates, of the Men's League, Local Preachers Association, Women's Association, Women's Auxiliary, Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano, Young Men's Guild and Unzondelelo, if the registered membership of the Organisation in the District exceeds 400. If the membership is below 400, the District President or alternate may attend;
- 6.4.16 one Local Preacher recommended by the Local Preachers Committee, appointed by Synod to oversee Local Preachers' work in the District;
- 6.4.17 five Representatives elected by the District Youth Synod;
- 6.4.18 an Evangelist and a Bible Woman appointed by the District Evangelist's and Bible Women's Committee;
- 6.4.19 the Manager of any Christian Connexion Resource Centre in the District, if a member of the Methodist Church;
- 6.4.20 the District Trust Properties Secretary and one other member of the District Trust Properties Committee;
- 6.4.21 two representatives of the District Music Association;
- 6.4.22 any official of the World Methodist Body residing in the District.

POWERS OF SYNOD

6.5 *The following, inter alia, are the functions and duties of Synod:*

- 6.5.1 to provide spiritual leadership for the District, applying the lead provided by Conference;
- 6.5.2 to determine mission priorities and activities in the District;
- 6.5.3 to allocate resources and provide material and other assistance to the Circuits;
- 6.5.4 to consider and deal with the matters contained in the Order of Business for Synods (Appendix 5), subject always to the decisions of Conference;

- 6.5.5 to enquire into the disciplinary behaviour of all Ministers in the District;
- 6.5.6 generally to administer the District considering and implementing matters referred to it by Conference or the Connexional Executive;
- 6.5.7 subject to the final authority of Conference, to determine Circuit boundaries, divide or unite Circuits, and establish new Circuits.
- 6.5.8 Any change in Circuit boundaries shall be detailed in the Minutes of Synod and the District Secretary shall send a copy of the record to each Circuit affected.
- 6.5.9 To appoint the District Stationing Committee.

NB:

- (a) Obituaries of deceased Ministers and Deacons shall be forwarded by Synod to the General Secretary.
- (b) The expenses of Supernumeraries attending Synod shall be charged to Connexional Funds.

6.6 SYNOD MISSION GROUPS

- 6.6.1 Synod may establish such Mission Groups and other Committees as it considers necessary, and shall appoint their members and officers. The Bishop, the Vice-Chairman, the District Secretary and the Statistical Secretary are ex officio members of each Committee;
- 6.6.2 The purpose of Mission Groups and other Committees is to promote the mission of the Church at Circuit and Society level.
- 6.6.3 Each Mission Group or Committee may co-opt members who do not thereby become members of Synod.
- 6.6.4 The Secretary of each Mission Group or Committee shall report on its behalf to Synod on the work for the year and may require from the Circuits and Societies such Accounts, Schedules and Reports as are necessary for this purpose.
- 6.6.5 The Secretary of each Mission Group or Committee shall keep its records and documents.

THE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE

- 6.7 Synod shall elect a District Executive from among its members. Such members hold office for one year from the rising of Synod and are eligible for re-election. The Executive may co-opt further members who do not, thereby, become members of Synod. The following are ex officio members:
 - 6.7.1 the Bishop, Vice-Chairman, District Secretary, Statistical Secretary, District Lay Leader and District Treasurer;
 - 6.7.2 any lay Member of the District who is a member of Conference;
 - 6.7.3 The District Executive shall include adequate lay representation;

6.8 *The functions and duties of the District Executive are:*

- 6.8.1 general administration of the District between meetings of Synod, including providing spiritual direction, establishing policy and plans, implementing the decisions of Synod, and referring tasks to the Mission Groups, Committees, Circuits and Societies;
- 6.8.2 to receive and make necessary changes to the draft of the stations of Ministers in the District received from the stationing committee, for presentation to Synod;
- 6.8.3 deciding who may attend Synods as visitors without the power to vote;
- 6.8.4 ensuring that no Connexional or District Convention shall be held in any Circuit without the authority of the District Executive Committee;
- 6.8.5 such other functions as are delegated to it by Synod.

OFFICERS OF THE SYNOD

6.9 THE BISHOP

- 6.9.1 The Bishop is the official head and principal pastor of a District and is subject to the directions of Conference and the Laws and usages of the Church. The Bishop exercises his/her duties in the spirit of servant-leadership that was taught and modelled by our Lord Jesus Christ and in a consultative and democratic spirit.
- 6.9.2 The Bishop is inducted to the Ministry of oversight at the commencement of his/her term of office.
- 6.9.3 The Bishop shall be a full-time itinerant Minister, in service of the MCSA and may be fully or partially separated from Circuit work according to the circumstances of the District.
- 6.9.4 He/she is accountable to the Conference through the Presiding Bishop and the Connexional Executive, and to the District through the Synod and the District Executive.
- 6.9.5 The term of office of the Bishop shall be five years from the 1st January of the year in which the term begins, but he/she may assume office earlier by mutual agreement with the incumbent Bishop. A Bishop may serve a second term of 5 (five) years.

6.10 *The functions and duties of a Bishop are, inter alia:*

- 6.10.1 to be the spiritual leader of the District and to provide for the spiritual nurture of both laity and clergy;
- 6.10.2 to be the mission-leader of the District and to promote and provide for the mission and growth of the Church;
- 6.10.3 to be the principal pastor of the District and provide for the pastoral care of the clergy and their families, as well as the laity;
- 6.10.4 to strive for and be the custodian and focus of unity in the District;

- 6.10.5 to teach and safeguard the doctrines of the Christian faith as they have been received by the MCSA;
- 6.10.6 to oversee the on-going training of clergy and laity for the work of the Church;
- 6.10.7 to oversee the liturgical practice and worship in the District and ensure that the directions of Conference in this regard are observed;
- 6.10.8 to participate in the ordination of presbyters and deacons stationed in the District or preside if deputed by the Presiding Bishop;
- 6.10.9 to represent the Church ecumenically and in the wider society;
- 6.10.10 to facilitate the prophetic function of the church in society;
- 6.10.11 to have general oversight of the work in all Circuits, Organisations and institutions in the District;
- 6.10.12 to enter any Circuit in the District and/or preside at any Circuit meeting if satisfied, after consultation with the Superintendent, that such intervention is necessary;
- 6.10.13 to convene and preside at the annual District Synod;
- 6.10.14 to convene and preside at the District Executive;
- 6.10.15 to ensure that proper minutes and records are kept of the District Synod and District Executive and to sign, secure and safeguard such records;
- 6.10.16 to oversee the stationing of ministers in the District through the District Stationing Committee, the Synod and Connexional Executive and, wherever necessary, to apply to the Presiding Bishop to fill any vacancy or make any necessary change in stations during the course of the year;
- 6.10.17 to recommend to the Connexional Executive and the Presiding Bishop the appointment of Superintendents of Circuits, or any necessary changes in or withdrawal of Superintendency;
- 6.10.18 to ensure that the directions, decisions and requirements of the Conference, the Connexional Executive and the Synod are carried out by the Circuits, Societies, ministers, officials, organisations and institutions in the District;
- 6.10.19 to participate in Connexional leadership and attend Conference, the Connexional Executive and other Connexional meetings;
- 6.10.20 to be the chief channel of communication between the District, and Conference;
- 6.10.21 to deal with any administrative matters which are required from time to time by the District, or the Connexion;
- 6.10.22 to Chair Connexional Committees or Unit Meetings as directed by the Presiding Bishop;
- 6.10.23 to be appointed as Superintendents of Circuits in exceptional cases only and where there is a strong motivation;

- 6.10.24 To be the Public Relations Officer within the District in liaison with the Superintendents. A Bishop may appoint liaison officers with the local press and the regional media;
- 6.10.25 to delegate any of these duties to the Vice-Chairman.

ELECTION AND APPOINTMENT OF BISHOPS

- 6.11 The following regulations and procedures shall govern the **election and appointment** of Bishops.
 - 6.11.1 The procedure for electing a Bishop is detailed in Appendix 11.
 - 6.11.2 Candidates for nomination by Synod as Bishops shall be Ministers in full Connexion. Supernumerary Ministers and Non-itinerant Ministers are not eligible. The elections shall take place in the last year but one of the current Bishop's term of office, unless there are special circumstances, in which case the Connexional Executive or Presiding Bishop shall make a ruling.
 - 6.11.3 The District Secretary shall invite all Circuit Quarterly Meetings within the District to nominate any Minister in full Connexion, whether in the District concerned or not, at the January Quarterly meeting. These nominations are to be submitted to the Secretary of Conference by 31st March. The Bishop shall be appointed by Conference following their election by Synods for a term of 5 (five) years, renewable for 1 (one) final term
 - 6.11.4 The Conference is the final authority for the appointment of Bishops and has the right to veto the nomination of a Synod. In such a case the Conference may institute a new election process.

THE VICE-CHAIRMAN

- 6.12 The Vice-Chairman is elected by the Synod immediately prior to taking office. The Synod shall vote by ballot without previous nomination but only for a Minister in full Connexion and who is in the service of a Circuit in the District. The person elected shall have a simple majority of the votes cast.
- 6.13 The Vice-Chairman shall act at all times subject to direction of the Bishop.
- 6.14 Should the Bishop die, become incapable of the work of a Bishop, be impeached, or be absent for a prolonged period, the duties shall devolve upon the Vice-Chairman until the Bishop can return, or until the successor elected by the next Synod assumes office, as the case may be. This provision does not derogate from the powers of Conference to appoint a new Bishop with immediate effect.
- 6.15 The Vice-Chairman is ex officio member of all District Committees.
- 6.16 The Vice-Chairman shall hold office for a term of 3 (three) years from the 1st January and may be re-elected.

THE DISTRICT SECRETARY

- 6.17 The District Secretary shall be appointed by Synod after nomination from the floor. The District Secretary holds office for 3 years from the 1st January and may be re-elected. The District Secretary may be a lay-person or a Minister.
- 6.18 *The duties of the District Secretary are inter alia:*
- 6.18.1 to support and facilitate the administrative work of the District;
 - 6.18.2 to keep proper records of all proceedings of Synod;
 - 6.18.3 to prepare one unbound copy of the records for immediate forwarding to the General Secretary, and three bound copies for signature by the Bishop, the Vice-Chairman and the Secretary. One bound copy to be forwarded to the Methodist Connexional Office;
 - 6.18.4 to forward all documents, reports, resolutions and schedules as required;
 - 6.18.5 persons appointed by Synod to any office, Group or Committee shall be advised accordingly by the District Secretary;
 - 6.18.6 to discharge such other duties as the Bishop or Synod may require.
- 6.19 The District Secretary is ex-officio a member of all District committees.
- 6.20 Synod may appoint an Assistant Secretary.

THE STATISTICAL SECRETARY

- 6.21 The District Statistical Secretary shall be appointed by Synod, holds office for 3 (three) years from the 1st January after appointment and may be re-elected;
- 6.22 The Statistical Secretary is ex-officio a member of Synod and of all District Mission Groups and Committees and shall gather the required statistics of the District, interpret them, and forward them as required.

DISTRICT LAY LEADER

6.23 Election and Appointment of District Lay Leader

The District Lay Leader shall be nominated, with motivation, at District Synod for election and appointment for a 3 (three) year term, and may be re-elected for a further term.

6.24 Role and Functions of a Lay Leader

Within the broad parameters of the following, each District shall determine the nature and functions of this role within its own context.

Guidelines for the office of the District Lay Leader may include the following:

- 6.24.1 to represent the views and interests of the Church and its members throughout the District;
- 6.24.2 to be an advisor to the Bishop and District Executive;
- 6.24.3 to advocate for greater involvement of Laity and for the District to focus on issues facing the Church;
- 6.24.4 to facilitate dialogue on missional and Organisational issues;

- 6.24.5 to have an educative focus, conscientising and informing lay persons on critical Church and Social matters;
- 6.24.6 to galvanise support for Connexional and District projects and events;
- 6.24.7 to assist Laity in adding value to the Methodist Church of Southern Africa's vision and Mission.

DISTRICT FINANCES

- 6.25 Synod shall elect a District Finance Committee comprising the ex-officio members (as designated in Laws and Discipline para 6.6.1) and not less than 4 (four) other persons with appropriate skills and competencies. Members of the Committee are elected for a period of three years and may be re-elected. Synod shall designate the Chairman of the Committee.
- 6.26 *The functions and duties of the District Finance Committee are, inter alia:*
 - 6.26.1 to prepare a District Budget for submission to the District Executive and Synod for consideration and approval;
 - 6.26.2 to give oversight of all financial matters pertaining to the District, Organisations and Institutions; and ensure that all expenditure incurred is in accordance with approved budgets;
 - 6.26.3 to ensure that all audited Annual Financial Statements pertaining to District, Circuit and Society finances are prepared and submitted to the District Treasurer by Synod and ensure that paragraphs 9.87 to 9.89 (Financial Form 4c and 4s Schedules) are implemented within the District;
 - 6.26.4 to scrutinise the data sent to the District Treasurer in respect of Circuits that are in arrears, and to ensure that paragraphs 9.54 (Consequences for Circuits which do not pay assessments), and 9.56 (Arrears), are implemented within the District;
 - 6.26.5 to have oversight regarding the implementation of the Connexional Policy on Financial Management and the Institutional Competency Assessment (determined by Conference) within the District, to give assistance to the Bishop, Superintendents and other persons within the District in respect thereof, and to ensure that the required reports are submitted to Synod;
 - 6.26.6 to advise the District of any financial concerns or irregularities regarding finances within the District Executive and to ensure that any investigations or remedial steps that may be required are undertaken;
 - 6.26.7 to ensure that Trust Funds, Bequests and other Funds designated for specific purposes are used for their intended purpose and/or mandate;
 - 6.26.8 to nominate to Synod persons to serve as members of the District Finance Committee.

THE DISTRICT TREASURER

- 6.27 The District Treasurer shall be appointed by Synod, holds office for three (3) years from the 1st January after appointment and may be reappointed.
- 6.28 *The functions and duties of the District Treasurer are inter alia:*
- 6.28.1 to assist the Bishop and District Executive in the effective financial management and administration of the District;
 - 6.28.2 to ensure that all banking accounts conducted in the District, including Organisations & Institutions are correctly opened and maintained and that any deposits into or withdrawals from such bank accounts are procedural and properly recorded;
 - 6.28.3 to ensure that all payments on behalf of the District, Organisations and Institutions are drawn by cheque or debit order and that all payments are signed by two duly authorised persons. No credit card transactions are permitted. Electronic payments are only permitted where there is dual control of authorisation of payment and separate confidential passwords are utilised;
 - 6.28.4 to nominate to Synod for appointment a book-keeper, if required, and an auditor for the District accounts;
 - 6.28.5 to submit annually to Synod the audited District Annual Financial Statements and District Budget for the forthcoming year and a verbal and written report. The written report shall be included in the Synod Blue Book;
 - 6.28.6 to submit to the General Treasurers before 31st March a District Finance Report in the prescribed format;
 - 6.28.7 to build relationships with and liaise with all Circuits and Society Treasurers and Circuit Stewards in respect of financial and administrative matters within the District;
 - 6.28.8 to help ensure that all Circuit 4c and Society 4s Schedules within the District are submitted to the Finance Unit by 15th June annually;
 - 6.28.9 to report any matter of concern pertaining to finance and administration to the General Treasurers of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.
 - 6.28.10 to ensure that no Connexional or District Convention is held in a Circuit that is not financially viable, or that is in arrears with stipend assessments.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

6.29 Connexional and District Conventions

- 6.29.1 No Connexional or District Conventions shall be held in a Circuit that is not financially viable, or that is in arrears with assessments.
- 6.29.2 No Connexional or District Conventions shall be held in any Circuit without the authority of the District Executive Committee.

CHAPTER 7

THE CIRCUIT AND THE SOCIETIES

- 7.1. Districts are divided into Circuits each consisting of a number of Societies.

THE CIRCUIT

Circuits oversee and coordinate the work of Societies and promote and ensure the implementation of mission imperatives throughout the Circuit.

7.2. **Circuit Quarterly Meeting:**

The Circuit Quarterly Meeting administers the affairs of the Church within the Circuit. The Circuit Quarterly Meeting is responsible for planning, promoting and monitoring the spiritual life and mission of the Church in the Circuit. The Order of Business in Appendix 8 of the Laws and Discipline must be included in the agenda of any Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

- 7.3. The Circuit Quarterly Meeting shall establish such Mission Groups as it deems necessary, and shall appoint the members of the Groups and convenors with power to appoint further members. Mission Group members may be drawn from beyond the membership of the Meeting but they do not thereby become members of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.
- 7.4. The Circuit Quarterly Meeting may appoint ad hoc committees to initiate and implement special projects. Mission Groups and committees receive their authority from, and are accountable to the Meeting.
- 7.5. The Circuit Quarterly Meeting may appoint a Circuit Executive Committee consisting of the Ministers, the Circuit Stewards, the Circuit Treasurer and others elected from the Meeting so that there are at least as many lay-persons as Ministers. The Superintendent shall preside over the Executive Committee.
- 7.6. The Circuit Quarterly Meeting shall be held once a quarter in the Circuit, usually in January, April, July and October, the October Meeting being devoted to planning the Circuit's work for the coming year.
- 7.7. The Circuit Quarterly Meeting shall devote significant time, at least twice a year, to mission planning and reflection.

Membership:

- 7.8. The following are members of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, provided that they are full members of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for at least the past two consecutive years:
- 7.8.1. the Ministers, Probationers, Supernumerary Ministers, Deacons and Evangelists stationed in the Circuit, any other Ministers who are

- members in the Circuit, and the Biblewomen and Lay Agents in the Circuit;
- 7.8.2. the Circuit Stewards and the Society Stewards in the Circuit;
 - 7.8.3. the Circuit Secretary;
 - 7.8.4. the Circuit Treasurer;
 - 7.8.5. conveners of the Mission Groups in the Societies;
 - 7.8.6. one Steward of the Poor Fund from each Society;
 - 7.8.7. the duly appointed Leaders of all Classes, Junior Classes, Home Bible Study and Fellowship Groups, and of Ministries established by the Societies;
 - 7.8.8. five Local Preachers elected annually by the Local Preachers' Quarterly Meeting;
 - 7.8.9. the Circuit President and one duly appointed representative of the Circuit Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano and Young Men's Guild;
 - 7.8.10. the President or duly appointed representative of every branch of the Women's Association, Women's Auxiliary and Men's League;
 - 7.8.11. any office-bearer of the General Executive or the District Executive of the Women's Association, Women's Auxiliary, Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano, Young Men's Guild, or Men's League being a member of a Society in the Circuit;
 - 7.8.12. every person appointed to preside over a Trust Properties Committee in the Circuit;
 - 7.8.13. a representative of every branch of the Youth Unit, who shall be not less than eighteen years of age;
 - 7.8.14. the Secretary of the Circuit Youth Unit Council;
 - 7.8.15. any member of the Connexional Executive who resides in the Circuit.
- 7.9. A united congregation, forming part of a Circuit, shall be represented at the Circuit Quarterly Meeting on the same basis as a Methodist Society.

Powers and Duties:

- 7.10. *The powers and duties of the Quarterly Meeting are inter alia:*
- 7.10.1. to spread the Gospel and extend the work of the Church especially by planning, promoting and monitoring the spiritual life and the mission of the Church in the Circuit;
 - 7.10.2. to control and administer the affairs of the Circuit;
 - 7.10.3. to appoint Circuit Mission Groups and monitor their activities;
 - 7.10.4. to receive, consider and act upon spiritual, numerical and financial reports of the Societies in the Circuit, and of Women's, Men's and Youth work in the Circuit, and of such Units of the Church as are required to operate within the Circuit, as well as any other societies and organisations in connection with the Societies;

- 7.10.5. to elect by majority vote, after nomination by the meeting, up to four Circuit Stewards and to give them authority jointly to operate upon the banking account of the Circuit;
- 7.10.6. to appoint a Secretary to the Meeting;
- 7.10.7. to appoint a Circuit Auditor and, if considered necessary by the Meeting, a Circuit Treasurer;
- 7.10.8. the Circuit Treasurer shall be appointed after careful consultation between the Superintendent Minister and the Circuit Stewards and ratified at the October Quarterly Meeting. The appointment shall be for a 3 (three) year term renewable up to a maximum of 3 (three) terms;
- 7.10.9. to appoint, if considered necessary, a Circuit Finance Committee to assist in the management of Circuit finances. Such a Committee shall be representative of the Societies in the Circuit;
- 7.10.10. to make provision for Circuit expenses and to pay, through the Circuit Stewards, all claims on Circuit funds including traveling expenses within the Circuit, the amounts due to Connexional Funds and the stipends and other allowances of the Ministers;
- 7.10.11. to consider paying an allowance in lieu of rent to Ministers who provide their own accommodation;
- 7.10.12. to receive reports of contributions of the Circuit to Connexional Funds;
- 7.10.13. to approve or otherwise Candidates for the Ministry nominated by the Superintendent;
- 7.10.14. to invite, upon the nomination of the Circuit Stewards, Ministers to labour in the Circuit;
- 7.10.15. to appoint Lay pastoral staff to work in the Societies;
- 7.10.16. to make recommendations to Synod;
- 7.10.17. to consider and act upon such matters as may be referred to it by Conference, the Connexional Executive or Synod;
- 7.10.18. to elect representatives to Synod and to elect an alternate should a Circuit Steward not be able to attend Synod;
- 7.10.19. to approve the necessary reports and schedules for submission to Synod;
- 7.10.20. to appoint a Treasurer to the Ministerial Students' Fund, who shall promote the interests of the Fund and solicit subscriptions on its behalf;
- 7.10.21. to perform and discharge the functions and duties of a Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting where there is no such Meeting;
- 7.10.22. to perform and discharge the functions and duties of a Local Trust Properties Committee where there is no such Committee;
- 7.10.23. to consider necessary changes in times of services on the Lord's Day in consultation with the Local Preachers' Meeting.

General Regulations:

- 7.11 If a Circuit Quarterly Meeting invites Synod to meet in an area where there is more than one Circuit, it shall collaborate with the other Circuit Quarterly Meetings before extending such an invitation, unless it is prepared to meet all the local expenses involved.
- 7.12 **Membership Records**
Circuits shall keep permanent records of all persons received into full membership.
- 7.13 **Gambling**
No Circuits, Organisations and Societies shall raise funds through “games of chance” (e.g. raffles, gambling etc.).
- 7.14 **Care of Prisoners**
Conference directs Ministers with prisons within their Circuit boundaries to ensure that Methodist Spiritual Workers are appointed to such prisons. The procedure for such appointments is a personal application to the Head of the Local Prison, where Form G317 must be completed in triplicate.
- 7.15 **Stationing of Ministers**
- 7.15.1 **Stationing through Invitation:**
The Circuit Quarterly Meeting may invite a Minister to labour in the Circuit in a duly recognised appointment. The following regulations must be observed but nothing shall derogate from the authority of the Connexional Executive to decide the annual appointments of all Ministers.
- 7.15.1.1 When an invitation is to be extended, whether for an initial or a subsequent period, the Circuit Stewards shall report to the Bishop. The Circuit Stewards shall then convene a Circuit Stationing Committee comprising the Superintendent and Circuit Stewards. If the invitation relates to the Superintendent then the Circuit Stationing Committee shall comprise the Bishop and the Circuit Stewards.
- The Circuit Stationing Committee shall call a meeting of the Society Stewards of the Societies affected by the invitation in order to consult on principles (not names) such as budget, profiles and the mission needs of the Societies. This Society Stewards’ consultative meeting shall not vote at any stage other than at the Circuit Quarterly Meeting. No less than three and no

more than five Society Stewards shall be elected by this consultative meeting to be members of the Circuit Stationing Committee while the invitation that affects them is considered.

- 7.15.1.2 Before the Circuit Stationing Committee finalises a list of names of ministers who could potentially be invited, they shall consult with the Bishop, or the person mandated by the Bishop, who may add names to this list for consideration. The Bishop will also engage the Committee on transformational issues such as gender and race. No invitation (or re-invitation) shall be extended to any minister without the agreement of the Bishop.
- 7.15.1.3 Before taking any steps to replace a Minister the Circuit Stewards shall advise that Minister.
- 7.15.1.4 The Circuit Stewards shall all sign a Letter of Enquiry, asking whether the Minister selected by the Committee would accept the appointment concerned. A copy of this letter shall be forwarded to the local Bishop as well as the Bishop of the District in which the Minister is currently stationed.
- 7.15.1.5 A Minister shall not consider such an enquiry before advising the local Circuit Stewards and Bishop.
- 7.15.1.6 The Minister shall reply in writing within two weeks of receiving the letter of enquiry. If the reply is affirmative neither the Minister nor the Circuit Stewards may consider other enquiries.
- 7.15.1.7 After an affirmative reply has been received, the matter shall be introduced at the next Quarterly Meeting. The Circuit Stewards shall propose and second the invitation. There shall be no debate but questions for clarification shall be allowed. No amendment may be proposed by the Meeting, which shall vote for or against.
- 7.15.1.8 Should the Meeting resolve to make the invitation, the Circuit Stewards shall convey this information to the Minister and the local Bishop within 7 days. The Minister and the Circuit are then committed to each other in terms of the invitation but always subject to the authority of the Conference.
- 7.15.1.9 Should the Meeting resolve not to make the invitation, the Circuit Stewards shall convey this information in writing to the Minister and the local Bishop within 7

- days. If time permits for the procedure to be repeated in respect of another Minister the Circuit Stewards may begin again as in para. 7.15.1.1. Otherwise the matter shall be referred through the Synod to the Connexional Executive.
- 7.15.1.10 An invitation may not be extended later than the April Quarterly Meeting or earlier than 2 years before the beginning of the period to which the invitation relates.
- 7.15.1.11 An invitation is for an initial period of five (5) years. It may be extended by the Quarterly Meeting as per the procedure above, by up to 5 years at a time, as the Circuit Quarterly Meeting may decide.
- 7.15.1.12 Under exceptional circumstances where it appears that the current period cannot be sustained, the Circuit Stationing Committee and the Minister concerned shall meet to discuss the matter. The Circuit Stewards shall submit a report to the Bishop who shall place the matter before Synod.
- 7.15.1.13 No Minister shall entertain an enquiry concerning an invitation, neither shall Circuit Stewards extend such an enquiry, where the Minister concerned has served for less than 3 years in the present appointment (except as provided for in para. 7.15.1.12). An Ordinand, however, may receive and accept an invitation for the year following ordination regardless of the period of service in the present Circuit. Probationers are not eligible for invitation.
- 7.15.1.14 A District Stationing Committee consisting of the District officials as well as five Synod-elected lay people and five Synod-elected clergy shall meet at least once before the annual Synod. They will present the draft of Stations for interrogation by the Synod, and meet at least once more before Conference. The Committee shall invite the Superintendent and one Circuit Steward of any Circuit affected by changes in the stations of ministers. The committee is elected by Synod for a three year term, renewable.
- 7.15.1.15 A Pastoral Commission Report shall be provided by the Bishop of a District in which a Minister is left without a station for the ensuing year. This report shall be submitted to the General Secretary within 21 days of the rising of Conference for the consideration of the Presiding Bishop.

7.15.1.16 Connexional Stationing is the work of Conference as delegated to the Preliminary Stationing Meeting by Bishops and the Connexional Executive, and the final reading of stations shall take place at Conference.

7.15.2 Stationing by Conference:

7.15.2.1 Noting that Methodist Ministers are always under annual review in accordance with para 4.61, a Minister stationed without invitation to a Circuit shall remain in the appointment for at least 3 years. In the second or third year the Circuit may invite the Minister to complete the remainder of an initial period of 5 years. Such a Minister may, alternatively, accept an invitation to serve (after 3 years) in another Circuit. Failing either such invitation, the Connexional Executive shall decide where to station the Minister.

7.15.2.2 Under exceptional circumstances where it appears that the current period cannot be sustained, the Circuit Stationing Committee and the Minister concerned shall meet to discuss the matter. The Circuit Stewards shall submit a report to the Bishop who shall place the matter before Synod.

The Superintendent Minister:

7.16 The Superintendent of the Circuit is the official head of the Church in the Circuit and shall exercise authority and carry out duties as such subject to the directions of the Conference and the Laws and Discipline of the Church, being responsible in the first instance to the Bishop. The Connexional Executive appoints the Superintendent who assumes office on the 1st January and may be reappointed. The Bishop should consult the District Executive, and the Ministers and Circuit Stewards of the Circuit, before recommending the appointment of a Superintendent.

7.17 The Superintendent shall be an ordained Minister in the Circuit unless the Connexional Executive otherwise directs. If necessary, the Superintendent may depute another ordained Minister in the Circuit to act as Superintendent. With the approval of the Bishop, a Probationer in the Circuit or an ordained Minister from another Circuit may serve as the deputy.

Powers and Duties:

7.18 *The powers and duties of the Superintendent are inter alia:*

7.18.1 to lead the Circuit in spiritual matters and to be pastor to the Ministers in the Circuit and their families;

7.18.2 to arrange the regular meeting of Ministers and to oversee their work;

- 7.18.3 to oversee especially the character and effectiveness of the Leaders in leading the Classes;
- 7.18.4 to preside at all official meetings of the Circuit and, when unable to attend, to depute another Minister so to preside;
- 7.18.5 to submit to the Leaders' Meeting persons to be considered for acceptance as Members of the Church, or to depute a colleague to do so;
- 7.18.6 to nominate Candidates for the Ministry (4.12);
- 7.18.7 to decide whether to permit any appeal for funds made by or on behalf of organisations from elsewhere in the Connexion, or made by external organisations. Such permission must be in writing;
- 7.18.8 to hold in safe custody and to keep with accuracy the Circuit records and registers of people and property and, on moving from the Superintendency, to submit these to the new Superintendent;
- 7.18.9 to ensure that Circuit records which are more than fifty years old be placed in the custody of the Methodist Archives at the Cory Library for Historical Research at Rhodes University. Societies and Circuits are invited to deposit objects of historical and cultural interest, such as clothing, vessels and paintings, in the care of the Albany Museum, Grahamstown. If such objects are retained locally, the Albany Museum offers advice about methods of conservation.
- 7.18.10 to ensure that an exact inventory of the furniture, belonging to the Church, in each Minister's house is prepared and periodically corrected by the Circuit Stewards and the Minister in residence;
- 7.18.11 to prepare and forward, after being approved by the Quarterly Meeting, the Reports and Schedules required by Synod or the Committees or officers appointed by the Connexional Executive;
- 7.18.12 to furnish the Bishop immediately after their election with the names and addresses of the Circuit Stewards and other members elected by the Quarterly Meeting as Representatives to Synod, and with the names and addresses of their alternates;
- 7.18.13 to ensure that all monies held by organisations or departments in the Circuit are reported to the Quarterly Meeting, and the accounts audited before being presented to Synod;
- 7.18.14 to ensure that all collections and assessments for Connexional Funds are made and remitted according to the directions of the Connexional Executive.
- 7.18.15 to report all Bequests to Synod;
- 7.18.16 to be responsible for preparing the Circuit Preaching Plan;
- 7.18.17 to observe and carry out all official directions and regulations.

The Circuit Stewards:

- 7.19 There shall be not less than 2 (two) and not more than 4 (four) Circuit Stewards who are the Executive Officers of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

Circuit Stewards shall be nominated, with motivation, by members of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting for election and appointment at the October Circuit Quarterly Meeting for a 3 (three) year term, up to a maximum of 3 (three) terms. If a vacancy arises it may be filled at the next Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

7.20 The Circuit Stewards are the officers through whom all communications affecting the appointment of Ministers are addressed.

7.21 *The duties of the Circuit Stewards are inter alia:*

7.21.1 to provide for the effective operation of the Circuit subject to the directions of the Quarterly Meeting;

7.21.2 to manage all Circuit funds on behalf of the Quarterly Meeting and in conjunction with the Circuit Finance Committee where this exists. No other person shall perform this duty and the Circuit Treasurer, where appointed, shall operate under the direction of the Circuit Stewards;

7.21.3 to open a Banking Account in the name of 'The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Circuit' and jointly to operate thereon. The signatories on the Banking Account may include the Superintendent or a duly appointed deputy;

7.21.4 to pay to the Connexional Office the amounts due to the Connexional Funds and the stipends and other allowances of the Ministers, and all other claims on the Circuit funds;

7.21.5 to keep proper accounts of income and expenditure, and to submit them to each Quarterly Meeting;

7.21.6 to have the annual financial schedules audited and to submit them to Synod;

7.21.7 to consult the Ministers and Society Stewards so as to know the needs and wishes of the Societies and the Ministers in connection with the stationing of Ministers in the Circuit;

7.21.8 to convene and form part of the Circuit Stationing Committee and to correspond with Ministers concerning invitations to labour in the Circuit;

7.21.9 to nominate to the Quarterly Meeting any Minister for invitation to labour in the Circuit, and to advise the Bishop of the decisions of the Circuit Stationing Committee and of the Quarterly Meeting in connection with invitations to Ministers;

7.21.10 to correspond with the newly-appointed Minister immediately after the Connexional Executive has made the appointment, to meet the Minister on arrival in the Circuit and to facilitate the removal;

7.21.11 to ensure that, if the Minister is to occupy a Circuit house, it is ready and fit for occupation and adequately furnished;

7.21.12 to take turns in attending Synod as a representative;

- 7.21.13 to be ex-officio members of all Committees in the Circuit and Societies.

Memorials from Circuits to the Conference:

- 7.22 The Quarterly Meeting may memorialise the Conference or Connexional Executive. At least fourteen days' notice of the proposed memorial shall be given by the proposer to the Superintendent and the members of the Meeting. The Meeting may amend the proposal.
- 7.22.1 Once approved, a Memorial shall be signed by the Circuit Stewards on behalf of the Meeting and forwarded by the Superintendent to the General Secretary, at least 1 (one) month before the meeting of Conference;
- 7.22.2 no Memorial may be adopted by the Quarterly Meeting which is manifestly of a seditious character, or is in conflict with the Doctrines, Discipline or Ethos of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, or involves direct interference in the affairs of another Circuit.

Circuit Finances:

- 7.23 The chief sources of Circuit income are: Assessments levied by the Quarterly Meeting on the Societies, Donations, and the Offerings of the people whether in pledged giving, weekly collections, or contributions in the Classes.
- 7.24 The funds of the Church shall be operated only through a Bank Cheque Account in the name of 'The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, Circuit', and shall be managed by the Circuit Stewards under the direction of the Quarterly Meeting. The Church's financial policy as recorded in the Policy Manual which is obtainable from the Methodist Connexional Office shall be strictly adhered to. In no circumstance shall any monies of the Church be placed in the account of a Minister or anyone else.
- 7.25 No Circuit, Society or organisation shall overdraw any account of the Church or enter into a hire-purchase agreement in the name of the Church without the permission of the General Treasurers.
- 7.26 Financial statements prepared for Societies and Circuits by a person other than a registered accountant shall be audited by a person with an accounting qualification, whose qualifications shall be stated in the audited financial statements.
- 7.27 A Circuit which does not meet its assessment or any other financial commitment for three consecutive months shall, until it meets its obligations, lose control of its finances, choice of ministerial assistance, and the right to have a Minister within the Circuit as its Superintendent. The Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Bishop, is empowered to appoint a Commission to supervise the finances of such a Circuit, and to institute an investigation to examine the viability of the Circuit with a view to amalgamation with or incorporation into another Circuit, or disbandment if necessary.

- 7.28 No financial appeal by or on behalf of any Circuit or Methodist Institution shall be made without the consent of the District Finance Committee and the Bishop. Any financial appeals, to a Circuit, from outside the Church, shall be made through the Superintendent and with his/her *written approval in order to expedite the process of such appeals*.
- 7.29 All organisations within the Circuit making any donation to, or conducting business with an outside organisation shall do so only with the written approval of the Superintendent.
- 7.30 **Affiliation with other Organisations**
No Organisation within the Church shall affiliate with an outside organisation without the approval of the Superintendent, who may consult the Bishop if necessary.
- 7.31 **Loans**
No loan from Circuit or Connexional Funds may be made to any private person or body.
- 7.32 **Matters Referred to Quarterly Meetings**
Superintendents and Circuit Stewards are to ensure that all matters sent down for debate in Quarterly Meetings be so debated and that failure to do so is a breach of our discipline.

THE SOCIETY

- 7.33 The Circuits are divided into Societies as determined by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and set forth in the records of the Circuit.
- 7.34 All Methodist Societies shall:
- 7.34.1 display a Connexional identity;
 - 7.34.2 be outward looking and missional;
 - 7.34.3 exercise the care and discipling of members;
 - 7.34.4 promote every member Ministry;
 - 7.34.5 offer healing and transformation, especially in relation to our Mission Pillars.

Annual Society Meeting:

- 7.35 The Society shall hold an Annual Meeting open to all Members.
- 7.36 The Superintendent or a Minister deputed by him/her to preside over the Society Leaders' Meeting shall also preside over the Annual Society Meeting.

Functions:

- 7.37 *The following are inter alia the functions of the Annual Society Meeting:*
- 7.37.1 to decide the mission objectives of the Society;

- 7.37.2 to elect not less than two and not more than ten Society Stewards. Society Stewards shall be nominated by the Leaders' Meeting as well as by members of the Society at the Annual Society Meeting for election and appointment at the Annual Society meeting for a 3 (three) year term up to a maximum of 3 (three) terms;
- 7.37.3 to appoint a Secretary of the Leaders' Meeting;
- 7.37.4 to appoint a Society Treasurer after careful consultation between the Minister and the Society Stewards and ratified at the annual Society meeting. The appointment shall be for a 3 (three) year term renewable up to a maximum of 3 (three) terms;
- 7.37.5 to appoint a Society Auditor;
- 7.37.6 to appoint such Society Mission Groups as it deems necessary;
- 7.37.7 to elect members to convene the Mission Groups, where possible using the Society Stewards;
- 7.37.8 to establish Ministries in the Society and to appoint a leader for each such Ministry;
- 7.37.9 to receive and consider the reports on the activities and expenditure as well as the plans and estimated expenditure of the Mission Groups;
- 7.37.10 to elect annually, after nomination from the floor, the Stewards of the Poor Fund. The Meeting shall appoint one of the Poor Fund Stewards as a member of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting;
- 7.37.11 to elect Class Leaders who are appropriately identified and skilled, ratified by the Society Leaders' Meeting and appointed for a 3 year term up to a max of 3 terms. The meeting is also to appoint Assistant Class Leaders and two representatives to the Children's ministry.
- 7.37.12 to receive and consider the financial statement of the Society and to approve the budget for the following year;
- 7.37.13 to appoint annually the members of the Trust Properties Committee;
- 7.37.14 to allocate funds needed by the Trust Committee and to receive an account of the use of the funds;
- 7.37.15 to elect two Local Preachers, being members of that Society, to be members of the Society Leaders' Meeting.

Mission Groups:

- 7.38 The Society Mission Groups report to the Annual Society Meeting but are accountable to the Leaders' Meeting. The following activities should be part of every Society's life and the Annual Society Meeting should appoint Mission Groups which best promote them:

Spiritual Formation; Mission and Extension; Youth; Justice and Service; Property; and Finance.

- 7.39 The Annual Society Meeting may permit any activity in the Society to operate without being included under a Mission Group.
- 7.40 The Organisations in the Church, such as the Women's and the Men's Organisations and Youth Unit are part of the mission of the Society and should therefore be regarded as Mission Groups.
- 7.41 The Superintendent and Minister(s) of the Society are members of all Mission Groups and shall receive the Minutes of all their meetings.
- 7.42 No Mission Group shall incur expenditure or a liability thereto without the authority of the Annual Society Meeting, but in an emergency, special authority for expenditure which falls outside the approved budget may be granted by the Leaders' Meeting. Such authority shall be reported to the next Annual Society Meeting.

Society Leaders' Meeting:

- 7.43 A Leaders' Meeting shall be held as and when occasion may demand, to oversee the life and mission of the Society and to administer the affairs of the Society. It shall be presided over by the Superintendent, or by a Minister in the Circuit deputed thereto by the Superintendent.

The functions and duties of a Society Leaders' Meeting are inter alia:

- 7.43.1 to propose mission and other objectives to the Annual Society Meeting. (The Meeting is referred to in Question 4 in the Order of Business for Circuit Quarterly Meetings in Appendix 8);
- 7.43.2 to consider the spiritual state of the Classes and Bible-Study Groups;
- 7.43.3 to appoint leaders of Home Bible Study and Fellowship Groups;
- 7.43.4 to appoint an Organist and a Choir Leader where necessary;
- 7.43.5 to appoint annually an appropriate number of Door Stewards and to define their duties;
- 7.43.6 to decide on applications for membership by persons on Trial submitted by the Superintendent or a Minister deputed by the Superintendent;
- 7.43.7 to decide on the removal of members to and from the Society;
- 7.43.8 to recommend to the Quarterly Meeting the appointment of lay ministry, pastoral and administration staff to work in the Society;
- 7.43.9 to receive and consider at each Meeting a report of Sunday School work in the Society;
- 7.43.10 to administer the Fund for the Poor;
- 7.43.11 to administer Society funds, where the Quarterly Meeting permits the Society to administer part of the funds it receives.
- 7.43.12 The Society Leaders' Meeting shall elect a Society Steward when a vacancy occurs in between Annual Society Meetings. This shall be until the next ASM.

- 7.44 Where there is no Society Leaders' Meeting its functions shall be performed by the Leaders' Meeting of a neighbouring Society or by the Quarterly Meeting, as decided by the Superintendent.
- 7.45 The Leaders' Meeting may delegate any of its functions, to an Executive Committee which it shall appoint from among its members and which shall include the Society Stewards.

Membership:

- 7.46 The following are members of the Leaders' Meeting. (Elected members and ex officio members remain members of the Meeting only while members of the Society):
 - 7.46.1 the Ministers, Deacons, Supernumerary Ministers and Probationers who are appointed to work in the Circuit and any other Ministers who are members of the Society;
 - 7.46.2 the duly appointed Evangelists, Lay Agents and Biblewomen serving the Society;
 - 7.46.3 the Circuit Stewards;
 - 7.46.4 the Society Stewards;
 - 7.46.5 the Stewards of the Poor Fund;
 - 7.46.6 the Leaders of all Classes, Junior Classes, Home Bible Study and Fellowship Groups, and Ministries;
 - 7.46.7 the President and a duly appointed representative of each branch/sub-branch of the Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano and Young Men's Guild in the Society;
 - 7.46.8 the President or duly appointed representative of each branch of the Women's Association, Women's Auxiliary, and Men's League in the Society;
 - 7.46.9 any office-bearer of the General Executive or the District Executive of the Women's Association, Women's Auxiliary, Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano, Young Men's Guild or Men's League if a member of the Society;
 - 7.46.10 a representative of every branch of the Youth Unit in the Society, being eighteen years of age or older;
 - 7.46.11 two Local Preachers being members of that Society;
 - 7.46.12 any member of the Society appointed to convene a Mission Group;
 - 7.46.13 any member of the Society who is a member of the Connexional Executive or Conference.

Society Stewards:

- 7.47 Society Stewards are the executive Officers of the Leaders' Meeting of the Society to which they belong, and are ex-officio members of the Quarterly Meeting.
- 7.48 Society Stewards shall be nominated by the Leaders' Meeting as well as

by members of the Society at the Annual Society Meeting for election and appointment at the Annual Society Meeting for a 3 (three) year term up to a maximum of three (3) terms.

7.49 *The duties of the Society Stewards are, inter alia:*

- 7.49.1 to co-operate with the Ministers and Leaders of the Society to promote its spiritual and temporal welfare;
- 7.49.2 to attend the Leaders' Meeting of which they are members;
- 7.49.3 to ensure that all approved Collections are duly made at the proper time;
- 7.49.4 to take charge and keep an account of collections for Circuit and Connexional funds, and to remit to the Circuit Stewards without delay;
- 7.49.5 to pay to the Circuit Stewards all funds due to the Circuit;
- 7.49.6 to distribute all pulpit notices signed by the Superintendent or the person deputed thereto;
- 7.49.7 to make proper arrangements for Baptisms;
- 7.49.8 to be in attendance in the vestry to receive the Preacher;
- 7.49.9 to make the best arrangements for the service should the Preacher appointed fail to keep the appointment or send a supply.

Class Leaders (Fellowship group leaders/Bible study group leaders, hereafter Class Leaders):

- 7.50 A Class Leader is appointed to have spiritual oversight of a number of Members and should be trained for such work.
- 7.51 A Class Leader shall be a member of the Church in good standing. Class Leaders should be appropriately identified and skilled, ratified by the Society Leaders' Meeting and appointed for a 3 (three) year term up to a maximum of 3 (three) terms, by the Annual Society Meeting.
- 7.52 The duties of the Class Leaders are, inter alia:
 - 7.52.1 to assist the members of the Class in their spiritual life and growth, making this the primary aim of the Class meetings;
 - 7.52.2 to visit the members of the Class as frequently as possible in order to watch over their spiritual life;
 - 7.52.3 to keep Class Registers of the Class members.
- 7.53 No Class Leader shall be removed from office except by the Leaders Meeting, but those who have no members under their care cease to be Class Leaders. Class Leaders who remove from the Society thereby surrender their office.
- 7.54 Class Leaders are members of the Leaders' Meeting of the Society to which they belong and are members of the Quarterly Meeting.

Stewards of the Poor Fund – Communion Stewards

- 7.55 There shall be not more than 6 Stewards of the Poor Fund, who are also Communion Stewards.

7.56 *The duties of the Stewards of the Poor Fund are:*

- 7.57.1 to act as Communion Stewards by providing for the administration of the Lord's Supper and Love Feasts, by preparing the elements;
- 7.56.2 to arrange for the collection of funds for the needy;
- 7.56.3 to inform the Minister of any who are ill or in distress and to collaborate with the Minister in caring for them and in making disbursements from the Poor Fund;
- 7.56.4 to keep proper accounts of all receipts and payments from the Poor Fund, certify these as correct, and report them to the Leaders' Meeting;
- 7.56.5 to attend the Leaders' Meeting.

PREACHING PLACES

7.57 Conference recognises the difficulty Circuits have in differentiating between Societies and Preaching Places and offers the following guidelines:

- 7.57.1 a Society must have a Society Steward;
- 7.57.2 a Society should have at least 15 Full Members;
- 7.57.3 a Society should have at least one Class Leader with a functioning class;
- 7.57.4 a Society should ideally be able to do its own bookkeeping.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

7.58 **Connexional and District Conventions**

- 7.58.1 No Connexional or District Conventions shall be held in a Circuit that is not financially viable, or that is in arrears with assessments.
- 7.58.2 No Connexional or District Conventions shall be held in any Circuit without the authority of the District Executive Committee.

CHAPTER 8

UNITS, COMMITTEES & ORGANISATIONS

- 8.1. Conference or the Connexional Executive may allot part of the work of the Mission of the Church at Connexional, District and Circuit level to certain **Units** established for this purpose, directing and controlling their work through Conference, the Synods or the Circuits.

The Units are:

- The Communication Unit
- The Ecumenical Affairs Unit
- The Education for Ministry and Mission Unit
- The Finance Unit
- The Human Resource Unit
- The Mission Unit
- The Youth Unit

- 8.2. Conference may allot part of the work of the Mission of the Church at Connexional, District and Circuit level to certain **Organisations** established for this purpose, directing and controlling their work through Conference, the Synods or the Circuits.

The Organisations are:

- Connexional Music Association
- Local Preachers' Association
- Men's League
- METHSSOC (Methodist Student Society)
- uNzondelelo
- Wesley Guild
- Women's Association
- Women's Auxiliary
- Women's Manyano
- Young Men's Guild
- Young Women's Manyano

- 8.2.1 These Organisations shall operate in terms of their constitutions, but such constitutions shall be subject to the Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Methodist Church

of Southern Africa. In case of conflict of interpretation, the Laws and Discipline takes precedence.

8.2.2 The constitutions of these Organisations or any amendments thereto shall not come into operation until ratified by Conference.

8.3 Conference may allot part of the work of the Mission of the Church at Connexional, District and Circuit level to certain **Committees** established for this purpose, directing and controlling their work through the Conference, the Synods or the Circuits.

The Committees are:

- The Connexional Chaplaincy Committee
- The Connexional Disciplinary Committee
- The Doctrine Ethics and Worship Committee – DEWCOM
- The Methodist Publishing House Committee
- The Revision Committee
- The Connexional Structures Committee
- The Connexional Trust Properties Committee

8.3.1 Conference may add, combine or discontinue Units, Organisations or Committees.

8.3.2 The Orders, Organisations and Associations shall operate in terms of their Constitutions subject to the Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church.

8.3.3 The work of the Mission of the Church shall primarily be overseen by the Districts and they shall be accountable to the Conference and the Connexional Executive.

8.4 **THE COMMUNICATIONS UNIT**

8.4.1 The Conference shall appoint a Director to the Unit. The Director is a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

The task of the Communications Unit shall be to effectively communicate the MCSA vision of healing and transformation. To this end the Unit shall provide a service of communicating information on the life and witness of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

Communications Advisory Board

8.4.2 Conference shall appoint a Communications advisory Board consisting of the following:

A Bishop (Chair); Director of the Unit; General Secretary; Mission Unit Director and five (5) selected members knowledgeable in, inter alia corporate communications and strategic management, marketing, etc.

The Function of the Unit

- To continuously advocate, mobilise, inform and educate Methodist people and be the public relations arm of the MCSA within the office of the Presiding Bishop
- To effectively communicate and assist in realising the MCSA's vision: 'A Christ Healed Africa for the healing of nations' and the five imperatives including a deepened spirituality; justice and service in church and society; evangelism and church growth; empowerment and development and education.

8.4.3 *The functions and duties of the Director are, inter alia:*

- (a) Head the Communications and information unit of the MCSA reporting to the Office of the Presiding Bishop, the Conference and the Connexional Executive; exercise oversight on the work and staff of the Unit, and represent the Unit at Conference and the Connexional Executive;
- (b) Direct and manage the MCSA's communication strategy which includes, inter alia, public relations, media, marketing, information and education strategies and programmes;
- (c) Edit and review the New Dimension MCSA newspaper as well as undertake all associated activities, ensuring that the newspaper reflects the ethos, mission and vision of the MCSA;
- (d) Manage the MCSA website and other social media pages;
- (e) Establish and maintain good relations with relevant media;
- (f) Provide and ensure relevant theological, social and political content to the MCSA's work;
- (g) Liaise and network with other media partners;
- (h) Write up and issue press releases and public statements as directed by the office of the Presiding Bishop;
- (i) Undertake public relations and media liaison for the MCSA.

8.5 ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS UNIT

The Unit shall encourage ecumenical involvement throughout the Connexion. It shall ensure that Methodist people realise that ecumenical involvement is central to the mission of the Church.

8.5.1 The Ecumenical Affairs Unit is led by the Director in conjunction with the Office of the Presiding Bishop. The Conference shall appoint a Director to the Unit to hold office for a five (5) year term, renewable for one (1) final term. The Director is a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

Ecumenical Affairs Advisory Board

8.5.2 Conference shall appoint an Ecumenical Affairs Advisory Board consisting of the following:

8.5.3 A Bishop (Chair); Director of the Unit; General Secretary; and at least five (5) other members.

8.5.4 *The functions and duties of the Director are inter alia to:*

- (a) represent the unit at Conference and the Connexional Executive;
- (b) be part of the MCSA representation to the ecumenical bodies of which the MCSA is a member;
- (c) maintain contact with the District Ecumenical Affairs Secretaries;
- (d) undertake such other duties as the Conference and Connexional Executive may from time to time determine;
- (e) manage Church Unity Commission relationships;
- (f) ensure vibrant relationship with Councils of Churches;
- (g) foster and nurture relationships with international and regional ecumenical partners;
- (h) be aware of and follow up on inter-religious, inter-denominational dialogues.

8.5.5 Each District Synod shall appoint a District Ecumenical Affairs Secretary (DEAS) to hold office for three years, who is eligible for re-appointment.

The functions and duties of the DEAS are, inter alia, to :

- (a) champion and lead ecumenical co-operation in the District;
- (b) receive ecumenical reports from the Circuits;
- (c) collate and present a District Ecumenical Affairs report to Synod;
- (d) facilitate training sessions to encourage ecumenism in the District, enabling and encouraging prophetic living;
- (e) represent the District (in consultation with the bishop) in ecumenical forums within the District.

8.5.6 **United Congregations**

- (a) The Connexional Executive reaffirms its acceptance of United Congregations as an expression of the unity we seek and directs that this resolution be conveyed to all united congregations in which Methodists participate.
- (b) The Connexional Executive requests Bishops and Superintendents to consult partner churches of the Church Unity Commission about the establishment of work in new areas and to ensure that programmes of church extension are co-ordinated and, whenever possible, undertaken jointly.
- (c) Bishops and Superintendents are asked to note the following resolution of the Connexional Trust Properties Committee:

Before commencing any new development involving building and/or land purchases, local Trust Properties Committees should thoroughly investigate the possibility of joint schemes with other denominations (especially those engaged with us in unity discussions).

- (d) Negotiations for United Congregations shall be conducted on the basis of the Memorandum of Association and the Model Constitution for United Congregations (Obtainable from the Church Unity Commission).
- (e) The Connexional Executive approves in principle the establishment of joint committees representing the participating churches to consider and approve building schemes submitted by united congregations and authorises its representatives on the Church Unity Commission to negotiate the constitution of such committees.
- (f) The Connexional Executive accepts the principle of joint oversight of united congregations by the overseers of the participating denominations and authorises its representatives on the Church Unity Commission to negotiate the form of such oversight in consultation with the General Committee for Ecumenical Affairs.
- (g) The Presiding Bishop or the General Secretary is authorised to accept the constitutions or amendments to constitutions of united congregations.

8.5.7 National Councils of Churches

The Church, which is a member of the Councils of Churches in South Africa, Namibia, Swaziland, Mocambique, Botswana and Lesotho, directs the Synods concerned to require and to consider reports from the representatives of the Church on these Councils.

8.5.8 Relationships with other Methodist Denominations in Southern Africa

Conference 1995 approved the initiation of discussion with other Methodist denominations in Southern Africa and appointed the General Secretary as Correspondent.

8.5.9 Pastoral Exchanges

The Exchange Programme of the World Methodist Council provides for short-term exchanges (usually six weeks) between ministers of Conferences associated with the Council. The longer term World Church in Britain Programme is designed to give the British Church the opportunity of learning from the insights, witness and special skills

of ministers from other parts of the world. Details may be obtained from the General Secretary.

8.6 **EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY AND MISSION UNIT**

The Unit shall give expression to the conviction that Ministry is the work of the whole Church.

8.6.1 The Conference shall appoint a Director to the Unit to hold office for a five (5) year term, renewable for one (1) final term. The Director is a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive. The Connexional Executive may also appoint Co-ordinators for the Training of Lay Ministries and the Training of Ordained Ministries, for five (5) years. Co-ordinators are eligible for re-appointment for one (1) additional term up to five (5) years.

The Unit consists of two Sections viz. Training for Lay Ministries Section and Training for Ordained Ministries Section.

EMMU General Committee

8.6.2 The following are the members of the EMMU General Committee:

A Bishop (Chair); Director of the Unit; EMMU Registrar; EMMU Financial Administrator; Co-ordinators of Training for Lay Ministries and for Ordained Ministries; the Bishops of 3 Northern Districts, (Central, Highveld & Swaziland and Limpopo Districts); Ordinands' Convener, and Secretary of the Local Preachers' Department; Human Resource Unit Director; one representative from the Seminary; all District Supervisors of Studies; one representative for Order of Evangelism; Convener of the Non-itinerant Training programme and one representative from the TEE College. The EMMU General Committee is encouraged to ensure ecumenical participation in its work.

8.6.3 *The functions and duties of the EMMU General Committee are inter alia to:*

- (a) plan and propose to Conference and the Connexional Executive an overall policy of education for ministry, ordained and lay;
- (b) consider annually the record and situation of every Candidate and Probationer for report and recommendation to the Connexional Executive;
- (c) apply the regulations of Conference and Connexional Executive with regard to Probationers and Candidates;
- (d) provide for liaison and co-operation between the various agencies involved in education for ministry;
- (e) aid and provide training for all who have responsibility for the supervision of Probationers;

- (f) examine and review patterns of the Church's ministry and to make recommendations thereon;
- (g) implement the resolutions of Conference on Education for Ministry and Mission.
- (h) Retain a functioning relationship with the Seminary.

8.6.4 *The functions and duties of the Director are, inter alia, to:*

- (a) exercise oversight on the work and staff of the Unit, and to represent the Unit at Conference and the Connexional Executive;
- (b) maintain contact with Connexional agencies engaged in education for ministry;
- (c) be responsible for the implementation of the policy of the Unit as decided by Conference;
- (d) maintain contact with other denominational and ecumenical agencies engaged in education for ministry;
- (e) undertake such other duties as the Conference, the Connexional Executive or Connexional Committee may from time to time determine.

8.6.5 Each District shall annually appoint an EMMU Committee consisting of the following:

The Bishop or deputy (Chair); District Supervisor of Studies; District Internship Convener (if different from the Supervisor of Studies); District Secretary of Christian Education; District Local Preachers' Secretary; District Evangelists/Biblewomen Secretary; District Youth Co-ordinator and any other members of the Connexional Committee residing within the District. The committee has power to co-opt. The District Committee shall meet at least twice a year before the EMMU General Committee.

8.7 **THE FINANCE UNIT (See Chapter 9)**

8.7.1 **The Finance Unit has responsibility mainly for the following:**

- 8.7.1.1 Pension/Provident Funds
- 8.7.1.2 Payment of stipend and pensions
- 8.7.1.3 Insurance of Church properties
- 8.7.1.4 Medical Aid
- 8.7.1.5 Property

8.8 **HUMAN RESOURCE UNIT**

8.8.1 The Conference shall appoint a Director to the Unit to hold office for a five (5) year term, renewable for one (1) final term. The Director is a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

8.8.2 The Human Resources Committee is appointed by Conference to oversee and manage the work of the Unit as directed by the Connexional Executive and Conference.

8.8.3 **Scope & Responsibilities**

The Human Resource Unit key outputs are to:

- 8.8.3.1 implement and coordinate Human Resources interventions throughout the Connexion;
- 8.8.3.2 facilitate the implementation of the HR strategy in line with approved policies, practices and programmes;
- 8.8.3.3 assist in the administration of personnel related matters;
- 8.8.3.4 advise Bishops, ministers and lay staff on Labour related issues as well as represent the Church at labour dispute forums;
- 8.8.3.5 ensure interpretation and application of all relevant HR policies and procedures;
- 8.8.3.6 develop and maintain a data base of ministers' profiles for stationing purposes;
- 8.8.3.7 trace and analyse human resource trends;
- 8.8.3.8 coordinate staff recruitment, selection, induction and performance management systems;
- 8.8.3.9 attend to all matters assigned by Connexional Executive and Conference.

8.9 **THE MISSION UNIT**

8.9.1 **The Call to Mission**

Conference acknowledges that the Church has been constituted by Jesus Christ for mission.

Conference declares the Church's commitment to Christ's commission to make disciples of all nations (Matt 28:18-19). This commission involves presenting Christ in the Power of the Holy Spirit so that all persons should put their trust in Jesus Christ, and nurture them to grow into mature Christians who will serve God in the world and through the Church.

The Methodist Church is called to its fundamental mission "to spread Scriptural Holiness throughout the land by the proclamation of the evangelical faith".

Conference affirms the importance of ministry to the whole person, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, setting free the captives, and the transformation of the socio-economic structures (Luke 4:18-19;

Romans 8:21) as being integral to the mission task of the Church, and Methodism in particular.

8.9.2 **The Structure of the Unit**

The Mission Unit exists to facilitate, coordinate and support the work of Mission within the Connexion and to build partnerships with other Methodist Connexions and other ecumenical formations and NGOs.

The Conference shall appoint a Director to the Unit to hold office for a five (5) year term, renewable for one (1) final term. The Director is a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

The Unit is made up of Desks, Field Workers and other Complimentary staff as is necessary to execute the work of the Mission Unit in relation to international mission partnerships, local faith-based organisations, disbursement of various funds, and the coordination of the work of Mission at District level.

The Unit is assisted by an Advisory Board in the execution of its duties. A Bishop appointed by the Presiding Bishop chairs the meeting of the Board which consists of the Director and usually six to eight additional members appointed by the Board itself. The Board meets normally four times a year, but at least three times a year. Desk Coordinators give feedback to the Board as and when required.

District Mission Coordinators and Coordinators of District Mission Desks are appointed by Synods. The District Mission Coordinator coordinates the work of the Mission Unit in the District. The District and Desk Coordinators meet together annually under the direction of the Mission Unit Director.

8.9.3 **Mission Unit Mandate**

Conference directs the Mission Unit within the Presiding Bishop's office under the leadership of the Unit Director to:

- (a) promote and encourage theological reflection and study in the area of mission;
- (b) stimulate and encourage theological reflection and programmes of action on issues and proposals concerning evangelism and Church growth, development and economic empowerment, spirituality, justice and service, renewal and inter-faith relations in contemporary society, and to advise the Conference and the Districts;
- (c) be a channel of communication between the Districts and Connexional Executive on relevant mission matters;

- (d) promote research on moral and ethical issues which affect civil society and the Church;
- (e) amplify the prophetic voice of the church through advocacy, lobbying and monitoring organs of civil society;
- (f) network with other churches, national and international agencies which promote mission;
- (g) monitor and facilitate the work of the Connexional Mission Coordinators.

8.9.4 **Methodist Relief and Development Fund**

The Methodist Relief and Development Fund exists to assist those in need as a result of events over which they have no control, as well as for the purpose of development projects.

All Circuits are asked to seek ways and means of supporting this fund.

The Fund does not replace local responsibility for normal need catered for by the Poor Fund.

Applications from the Churches for assistance should be sent to the Mission Unit through the Bishop.

All Leaders Meetings and Quarterly Meetings should support the Methodist Relief and Development Fund by tithing their Poor Fund to this Fund, as well as by other means.

In the event of a social crisis within the District, the District Mission Coordinator shall consult the Bishop and the appropriate Superintendents and, if necessary, convene a District Crisis Task Group, in order that the Church might take timeous and appropriate action.

8.9.5 **Mission and Extension Fund**

The Mission and Extension Fund was established to enable the church to assist struggling Circuits and Districts to meet their mission aims and goals. Funds are to be disbursed as decided by Conference from time to time, a portion to be returned to Districts for their Mission, a portion retained by the Unit, a portion to the Pula Fund.

8.9.6 **Pula Fund**

Conference 2009 resolved that funds from the Millennium Mission Resource Fund (MMRF) and 10% from the Mission and Extension Fund (M&E) shall be combined to form a pool from which distributions may be made to Districts, Units and Connexional Projects.

- (a) Districts, Units and the Connexion shall submit Project applications to the Mission Unit Advisory Board who will decide which projects will benefit;
- (b) The Fund will give special attention to HIV and AIDS work, mission work in the Connexion and countries with which the MCSA has partnerships;
- (c) Any special projects not covered in the MU budget shall apply to the Pula Fund;
- (d) The MU in collaboration with the District structures shall put in place mechanisms to monitor, evaluate and assess District M&E incomes, allocation to projects and report to Conference.

8.9.7 Children's Homes

- 8.9.7.1 The Mission Unit shall have general oversight of all Children's Homes in the Connexion through the work of the Childcare Desk.
- 8.9.7.2 Synods shall appoint a Committee of Management that shall report to Synod on their work.
- 8.9.7.3 The Connexional Executive may appointment a Connexional Committee to co-ordinate the work of Children's Homes and to assist in establishing new Homes.

8.9.8 Homes for the Aged

- 8.9.8.1 The Mission Unit shall have general oversight of all Homes for the Aged, which shall report to Synod on their work.
- 8.9.8.2 Incorporated Associations Not for Gain shall be registered in terms of Section 21 of the Companies Act in Districts where Homes for the Aged are established.
- 8.9.8.3 Appointments to Committees shall be approved by and report to Synod and shall include the Superintendent (or Deputy).
- 8.9.8.4 Methodist Homes for the Aged shall present a consolidated report and a copy of its audited annual financial statement to the Connexional Office, and shall report to each Synod where a Home is located.
- 8.9.8.5 The Connexional Executive may appoint a Connexional Committee to co-ordinate the work of Homes for the Aged in the Connexion and to assist in establishing new Homes.

8.10 METHODIST YOUTH UNIT

- 8.10.1 The Youth Unit shall be represented at Connexional Executive by the Connexional Co-ordinator and at additional representative at Conference.

8.10.2 The Co-ordinator shall be recommended for appointment to Conference, by the Connexional Youth Consultation in terms of its own constitution.

8.10.3 The Methodist Youth Unit shall operate under its own Constitution and exists to:

- (a) promote discipleship of Christ amongst young people;
- (b) encourage young people to play a vital role in the life of the Church;
- (c) help acquaint young people with biblical knowledge and to encourage them to actively participate in Christian Evangelistic programmes that foster a Christ-like lifestyle;
- (d) promote enthusiasm and loyalty for the work of God as exercised through the Church in particular;
- (e) present God to the world through the Church.

8.10.4 Divisions of Work

The Methodist Youth Unit work shall focus on the following groupings:

- (a) Wesley Guild
- (b) Children's Ministries
- (c) Youth Associations/Fellowships etc.
- (d) Methodist Student Societies (METHSSOC) (student based groups mostly in tertiary institutions, functioning with a Methodist ethos.)
- (e) Senior Guild/Senior Youth Fellowships/Young Adult Groups etc.
- (f) Girls' and Boys' Brigades within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa; and
- (g) any other organisations engaged in youth ministry within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

8.10.5 Societies and Circuits shall establish Wesley Guilds for youth, Sunday Schools and other organisations to further mission among young people.

8.10.6 Youth Ministry – General Regulations

(a) Connexional Youth Conference

A Connexional Youth Consultation may be organised as required by the Youth Unit.

(b) Youth Synod

In each District an annual Youth Synod shall be held. All Districts shall hold an annual Youth Synod under the general direction of the District Synod.

The Youth Synod shall elect five representatives to the District Synod. It shall receive matters remitted to it by the Synod and may refer recommendations to the Synod.

(c) Youth Representation

Bishops, Superintendents and Ministers shall ensure that youth is afforded greater participation in decision making within the structures of the Church.

Youth delegates to Conference shall be elected by the Connexional Youth Consultation.

(d) Age Limit for Wesley Guilds

There shall be no age limit for membership of Wesley Guilds.

8.10.7 Children's Ministries

All Children are an important part of the Body of Christ, the Church. Every effort must be made to grow them in the teachings of the Christian faith.

Districts, Circuits and Societies must pay serious attention to this ministry by;

- (a) Providing ongoing training for Sunday School Teachers;
- (b) developing forms of worship conducive to "All Age Worship";
- (c) encouraging parents, congregations and ministers to be involved in ministry to children;
- (d) Establishing child care programmes;
- (e) Providing funding.

8.10.8 Children's Ministry Leaders

Children ministry leaders and prospective Sunday School Teachers must be properly screened and trained and should have the following qualities:

- (a) a personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ;
- (b) regular attendance at Worship and participation in the Sacrament of Holy Communion;
- (c) full membership of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa;
- (d) knowledge of the procedure, events and activities of the Church;
- (e) skill and giftedness in working with children.

If a member with these qualities is not available in a society, that society may enlist a member of another society.

8.11 EDUCATION – GENERAL REGULATIONS

The following regulations apply to the establishment of Methodist Private Schools:

The need shall be established.

- 8.11.1 A support scheme must be created to support the scheme with work if not with money.
- 8.11.2 An outline of the scheme must be prepared with estimates of costs. Capital costs of buildings, grounds, furnishing and teaching aids must be estimated separately. Running costs must be divided into salaries and other costs.
- 8.11.3 A feasibility study indicating how costs will be met and how the school is intended to develop must be submitted to the Finance Unit of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for approval.
- 8.11.4 If the Methodist Connexional Office approves, a Board of Trustees must be established, including people with strong Methodist, financial and educational qualities and representatives of the District. The Trustees must be approved by Synod and must draft a Constitution.
- 8.11.5 The school must be registered with the relevant education department as a Methodist private school. Any special consent needed from local authorities must be secured.
- 8.11.6 Detailed architectural drawings and a more detailed feasibility study must be prepared.
- 8.11.7 Donations may be sought for establishing the school and for expenses. Any deficit on the first year's running costs must be more than covered by donations, and provision must be made for expansion. No undertakings, explicit or implied, should be given until the scheme is authorised. Where a donation is subject to conditions, these must be referred to the Presiding Bishop before the donation is accepted.
- 8.11.8 The proposal and plans must be submitted to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, the District Trust Properties Committee and the Connexional Office for approval.
- 8.11.9 The Board of Trustees shall then submit the application to Conference or the Connexional Executive.
- 8.11.10 A Building Project Committee to manage the building and layout of the school and a Management Committee to attend to its day-to-day running should be appointed.
- 8.11.11 Regular annual reports, including financial reports, shall be submitted to the Methodist Connexional Office Finance Unit and Synod. In the early days of the project, the Synod may require more frequent reports.

CHAPTER 9

THE FINANCE UNIT

Scope of Responsibilities

- 9.1. **The Finance Unit has responsibility mainly for the following:**
 - 9.1.1 Managing Pension and Provident Funds
 - 9.1.2 Payment of Stipend and Pensions
 - 9.1.3 Administration of Medical Aid
 - 9.1.4 Facilitation of Property Insurance, Acquisitions, Sales and Leasing.

Administration

- 9.2 The affairs of the Unit shall be administered by an Executive Committee appointed by Conference, who shall also appoint a Ministerial General Treasurer and a Lay General Treasurer who shall act under the direction of the Executive Committee.
- 9.3 The Unit shall administer the Funds of the Church including the Mission and Extension Fund in accordance with the regulations relating to them and under the direction of Conference.

Finance Unit Executive Committee

- 9.4 The Finance Unit Executive Committee consists of the Presiding Bishop, the Lay President, the Bishop of the District in which Finance Unit is located, the Ministerial and the Lay General Treasurers, the Ministerial and the Lay General Officers of the Supernumerary Fund, the Finance Unit Director, Human Resource Director and 4 (four) Ministers and eight (8) Lay Members nominated by Synods and appointed by Connexional Executive for a three (3) year term, renewable twice.
- 9.5 The Presiding Bishop shall preside over the meetings of the Committee but may depute the Bishop of the District in which the office is located.
- 9.6 *The Committee shall meet as the business of the Unit may require, inter alia, to perform the following functions and duties:*
 - 9.6.1 to receive and consider the Annual Report of the General Treasurers, together with the duly audited Annual Accounts of the Funds administered by the Finance Unit, and to report thereon to the Connexional Executive and Conference;
 - 9.6.2 to receive and consider any Resolutions, Recommendations, Memorials, suggestions etc., pertaining to Connexional Funds and to report to the Connexional Executive and Conference;

- 9.6.3 to administer the Regulations and decisions of Conference relating to Connexional Funds, and generally to manage the affairs of the Unit;
- 9.6.4 to empower, in its discretion, the General Treasurers to invest the monies of the Finance Unit or of Connexional Funds, as it may direct;
- 9.6.5 to invest and administer bequests;
- 9.6.6 to empower, in its discretion, the General Treasurers to raise or borrow money by way of mortgage, bank overdraft or in any other way, on the security of any property belonging to the Church, provided that when borrowing on the security of property in any Circuit, the authority of the relevant Quarterly Meeting is obtained, and the finances of the Circuit are not impaired thereby (para. 9.7);
- 9.6.7 to empower, in its discretion, the General Treasurers to grant Loans on the security of property, subject to the requirements of Conference;
- 9.6.8 to permit, in its discretion, any Circuit, Institution or Unit in the Connexion to overdraw a banking account;
- 9.6.9 to empower, in its discretion, the General Treasurers to advance money from day to day to any of the Funds administered by the Finance Unit;
- 9.6.10 to determine the rate of interest to be charged on Loans, or allowed on investments.

THE GENERAL TREASURERS

- 9.7 There shall be a Ministerial General Treasurer and a Lay General Treasurer of the Church. The Ministerial General Treasurer shall be the General Secretary of the Church and the Lay General Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer of the Church.

The Lay General Treasurer is appointed by the Connexional Executive after a proper search and interview process has taken place and shall hold office for a five (5) year term, renewable for one (1) final term. The Lay General Treasurer is a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

The duties of the General Treasurers are, inter alia, to:

- 9.7.1 be Executive Officers of the Committee;
- 9.7.2 conduct the business of the Office, subject to the directions of the Executive Committee; to open and maintain banking accounts and to deposit in such accounts all monies received for the Finance Unit or any of the Funds associated with it;
- 9.7.3 make all payments on behalf of the Finance Unit by cheque or electronic payment drawn on the accounts and signed/authorised by them or their duly authorised alternates and generally to operate such accounts;

- 9.7.4 overdraw any account, if necessary;
 - 9.7.5 ensure that all Assessments are paid to the Office by the Circuits concerned;
 - 9.7.6 represent the Office and the Funds associated with it in Conference and the Connexional Executive, and particularly in the presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts of the Executive Committee.
- 9.8 All Mortgage Bonds or other Deeds or Documents of security for monies lent or invested by the Office or for any other cause of debt to it shall be passed in favour of 'the General Treasurers for the time being of the Methodist Connexional Office', who also have authority to cancel, release, transfer or transpose any security or any portion thereof, and to sign any Consent, Certificate, or other Document required in connection therewith.
- 9.9 The General Treasurers shall carry out the directions of the Connexional Executive in respect of the Funds the Office administers, but decisions in discretion shall be with the Executive Committee and shall be reported to the following Connexional Executive.
- 9.10 If any refund is due or accruing from Connexional Funds to any Minister retiring from the Church on any grounds whatsoever, all liabilities, costs and charges due to and incurred by the Church in respect of and chargeable to such a Minister shall first be deducted from the above-mentioned refund.
- 9.11 The Office is the Custodian of Deeds (para. 10.12) and has charge and custody of all Title Deeds, Leases, Certificates of Title, Certificates of Occupation or other documents of title of Church Properties, and all Mortgage Bonds or other Deeds or Documents of security whatsoever belonging to the Church, and in connection with such custodianship its duties are, inter alia, to:
- 9.11.1 ensure that all Title Deeds and Diagrams in respect of landed property, all Mortgage Bonds and all other similar Documents are in safe custody;
 - 9.11.2 keep a record of such Deeds and Documents;
 - 9.11.3 provide the Superintendent on request with a complete extract of the Register of property in that Circuit;
 - 9.11.4 furnish the Superintendent with a receipt for any Deed or other Document received;
 - 9.11.5 release any Deed or similar Document only to the Superintendent or the Bishop concerned and to obtain a receipt.

THE CONNEXIONAL ASSESSMENT FUND

- 9.12 The Connexional Assessment Fund is maintained generally by a levy upon the Circuits determined by the Connexional Executive.
- 9.13 Expenditure from this Fund includes:
- 9.13.1 the expenses of the Methodist Connexional Office and any other offices as Conference may decide;

- 9.13.2 the expenses of authorised travelling to Conference, the Connexional Executive, and by Ministers' Widows or Widowers attending the Synod Memorial Service. All such traveling expenses shall be met on the basis of the most direct route and the most reasonable cost;
- 9.13.3 the expenses of other Executive Committees except those in charge of their own funds;
- 9.13.4 expenses of Circuit Supply where authorised by the Presiding Bishop;
- 9.13.5 grants for Extraordinary Affliction;
- 9.13.6 travelling expenses of Supernumeraries to Synod;
- 9.13.7 expenses relating to Connexionally appointed Committees;
- 9.13.8 long leave grants for Ministers;
- 9.13.9 the costs of ministerial education;
- 9.13.10 the costs of the removal of Ministers (including Supernumeraries and Probationers) and Deacons;
- 9.13.11 such other grants whether made within or outside the Church as Conference may decide.

9.14 FUNDS FOR MISSION WORK

In addition to the mentioned assessments, the Conference may receive contributions from, and may impose assessments on the Circuits and Societies for the mission work of the Units. This provision applies, inter alia, to the following funds:

- 9.14.1 the Mission and Extension Fund;
- 9.14.2 the Ministerial Students' Fund;
- 9.14.3 the Methodist Relief Fund;
- 9.14.4 funds for Christian Citizenship work;
- 9.14.5 funds for Youth work;
- 9.14.6 funds for Local Preachers' work.

These funds shall generally be administered by the Finance Unit but the Connexional Executive may permit any fund to be administered by a Unit, Organisation or Order.

9.15 Extraordinary Affliction Grants may be made to:

- 9.15.1 Ministers, Supernumeraries, Probationers and Deacons and their surviving spouses and dependent children;
- 9.15.2 members of the Order of Evangelism, their surviving spouses and dependent children, and retired Evangelists and Bible Women, under such conditions and subject to such limits as are determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time;
- 9.15.3 the Finance Unit Executive Committee shall decide on the conditions for making grants which are for cases of extraordinary affliction, the

cost of which applicants would have difficulty meeting from their ordinary resources;

- 9.15.4 Ministers permitted to take official positions outside the Church shall receive grants for themselves and their families, if an amount is paid in lieu of the Circuit Assessment (para. 9.12).

MINISTERS' CHILDREN

- 9.16 Ministers shall advise the Finance Unit immediately of the birth of a child, providing a copy of the birth certificate.
- 9.17 In addition to Ministers' children who are under eighteen years of age, except for those attending a recognised educational institution in which case the limit may be extended to twenty-four years, the following children qualify for benefits from Church funds:
- 9.17.1 children of annuitants of the Supernumerary Fund who are otherwise eligible;
- 9.17.2 children previously born to a person later married to a Minister and who are otherwise eligible;
- 9.17.3 children born to a Minister who marries after becoming Supernumerary;
- 9.17.4 legally adopted children and other dependent children recognised by the Finance Unit Executive Committee subject to a maximum of four such children in respect of one Minister.
- 9.18 Ministers permitted to take official positions outside the Church continue to qualify for grants for their children, provided an amount is paid in lieu of the Circuit Assessment mentioned in para. 9.12.
- 9.19 If any Minister's child dies before completing the eighteenth year, all allowances cease but a grant is made towards funeral expenses as determined by the Connexional Executive.

CONNEXIONAL REMOVALS

- 9.20 The Unit shall meet the claims of Ministers (including Supernumeraries and Probationers) as well as Deacons, and their families, for expenses incurred in moving to new appointments, subject to the conditions determined by Conference;
- 9.21 One grant is made for the removal expenses of a Minister who becomes a Supernumerary, or of the surviving spouse of a deceased Minister, provided the removal is within the Connexion and within a 3 year period of superannuation;
- 9.22 Candidates attending the Seminary:
- 9.22.1 as a rule are not part of the MJR scheme. Furnished accommodation is provided at the Seminary and a minimal amount of personal belongings are allowed. Only in exceptional cases, approved by the Finance Unit, will seminarian moves be considered. These

moves require approval from the Finance Unit by the 10th October annually, through the District MJR Coordinator. No reimbursement will be considered without supporting vouchers.

- 9.23 Removal expenses incurred by a Supernumerary sent by the Presiding Bishop as a Supply to a Circuit are a charge on the Removals Account.
- 9.24 The Finance Unit shall not pay removal costs of Ministers taking official positions outside the Church.
- 9.25 If any item is disallowed by the Bishop or by the General Treasurers the claimant may appeal to the Finance Unit Executive Committee.

LONG LEAVE ALLOWANCES

- 9.26 Long leave allowances are provided to Ministers and ordained Deacons in full-time Circuit work. Supernumeraries are not eligible for long leave.
- 9.27 The scale of long leave allowances shall be determined annually by the Connexional Executive which shall also authorise the payment of allowances when long leave is taken.
- 9.28 If a Minister becomes a Supernumerary, ceases to be recognised, or dies, whatever grant has accrued since long leave was last taken, becomes payable.
- 9.29 The usual duration of long leave is 2 (two) months; long leave may be postponed but for not more than three years. It is the responsibility of the Circuit to provide a supply for no more than 2 (two) months.
- 9.30 Ministers permitted to take official positions outside the Church qualify for long leave benefits, if an amount is paid in lieu of the Circuit Assessment (para. 9.12).
- 9.31 No grant, donation or loan shall be made from any Connexional Fund to assist a Minister to take long leave except as provided for in these regulations.
- 9.32 Long leave may not be taken unless suitable arrangements for supply have been approved by the Quarterly Meeting and endorsed in writing by the District Bishop or the General Secretary in the case of the Bishop and the Presiding Bishop.

MINISTERIAL STUDENTS' FUND

- 9.33 The object of the Ministerial Students' Fund is to provide education for ministry for accepted Candidates for the Ministry, Probationer Ministers, and to provide for the post-ordination education of Ministers.
- 9.34 The Ministerial Students' Fund derives income from Connexional Assessments, through collections and contributions from the Circuits and any other source, from Legacies, Endowments, Bequests, and other methods decided by the Connexional Executive.
 - 9.34.1 Districts should organise Annual Appeals for the Ministerial Students' Fund and send a printed letter of appeal to each member, making printed envelopes available. Good Friday should be the

day on which every Methodist is asked to make a specific gift to the Ministerial Students' Fund over and above any other giving to the work of God. The District shall set targets for the Circuits to achieve. Circuits may send a donation in lieu of a retiring collection. The Ministerial Students' Fund shall bear the costs of the scheme.

9.34.2 The Finance Unit shall administer a fund whereby ordained Ministers contribute to the Ministerial Students Fund by granting permission for a monthly deduction to be made from their stipends.

9.34.3 *Ministerial Students' Fund Cost of Ministerial Training*

9.34.3.1 The cost of ministerial training to be borne by any Minister who does not complete 5 years of ordained service to the Church, shall from time to time, be determined by the Finance Unit Executive Committee.

9.34.3.2 All Ministers contribute a percentage as determined by the Finance Unit Executive from time to time, towards their training; payable after Ordination.

9.34.3.3 The living allowances for Seminarians appointed by Conference may be partly covered by this fund.

INSURANCE

9.35 All Circuits shall arrange through the Finance Unit, insurance cover for all Church property, movable or immovable, such cover to include the contents of buildings against loss or damage.

9.36 Household effects of Ministers shall be insured by the Circuit against loss or damage as decided by the Finance Unit Executive.

9.37 The Finance Unit is authorised to charge such premiums to the Circuits. The insurance is not in force until the premiums are paid in full.

9.38 The Trust Committee or other administrators of Church property shall forward to the Finance Unit all necessary particulars of properties to be insured and shall keep such particulars up-to-date.

9.39 The 'Average Clause' shall apply to all insured property. (If the property, at the time of any loss, is under-insured then the Circuit shall be considered to be 'their own insurer' for the difference and shall bear a pro rata portion of the loss). Each item insured is subject to this condition.

9.40 The General Treasurers are authorised to insure or reinsure any Trust Property and to arrange any type of insurance which may be required.

9.41 Where insurance has been arranged by the Finance Unit, the terms and conditions imposed by the insuring company are binding on the Trustees or administrators of the property.

9.42 All persons having charge of Church properties shall exercise due and proper care to safeguard them.

9.43 The Finance Unit may distribute to Connexional Funds, on the recommendation of the General Treasurers, any surplus that may accrue from insurance.

GENERAL REGULATIONS**9.44** *Without Agency*

Where a Circuit is without agency the Circuit assessment is one-third of the assessment payable on the stipend of a Probationer Minister and if no Minister is stationed in the Circuit for more than 5 (five) consecutive years the Circuit shall be disbanded and attached to a neighbouring Circuit.

9.45 *Assessments of Ministers with Permission to Labour, on Leave of Absence or Seconded:*

Ministers and Deacons who are granted permission to labour or who are on leave of absence, appointed to Chaplaincies or Seconded, shall contribute each year the assessed cost of Supernumerary Fund contributions, Supernumerary Reserve Fund and Church Reserve Fund, Medical Plan, Furlough allowances, Removal reimbursements, and any other grants, if such benefits apply to them. Where a Minister or Deacon has contributed the assessed cost to the Medical Plan for less than 10 (ten) years, immediately prior to superannuating, that Minister or Deacon may apply for grants from the Medical Plan, limited to the same number of years for which such assessed cost was made.

9.46 *Assessments for Non-Stipendiary Personnel*

Where a non-stipendiary Minister, Probationer, Supernumerary or Deacon is appointed to a Circuit, the Circuit Assessment is 50% (fifty percent) of the stipend assessment payable on the minimum stipend of an ordained Minister. This would apply after the normal two (2) years waiting period.

9.47 *Assessments of Ministers Stationed in United Churches*

Ministers serving in United Churches shall contribute each year, if such benefits apply to them, the assessed cost of Supernumerary Fund contributions, Medical Plan, Furlough allowances and Removal reimbursements, together with an annual amount of approximately 50% (fifty percent) of the residual assessment per Minister.

9.48 *Ministers' Stipend Augmentation Fund*

The Finance Unit shall implement any Stipend Augmentation Fund established by Conference to ensure that the objectives, set by Conference for such Funds, are met.

9.49 *Grant-aided Circuits and Entities*

Units, Institutions and grant-aided Circuits that wish to increase stipends above the minimum rates shall first consult the General Treasurers.

9.50 *Stipend and Allowances for Supplies, Suspended Ministers and Probationers.*

The stipend paid by Circuits requiring a Minister for Supply shall be negotiable.

As a guide it should not be less than one-half of the stipend payable to a newly-Ordained Minister.

Ministers or Probationers under suspension who qualify to receive a stipend shall receive no less than the prescribed minimum applicable.

9.51 *Stipends and Allowances*

9.51.1 The Finance Unit shall determine and review Stipends and allowances annually, subject to Conference approval.

9.52 *Remuneration for Part-Time Chaplaincy Services*

Part-time Chaplaincies and Ministries may not be undertaken without the permission of the Quarterly Meeting and the Bishop. Any remuneration for such services shall accrue directly to the Minister.

9.53 *Combining Statements and Payments*

All assessments and payments due by Circuits shall be reflected on a monthly statement. The Circuits shall make a single combined payment to the Finance Unit or pay by monthly debit order by the 15th of each month.

9.54 *Late Payment of Assessments and Priority*

9.54.1 Priority must be given to the settlement of arrears. If a Circuit is unable to pay all arrears as well as the current month's assessments at once, it shall, in consultation with the General Treasurers, gradually reduce the arrears by making regular payments towards such arrears over a number of months. Therefore, where a monthly payment from a Circuit is less than that required according to the Finance Unit statement, such payment may be allocated by the Finance Unit in accordance with the following priority:

- (a) current month's Circuit assessment, medical assessment, loan instalments and insurance instalments;
- (b) the arrear Circuit assessment, medical assessment, loan instalment and insurance instalment;
- (c) Arrear stipends, Supernumerary Fund, Supernumerary Fund Reserve and the Church Reserve contributions;
- (d) current month's stipend and Supernumerary Fund contributions;

9.55 *Consequences for Circuits which do not pay assessments*

9.55.1 The Finance Unit will remind Circuits and advise Bishops which Circuits have not paid their assessments, who shall respond accordingly.

9.55.2 Where a Circuit falls more than 2 (two) months in arrears with assessments, and does not make arrangements with the Finance Unit to bring such arrears up to date, the General Treasurers shall request the Bishop to:

- (a) initiate an investigation into the Circuit, check its viability and take action to either re-organise the Circuit, offer training, improve the level of giving or request the Bishop & District Management to consider reorganising, amalgamating or disbanding the Circuit.
- (b) provide a written report to the Presiding Bishop within 60 days of being advised by the General Treasurers, on the outcome of such investigations and what constructive action has or will be taken to eliminate the arrears by a realistic target date;
- (c) follow up with the Circuit to ensure the actions agreed on have been achieved by the target date;
- (d) provide, as at the target date, a written report to the Presiding Bishop and General Treasurers, confirming specifically what action was taken and how the arrears are being eliminated;

The General Treasurers are authorised, after consultation with the Presiding Bishop, the District Bishop, District Treasurer/s and any other persons, to:

- (a) either institute training or other measures to improve the spiritual well being or financial giving of the members,
- (b) re-organise, amalgamate or disband the Circuit and station the Minister elsewhere if the Bishop or Circuit Official/s fail to adhere to the above instructions within 90 days.

9.55.3 In regard to any unviable Circuits generally within Districts, the Bishop must ensure that the District Executive formulates a strategy to address the matter. The strategy should take into account causal factors, e.g. changing social conditions in a particular area, shape of boundaries, direction of ministry, history of conflict etc. It should be established whether financial potential exists or not. If the potential does exist, the strategy should include elements to strengthen the Circuit leadership, financial systems and stewardship training. Where no such potential exists, recommendations regarding the amalgamation, incorporation or disbanding of the Circuit must be made.

9.56 *Arrears in Stipends, Pension Contributions, Assessments and Loan Installments*

9.56.1 A Circuit that does not meet its assessment or other financial commitment for 3 (three) consecutive months shall lose the following privileges until its obligations are met:

- (a) control of its finances;
- (b) the choice of ministerial assistance;
- (c) the right to have a Minister within the Circuit as a Superintendent;

The Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Bishop, is empowered to appoint a Commission to supervise the finances of such Circuit

and to investigate its viability, with a view to amalgamation with or incorporation into another Circuit, or disbanding if necessary.

9.57 *Travelling*

9.57.1 In every case it is the Circuit Quarterly Meeting which determines whether a Minister in the Circuit requires the use of a car for official duties.

9.57.2 Where Circuit travelling is by means other than a private car, all approved expenses shall be paid by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

9.58 *Travelling Allowance*

The recommended travelling allowance as set by Conference from time to time includes depreciation, all maintenance, insurance and running costs. If the distance travelled exceeds the monthly limit as set from time to time by Conference, the excess mileage may be claimed at the rate per kilometre as set from time to time.

9.59 *Holiday Travelling for Ministers Stationed Outside of Their Home Country*

The Finance Unit may assist Ministers stationed outside of the borders of their home countries, to visit their family once a year elsewhere in the Connexion.

9.60 *Annual Leave*

9.60.1 Ministers shall submit leave applications to their Superintendents, who shall consult the Circuit Stewards;

9.60.2 Superintendents submit their own leave applications to the Bishop, who shall consult the Circuit Stewards;

9.60.3 A record of Leave shall be maintained by the Circuit;

9.60.4 30 (thirty) Calendar days' Annual Leave shall be granted;

9.60.5 Annual Leave may not be accumulated, and shall be forfeited if not taken within 12 (twelve) months of falling due;

9.60.6 Leave not taken shall not be redeemed as cash, unless by mutual agreement between the District Bishop and Superintendent and or the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

9.61 *Long Leave*

9.61.1. The first long leave for a Minister is granted after 9 (nine) years of service which includes pre-ordination service. Thereafter long leave is granted after every 6 (six) years of service;

9.61.2. Years on Secondment, Leave of Absence or Study Leave do not count as service for Leave;

9.61.3. The alphabetical list of Ministers indicates when each Minister qualifies for long leave;

9.61.4. Long leave may be deferred but for no more than 3 (three) years and only upon approval of the Bishop;

9.61.5. The duration of long leave is 60 calendar days. Annual leave may be taken consecutively with long leave;

9.61.6. The Long Leave Grant is 10% (ten percent) of the annual Stipend Assessment for Ordained Ministers.

9.62 *Sick Leave*

When a Minister is off duty due to illness, the Bishop and Superintendent (if applicable) must be notified. During each sick leave cycle of 36 (thirty six) months, 30 (thirty) days sick leave may be granted. A written doctors' note must be provided by the Minister for sick leave taken of 3 (three) consecutive days or more.

9.63 *Compassionate Leave*

Such Leave may be granted after consultation with the Bishop and the Superintendent.

9.64 *Examination Leave*

A Minister will be granted leave for the purpose of writing an examination set by a recognised institution, subject to the approval of the Bishop and Superintendent (if applicable).

Such leave comprises:

1 (one) day per paper for studying;

1 (one) day per paper for writing of the examination

9.65 *Other Absences from the Circuit*

Applications from a Minister for any other absence shall be made to the Superintendent who shall consult the Bishop.

Mandatory attendance at official District and Connexional events is not regarded as leave, but unofficial attendance at such gatherings shall be subtracted from annual leave.

9.66 *Weekends off*

Ministers shall, where possible, be given one weekend off every quarter (as defined by the Preaching Plan). The weekend shall commence on a Friday morning and end on the Monday evening and shall not be accumulated.

There shall be no weekend off in the quarter (as defined by the Preaching Plan) in which the Minister takes annual leave.

9.67 *Days off*

Ministers shall be given 1 (one) day off per week. Days off may not be accumulated. Such days off will be taken after consultation with the Superintendent. A Superintendent's day off shall be arranged with the Bishop.

9.68 *Accommodation for Ministers*

In addition to the payment of minimum stipends, Circuits shall provide Ordained Ministers and Probationers with suitable free furnished accommodation.

9.69 *Manse Furnishing*

Circuits shall provide furniture, cutlery, linen, crockery and other necessary household equipment, which shall remain the property of that Circuit. As far as possible, new furniture and household equipment should be provided, failing which the Circuit shall ensure that such provisions are of a suitable quality. Ministers may be permitted to provide their own furniture for which the Circuit shall provide a reasonable furniture allowance to the Minister for depreciation.

9.70 *Medical Plan*

- 9.70.1 Claims must be lodged with the Medical Plan within 5 (five) months of the date of service. Claims older than 5 (five) months will not be considered;
- 9.70.2 No claim may be made for non-prescription medicines;
- 9.70.3 Healthcare providers must be registered with their respective professional bodies, i.e. The Health Professions Council of S.A, S.A Nursing Council and the Pharmaceutical Council;
- 9.70.4 Only Claims submitted on behalf of a member, members' spouse and/or eligible children will be settled. (Children's ages must be specified on the claim form);
- 9.70.5 Benefits are limited to treatment received within the Connexion. Medical expenses incurred outside of the Connexion must be arranged by the member prior to travelling. (This cover is not available from the Finance Unit);
- 9.70.6 Specific limits apply to certain specialist and primary care benefits such as nursing services, surgical appliances, hearing-aids, physiotherapy, pastoral and clinical psychologist (registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa), speech therapy, audiology, occupational therapy, podiatrists, orthodontists and specialised dental services. Applicants must contact the Medical Plan directly, prior to treatment or procedures for more information;
- 9.70.7 Pre-authorisation is required for major medical expenses resulting

from accidental or existing severe illness. Applicants are required to contact the Medical Plan directly for approval prior to treatment;

- 9.70.8 All medical expenses shall be refunded at the rate of 80% (eighty percent). The member's maximum personal liability for hospital expenses will be limited to an amount set from time to time (see Yearbook) for any single treatment or incident. Gross limits may be set from time to time (see Yearbook);
- 9.70.9 No member shall be eligible for benefits from the Fund if such person is entitled to benefits from any other medical scheme;
- 9.70.10 A Minister or Deacon who has served for less than 10 (ten) years in a Circuit or Connexional appointment immediately prior to superannuation may only apply for medical plan grants, limited to the number of years served in such an appointment;
- 9.70.11 When a Minister has been reinstated he or she may, on superannuation, apply for grants limited to the number of years served since the reinstatement;
- 9.70.12 When a Minister takes secondment or transfers to another Connexion and subsequently returns to full service within the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, on superannuation, they shall not be eligible for grants in respect of the number of years served on secondment or transfer, unless such a Minister has transferred their pension benefits and/or bought back such a service;
- 9.70.13 When a Minister or Deacon has served continuously in a Circuit or Connexional appointment for more than 10 (ten) years immediately prior to superannuation, grants from the medical plan shall continue for the Minister and spouse for life, as long as the Church is able.

9.71 *Allowances for Ministers Without Appointment*

Where the Connexional Executive decides to leave a Minister without an appointment, if the Minister has not found alternative employment, and subject to any disciplinary or other circumstance, the Presiding Bishop in his sole discretion may decide that an ex-gratia allowance be paid to the Minister for a period of 3 (three) months from 1 January of the year immediately following. The amount of the allowance shall be revised annually by the General Treasurers. An application for the allowance must be channelled through the Bishop to the General Secretary by no later than 31 March of that year.

9.72 *Children*

9.72.1 *Age Limit*

Unless there are special circumstances no claim will be recognised under the Supernumerary Fund, Medical Plan, Children's Funeral Grants or Removals, for children over eighteen years of age, except

for those still attending a recognised educational institution, in which case the limit may be extended to twenty-four years of age.

9.72.2 *Dependent Children*

Children legally adopted by a Minister or children who are blood relatives of a Minister and whose parents have been proven to be incapable of sustaining them, may be recognised by the Finance Office as dependent children.

No more than four (4) such children shall be recognised in respect of a Minister.

9.73 *Funeral Grants*

For Ministers who are members of the Provident Fund and not the Supernumerary Fund, the funeral grant shall be five times the average basic benefit applicable at the time of the Minister's death.

9.74 *Children's Education*

9.74.1 *Grants for Ministers' Children*

The Finance Unit may make grants to dependents of Supernumerary Ministers and Ministers stationed in Moçambique with dependent children.

9.74.2 *School Uniforms*

A school uniform allowance per school-going child shall be paid to Ministers and Probationers who are moved to another Circuit.

9.75 *Supernumerary Fund*

9.75.1 The stipend groups, Contributions and Basic Benefit rates are recorded in the Yearbook as determined from time to time by the Connexional Executive.

9.75.2 The banking account of the Supernumerary Fund is at First National Bank Limited and the Standard Bank of SA Limited and the signatories thereto are any two of the authorised and appointed staff of the Methodist Connexional Office who are the Administrators of the Fund.

9.76 *Lay Staff Pension Fund and Provident Fund*

9.76.1 All eligible lay employees are encouraged to become members of the one of the Funds.

9.76.2 The Trustees shall issue guidelines defining part-time employees.

9.76.3 Employers may provide pension and death benefits for all permanent "eligible employees".

9.76.4 All eligible lay employees have the option of joining either the Lay Staff Pension Fund or the Provident Fund;

- 9.76.5 Employers are required to pay contributions in respect of the respective Funds to the Finance Unit by no later than the 7th of the following month.

In the case of persistent default, the Trustees have the right to cancel the “employer’s” participation in the Fund once written notice has been provided to the “employer”. Before the Trustees consider the cancellation of an “employer’s” participation in the Fund:

- (i) the Finance Unit shall advise the defaulting “employers”, Circuits, Superintendents and Bishops in writing in an effort to persuade “employers” to fulfil their obligations and pay contributions on time each month.
- (ii) every effort is to be made by the Church to protect the interests of employees in such cases.

9.77 *Lay Staff Pension Fund and Provident Fund Trustees*

The names of the Trustees shall be recorded in the Yearbook.

9.78 *Connexional Office Capital Fund*

9.78.1 The interest accumulated by this Fund shall be used to provide grants for limited periods for such purposes as may be necessary. The maximum period of any grant shall be 4 (four) years and such grant shall be phased as follows:

- (a) 100% (one hundred percent) of grant for first and second year;
- (b) 66% (sixty-six percent) of grant for third year;
- (c) 33% (thirty-three percent) of grant for fourth year.

9.78.2 The General Treasurers are authorised to utilise the Fund at their discretion, in consultation with the Bishops where necessary.

9.79 *Property Protection Fund*

9.79.1 All persons responsible for any Church properties must exercise proper care to avoid loss, damage or fire;

9.79.2 All buildings and contents thereof in the name of the Church, shall be insured through the Finance Unit against fire, theft, storm damage and political riot;

9.79.3 Circuits are responsible for insuring the contents of all manses. The sum insured on each manse must represent the full value of all contents owned by the Circuit and by the Minister, calculated at new replacement value;

9.79.4 While Circuits are responsible for paying the premiums on household contents, they may recover the premium from Ministers for the portion of the Ministers’ goods which is insured for more than an amount set from time to time (see Yearbook);

- 9.79.5 The minimum sum insured on any manse is recorded in the Yearbook. The General Treasurers are authorised to vary the levies by no more than twenty percent (20%);
- 9.79.6 Other insurance cover is available from this Fund. Detailed information is circulated to Circuits and can be obtained from the General Treasurers;
- 9.79.7 Superintendents should ensure that all properties in their Circuits are insured for reinstatement value;
- 9.79.8 Evaluation of new, renovated or refurbished buildings should be referred to the District Trust Properties Committee for report to the Connexional Office.

9.80 *Connexional Bequests Fund*

The General Treasurers are authorised to pay accrued interest quarterly on the specified bequests.

9.81 *Removals*

- 9.81.1 Removals of Ministers shall normally be arranged by the Joint Removal Scheme; where this does not apply, the arrangements and quotation for the removal must be approved by the Bishop of the District to which the Minister is moving, and this approval must be obtained before the removal takes place, failing which any excess costs shall be borne by the Minister.
- 9.81.2 When a Circuit invites a Minister for a period of 5 (five) years and the Minister removes prematurely, due to a subsequent invitation, the Circuit making such invitation is responsible for the removal costs;
- 9.81.3 The costs of All Risks in Transit Insurance cover shall not be included in the claim but the General Treasurers shall arrange a Group Removals Policy. In the event of damage or loss of goods, such claims should be submitted to the Finance Unit;
- 9.81.4 Removal claims must be submitted by no later than 1 (one) month after the date of removal;
- 9.81.5 The value of reimbursement for privately arranged transport is recorded in the Yearbook;
- 9.81.6 When a Minister who is a citizen of the Republic of South Africa is sent to serve in another country within our Connexion or a Minister from another country within our Connexion is stationed within the Republic of South Africa, the cost of the required work permit and its renewal shall be borne by the Finance Unit.

9.82 *Loans*

9.82.1 *Building Loan Interest Rate*

The Connexional interest rate on building loans is recorded in the Yearbook for each year. The Finance Unit has the power to vary this rate.

9.82.2 *Property Loan Instalment*

Property loans shall be repaid in monthly instalments which include repayment of capital and interest at the current rate. Instalments shall be calculated to redeem the loan in 20 years or such other period as may be agreed with the Finance Unit. Any alteration in the interest rate shall be applicable to existing loans and the instalment or term adjusted as agreed with the Finance Unit.

9.82.3 *Outside Loans*

The General Treasurers are authorised to borrow in terms of Laws & Discipline, paras 9.6.6. and 10.7 as necessary and on terms and conditions to be approved by them.

9.83 *Investment of Funds*

Circuits and Societies are urged to invest available funds with the Finance Unit in the overall interest of the work of the Church. The rate of interest on money invested on call is recorded in the Yearbook. Two signatures, as for Bank Accounts, are required for withdrawal of investments.

9.84 *Banking Accounts*

The following banking accounts of the Connexional Office shall be at First National Bank Limited and the Standard Bank of SA Limited and the signatories be any two of:

9.84.1 The Lay General Treasurers, The Director and the Administrative Officer of the Methodist Connexional Office or Deputy. The name of the account is: "The Methodist Church of Southern Africa Methodist Connexional Office".

9.84.2 The account in the name: Methodist Connexional Office – Secretary's Account, is reaffirmed for which the signatories be any two of:

9.84.3 The Lay General Treasurers and the Director of the Finance Unit.

9.85 *Cash Management Scheme*

9.85.1 The Methodist Connexional Office shall administer the Cash Management Scheme. Circuits, Societies, Institutions and Organisations must submit to the Finance Unit full details of all their banking accounts.

9.86 *Circuit Auditors*

Only persons with accounting qualifications are permitted to audit Circuit and Society Accounts. Districts should organise teams of such qualified persons willing to serve as auditors. In exceptional circumstances the Bishop may permit some other suitable person to do the audit.

9.87 *Financial Form 4C and 4S Schedules*

Outstanding Schedules shall be received by the Finance Unit within 30 days of such notice to Bishops. Written notification to the Finance Unit shall be provided by the Bishop, stating the reason/s for late delivery of the forms, failing which the General Treasurer shall request the Bishop to:

9.87.1 appoint a Pastoral Commission to conduct an investigation into the Circuit;

9.87.2 place the Circuit under the administration of the District which shall complete Form 4C Schedules, have them audited and submitted to the Finance Unit;

9.87.3 commence disciplinary action, in accordance with L&D 11.2 & 11.3;

9.87.4 The Bishop shall initiate, in writing a Charge against the Superintendent Minister and Circuit Stewards for non-compliance with Laws and Discipline;

9.87.5 the Superintendent Minister shall be relieved of her/his Superintendency until confirmation from the Finance Unit that the Form 4C Schedules have been satisfactorily received, whereupon the Bishop, with the consent of the General Treasurers, shall decide whether to reinstate such Superintendency or not;

9.87.6 the disciplinary process must be allowed to run its full course including, if necessary, the suspension of Ministers and officials who do not comply with Rules and Usages.

9.88 Any Circuit which fails, for whatever reason, to submit a completed audited Form 4C Schedule within one year from the year end shall automatically lose its status as a separate Circuit and shall be amalgamated with another Circuit or be disbanded, which the Bishop and District Executive shall initiate and follow up with an appropriate resolution to Synod.

9.89 The Presiding Bishop is authorised, after consultation with the Bishop/s, General Treasurers and any other persons, to re-organise, amalgamate or disband the Circuit and remove or station the Minister elsewhere, if:

9.89.1 the District or Circuit Officials fail to adhere to the above instructions, or;

9.89.2 no action is taken, or;

9.89.3 the completed and audited Form 4C Schedule is not received by the Finance Unit within 1 (one) year from the year end.

9.90 Where Bishops fail to comply with the directives of the Connexional Executive Committee or the above processes, the Presiding Bishop, shall, in terms of para 5.14 of Laws and Discipline, initiate a Pastoral Commission to investigate the non-compliance by the Bishop. If necessary thereafter a charge shall be laid.

9.91 General Regulations

Loans

9.91.1 No loan from Circuit or Connexional Funds may be made to any private person or body.

9.91.2 ***Bursaries for Tertiary Education for the Children of Ministers and Laity***

- (a) The Connexional Bursary Secretary and the Lay General Treasurer are authorised to disburse the Baumann and Mabel Smith Bursaries, according to the stipulations of the donors and among the applicants for bursaries who qualify for them.
- (b) An amount set from time to time (see Yearbook) is allocated for bursaries for Ministers' children from the Circuit Assessment Account.
- (c) Bursaries awarded shall not total more than the amount voted plus the interest on the bequests and gifts, plus half the amount received from Circuit Bursary Fund levies to a maximum (see Yearbook) in any one year.
- (d) When an applicant fails their examinations, the bursary lapses and re-application may be made after successful completion of a year's work.

9.91.3 ***Application for Connexional Bursaries***

- (a) Applications for bursaries shall be forwarded to the Connexional Bursary Secretary, from whom the prescribed forms are obtainable annually as from 31st July.
- (b) Applications from children of Ministers should be approved by the Bishop.
- (c) Applications from children of lay persons must be accompanied by a testimonial from the applicant's Minister.
- (d) The closing date for applications is stipulated on the forms; late applications shall not be considered.

9.91.4 ***Bursary Fund Levy***

The Bursary Fund levy on Circuits per annum per Minister is recorded in the Yearbook.

9.92 ***Grants to Extraneous Societies***

9.92.1 Applications for Grants to Extraneous Societies should be sent to the officers of the Finance Unit not later than 1 June, together with an audited balance sheet of the Society concerned.

9.92.2 The Officers of the Finance Unit shall consider all such applications and present a list of recommended grants to the Connexional Executive.

CHAPTER 10

CHURCH PROPERTY

VESTING AND ADMINISTRATION

- 10.1 All Church property, movable and immovable, is vested in the Presiding Bishop for the time being as the Official Trustee, and is administered on behalf of the Official Trustee under the direction of Conference by the Connexional Office, Connexional and District Trust Properties Committees, and local Trust Properties Committees.

ACQUIREMENT AND ALIENATION

- 10.2 Conference alone may acquire for and on behalf of the Church by purchase, gift, exchange, lease, or in any other manner any property movable or immovable, and any rights and interests therein, and may sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of or alienate any property, movable or immovable, belonging to the Church and any of its rights and interests therein.
- 10.3 The Presiding Bishop for the time being, or the General Secretary for the time being, acting instead of and on behalf of the Presiding Bishop, is alone authorised to execute on behalf of the Church any power of attorney, declaration, consent, agreement, or other document necessary to give effect to any transaction referred to in the preceding paragraph or which may be required in connection therewith or in connection with any Deed of transfer, Deed of servitude or other Deed relating thereto, and requiring registration in any Deeds Registry or otherwise.
- 10.4 Before signing any such document as aforesaid the Presiding Bishop, or the General Secretary acting instead of and on behalf of the Presiding Bishop (para. 10.8), shall be satisfied that all regulations and requirements of the Church relevant to the transaction concerned have been duly observed and carried out.
- 10.5 Any such power of attorney, declaration, consent, agreement or other document when signed by the Presiding Bishop or by the Secretary acting instead of and on behalf of the Presiding Bishop (para. 10.8), and witnessed in accordance with law, shall be deemed to be sufficient proof of due compliance having been made with all the relevant regulations and requirements of the Church and of the due authorisation by Conference of the transaction concerned, and every Registrar of Deeds, other official or person concerned shall be absolved from enquiry into such transaction or from requiring the lodgement or production in respect thereof of any certificate, consent, or resolution of Conference or any Committee or person acting under it.

REGISTRATION OF TITLES AND FORM OF TRANSFER

- 10.6 All immovable property belonging to, or which may at any time be acquired by the Church for the benefit of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa shall in accordance with the provisions of Section 8 of Act 111 of 1978 be registered in the name of the Presiding Bishop of the Conference for the time being.

BORROWING OF MONEY

- 10.7 Conference represented by the General Treasurers may raise or borrow money by way of mortgage, bank overdraft, or in any other way, upon the security of any property belonging to the Church or otherwise (para. 9.6.6).
- 10.8 Except as otherwise provided in the Regulations of any Connexional Fund or Unit, the Presiding Bishop for the time being, or the General Secretary for the time being, acting instead of and on behalf of the Presiding Bishop, shall execute any Power of Attorney or Mortgage, or any other document necessary to give effect to any transaction referred to in the immediately preceding paragraphs, or that may be required in connection therewith, and the provisions of paras. 10.4 and 10.5 shall *mutatis mutandis* apply thereto.

INVESTMENT OF MONEY

- 10.9 Any monies belonging to the Church or to any of its Connexional, District or local Trust funds or to any of its Units may be invested in recognised trust investments including equities quoted upon the Stock Exchange and approved by the Presiding Bishop. Notwithstanding, the monies of the Methodist Supernumerary Fund, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Lay Staff Pension Fund, and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Provident Fund shall be invested in accordance with the rules of the respective Fund as lodged with the Registrar of Pension Funds in terms of the Pension Funds Act as amended from time to time.
- 10.10 The investment of funds from Bequests or any other Trust Funds shall be confined to the investments permitted in para. 10.9.
- 10.11 Except as otherwise provided in the Regulations of any Connexional Fund or Unit, the consent in writing of the Presiding Bishop shall be obtained to any investment referred to in the preceding paragraphs, and every Mortgage Bond or other deed of security shall be passed and registered in the name of 'The Presiding Bishop of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa for the time being, and the successor or successors in office, for the benefit of the Church', and the Presiding Bishop shall have authority to cancel or transpose any security or any portion thereof and to sign any consent, certificate or other document required in connection therewith.

CUSTODY OF DEEDS

- 10.12 The Connexional Office is the Custodian of Deeds (para. 9.11) and has charge and custody of all Title Deeds, Leases, Certificates of Title or other documents of title or Church Properties and of all Mortgage Bonds or other documents of security belonging to the Church. The rules to be observed in connection with such custody are contained in Chapter 9.

CONNEXIONAL TRUST PROPERTIES COMMITTEE***Membership:***

- 10.13 There shall be a Connexional Trust Properties Committee convened by the Presiding Bishop's office.

The functions and duties of the Connexional Committee are:

- 10.13.1 to administer the regulations of Conference;
- 10.13.2 to give advice when so requested by any District Committee;
- 10.13.3 to represent to Conference or the Connexional Executive any proposal or recommendation made by the Districts regarding Trust Properties.

Secretary:

- 10.14 The Connexional Executive shall appoint a Ministerial member of the Connexional Trust Properties Committee as Secretary to assume office on the 1st January of the following year. The Secretary is appointed for three years but is eligible for reappointment.
- 10.15 The Secretary conducts the correspondence and business of the Committee subject to its directions.

DISTRICT TRUST PROPERTIES COMMITTEES***Membership:***

- 10.16 Each Synod shall annually appoint a District Trust Properties Committee consisting of the Bishop, the Vice-Chairman, the District Secretary, the Statistical Secretary, three Ministers and five Lay Members. The Committee shall elect its own Secretary.

- 10.17 *The functions and duties of the District Trust Properties Committee are inter alia:*

- 10.17.1 to consider and approve or otherwise up to the value that shall be determined by Conference from year to year all applications from local Trust Properties Committees for loans, proposed alterations, erections, purchases or other acquirements, sales, mortgages or encumbrances of properties, and to make its recommendations to the Connexional Trust Properties Committee where the value exceeds the value determined by Conference from year to year:

- 10.17.2 to remit all such applications, with its decisions and any recommendations, to the Connexional Office;
- 10.17.3 to forward a copy of the Minutes of all of its meetings to the Connexional Office;
- 10.17.4 to consider all Circuit Accounts, reports and schedules pertaining to properties;
- 10.17.5 to ensure that Trust Property is adequately insured to provide for its replacement;
- 10.17.6 to ensure that Trust Property is accurately valued at regular intervals;
- 10.17.7 to submit to Synod an Annual General Report;
- 10.17.8 to secure as far as possible the due observance of the rules and regulations of Conference in regard to new undertakings as well as the general administration of Trust Property.
- 10.17.9 no new undertaking to build a church complex/hall may take place within a 10 kilometre radius of an existing Methodist Church complex/hall without the prior approval of the District Trust Properties and the Connexional Trust Properties Committees.

Secretary:

10.18 *The duties of the Secretary of the District Trust Properties Committee are inter alia:*

- 10.18.1 to conduct the correspondence and business of the Committee subject to its directions;
- 10.18.2 to receive all applications from local Trust Properties Committees concerning loans, proposed alterations, erections, purchases or other acquirements, sales, mortgages or encumbrances of properties;
- 10.18.3 to place all such applications before the District Committee;
- 10.18.4 to communicate to the local Trust Properties Committee the decision and recommendations of the District Committee on any applications;
- 10.18.5 to remit to the Connexional Office any application received, together with the decision and recommendations of the District Committee;
- 10.18.6 to receive all Circuit accounts, reports and schedules pertaining to properties, and to prepare them for consideration by the Committee;
- 10.18.7 to forward copies of Minutes of District Trust Property Committee meetings to the Connexional Office.
- 10.18.8 to submit copies of the Annual General Report to Synod and the Connexional Trust Properties Committee.

LOCAL TRUST PROPERTIES COMMITTEES

- 10.19 The immediate oversight and administration of local Church property shall be undertaken by a local Trust Properties Committee on behalf of the Official Trustee.
- 10.20 Where no local Trust Properties Committee has been appointed, its duties and functions are performed and discharged by the Quarterly Meeting.

Membership:

- 10.21 The members of a local Trust Properties Committee shall not be fewer than five or more than fifteen, including the Official Trustee the Presiding Bishop, the Superintendent, the Minister(s) in charge of the Society, and the Circuit Stewards.
- 10.22 The members and officers are appointed by the Annual Society Meeting for one year at a time but are eligible for reappointment. Not more than 3 adherents of the Society may be appointed members; the others shall be members of the Society of not less than 2 years' standing.
- 10.23 The Annual Society Meeting shall appoint a member of the local Trust Properties Committee to preside over its meetings.
- 10.24 The person who presides over the Committee is a member of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting (para. 7.8.12).
- 10.25 If any member or officer of the local Trust Properties Committee retires during the year, the Committee may elect a successor for the remainder of the year to ensure compliance with 10.21 above.
- 10.26 *The functions and duties of the local Trust Properties Committee are inter alia:*
 - 10.26.1 to be responsible to the Official Trustee, the Presiding Bishop, for the property and generally to manage and administer the property on behalf of the Official Trustee;
 - 10.26.2 to appoint annually from among its members a Secretary and a Steward or Stewards, and to assign their duties to them;
 - 10.26.3 to ensure that all property of an insurable nature is adequately insured, and to safeguard the property against risk of loss or damage;
 - 10.26.4 to appoint a Caretaker where necessary and to define the duties and remuneration;
 - 10.26.5 to administer funds allocated to it by the Annual Society Meeting and to present audited accounts to that Meeting;
 - 10.26.6 to control the use and letting of Church buildings and to ensure that only those activities and entertainments are permitted which are consistent with the primary purpose for which the buildings exist;
 - 10.26.7 to observe and carry out all regulations in regard to proposals for loans, alterations, erections, purchases or other acquirements, sales, mortgages or encumbrances of properties.

- 10.27 The Committee shall hold its annual meeting as soon as possible after the close of the Financial Year.
- 10.28 Trust Property Reports shall be presented to the Quarterly Meeting before being submitted to Synod.

The Secretary:

10.29 *The duties of the Secretary are inter alia:*

- 10.29.1 to convene meetings of the Committee in consultation with the Chairman, giving adequate notice to each member and indicating the intended business of the meeting;
- 10.29.2 to record minutes of the meetings;
- 10.29.3 to conduct all necessary correspondence;
- 10.29.4 to ensure the execution of the resolutions and directions of the Committee.

The Trust Stewards:

10.30 *The duties of the Trust Steward(s) are inter alia:*

- 10.30.1 to attend to the general maintenance of all Trust property;
- 10.30.2 to ensure that all Church buildings and premises are properly cleaned, lighted and ventilated;
- 10.30.3 to attend to the furniture and fittings of any Church premises;
- 10.30.4 to ensure adequate access for persons with disabilities.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 10.31 All members of Local Trust Property committees shall declare any conflict of interest that may exist in relation to all property matters. A register of Conflicts of Interest shall be kept and submitted to the District Trust Property Secretary and the General Treasurers.
- 10.32 The Superintendent is required:
 - 10.32.1 to keep a Register of all immovable property in the Circuit, and to hand such Register and all relevant documents to the successor on leaving the Circuit;
 - 10.32.2 to forward immediately to the Custodian of Deeds the original title deed and related documents where land has been acquired and registered in the name of the Church;
 - 10.32.3 to be personally responsible for the due return to the Custodian of Deeds of any title deed and related document that has been temporarily released by the Custodian;
 - 10.32.4 to ensure that no building project is proceeded with until all regulations have been complied with and all necessary financial arrangements made.
- 10.33 Synods shall make enquiry through the Superintendent in every case where no reduction of Trust debt has been made during the year. .

- 10.34 Any agreement between the Church and a person desiring to occupy or lease portion of Church land requires the approval of the District Trust Properties Committee.

USE OF CHURCH BUILDINGS

- 10.35 Trust property shall be used only for general Church or Sunday School meetings or functions related thereto, or for educational or philanthropic purposes. Any exception requires the prior approval of the local Trust Properties Committee.
- 10.36 The primary purpose for which Church buildings and Trust properties exist necessarily excludes every kind of function that is likely to bring reproach upon the Church. The following regulations apply to any meeting or function held on Trust premises, whether in the name of the Methodist Church or otherwise:
- 10.36.1 no entertainment shall be given unless the programme has been previously approved by the Superintendent or the Leaders' Meeting;
 - 10.36.2 dances or similar types of entertainment may take place on Trust premises only if they form an incidental and subsidiary item in the programme of a church organisation, and if the Leaders' Meeting has approved. Such dancing shall take place only under the supervision of a person nominated by and responsible to the Leaders' Meeting. No dance shall be held in a Church;
 - 10.36.3 gambling of any kind and raffles or other competitions that involve the principle of gambling are expressly forbidden;
 - 10.36.4 the raising of funds for Church purposes by means of raffles, gaming or any other method which involves gambling shall not be permitted, and entertainments which are not allowed on Trust premises shall not be held elsewhere in the name of the Methodist Church.
 - 10.36.5 no Trust property shall be let for any public religious meeting unless the Superintendent is able to and does accept responsibility for the teaching that may be given;
 - 10.36.6 in granting temporary use or occupation of any Church hall, vestry or other Trust premises, it shall be specifically stipulated that no alcoholic or intoxicating liquor or narcotic drugs shall be brought on to or be permitted to be on such premises; that the lessors by and through any officer, caretaker or other nominee shall have the right in the event of any breach of this stipulation to take immediate steps to terminate the occupation and to secure ejectment without compensation to the lessee or occupier, and without prejudice to the lessor's right to recover the payment agreed upon for the use of the premises;
 - 10.36.7 no racial restriction shall apply to the use of any Trust property;
 - 10.36.8 no party political electioneering shall be held on Trust property.

However, it may be used in the promotion of good governance such as polling stations, voter registration, political monitoring training, refugee shelter and similar activities that would foster neighbourliness, justice and mercy. Where Church buildings are used for such purposes, a contract or agreement regulating responsibility and liability for damages to Trust Property in consequence of such use must first be concluded.

10.37 Where possible Churches should be left open during the day.

REGULATIONS FOR PURCHASE, SALE, ENCUMBRANCE OR MORTGAGE OF LANDED PROPERTY

10.38 Any proposal by a local Trust Properties Committee:

10.38.1 to purchase or acquire by way of gift or otherwise any landed property, or rights and interests therein;

10.38.2 to sell or alienate any property or portion thereof, or any rights or interests therein;

10.38.3 to encumber any property by raising money either on Mortgage Bond or by loan from a Connexional Fund;

10.38.4 shall, after being approved by the local Trust Properties Committee, be submitted to the Quarterly Meeting for approval.

10.39 Once a scheme has been approved by the Trust Properties Committee and by the Quarterly Meeting it shall be submitted by the Secretary of the Trust Properties Committee to the District Trust Properties Committee for approval up to the value that shall be determined by Conference from year to year. Where the scheme exceeds this amount it must be referred to the Connexional Trust Properties Committee for approval.

10.40 Where it is proposed by the District Trust Properties Committee to sell any property or portion thereof, and the District Trust Properties Committee has by a majority of not less than two-thirds resolved to approve the proposal, the matter shall be submitted, through the Bishop, to the Presiding Bishop or the General Secretary for approval. Notwithstanding this paragraph or anything else contained in the Laws and Discipline, nothing shall derogate from the power of the Official Trustee to decide whether or not any property should be sold without the involvement of the District Trust Properties Committee.

10.41 Where Church or Mission land is sold, sufficient land should be retained for the use of the Minister in charge of such Mission. The proceeds of the sale shall be invested in the name of the Official Trustee of the Church for the use and benefit of the Trust properties of the Circuit concerned or for such use and benefit as the Connexional Executive, after reference to Synod, may decide.

10.42 Particulars of any sale shall be forwarded by the Superintendent to the Connexional Office for record purposes.

10.43 Final permission to purchase or otherwise acquire any landed property or rights and interests, or to sell or alienate any landed property or any rights and

interests therein, shall lapse if no definite steps have been taken in furtherance thereof before the meeting of the next Synod.

- 10.44 Where land has been acquired, the original deed shall be deposited with the Custodian of Deeds.
- 10.45 Where it is proposed to encumber or mortgage Trust property, and the District Trust Properties Committee has approved, the proposal shall be submitted to the Presiding Bishop or the General Secretary, either of whom may give written approval.
- 10.46 The following additional provisions shall apply in connection with a Loan sought from any Connexional Fund:
- 10.46.1 no loan shall be made upon any property or land or upon any erection on any land to which the Church has no clear or sufficient title or certificate of occupation, or upon land on which only permission to build has been given, unless in an interdenominational scheme a legal agreement approved by the Treasurers of the Connexional Office has been drawn up, defining the proportion of responsibility for upkeep and use, as well as debt reduction, and allocation of proceeds, in the event of possible future disposal of the property, falling to The Methodist Church of Southern Africa as a shareholder;
 - 10.46.2 no loan shall be made upon any property which is not considered adequate security for the repayment of the loan;
 - 10.46.3 loans from Connexional Funds shall be repaid in monthly instalments which include repayments of capital, and interest at the rate determined by the General Treasurers;
 - 10.46.4 in all cases where advances or loans are made from Connexional Funds against the security of Trust property, the Treasurers of the said Funds shall obtain:
 - (i) an acknowledgement of debt duly executed by or on behalf of the Local Properties Committee concerned,
 - (ii) the Title Deeds of the properties upon which the loan is to be advanced,
 - (iii) a duly executed memorandum to the effect that such Title Deeds are lodged as security for the repayment of the loan and that they are to remain in the custody of the said Treasurers until such time as the said loan has been repaid;
 - (iv) an undertaking that the property conveyed by such Title Deeds shall not be mortgaged as security for any further loan until the first mentioned loan has been repaid, or unless the consent of the Treasurers of the Fund concerned has first been obtained.
 - 10.46.5 in all revenue-producing property, the servicing of all loans thereon and the cost of proper maintenance, rates, insurance, upkeep and necessary repairs are a first charge upon such revenue. Managers of such property shall not be entitled to divert any portion of the said

revenue to other purposes until the above-mentioned charges have been met.

- 10.46.6 all applications for a loan or for permission to seek a loan shall be accompanied by a copy of the audited 4C Schedule for the previous year.
- 10.46.7 any loan application from any Organisation (other than a Connexional Organisation) to purchase property requires the permission of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and District Trust Property Committee.

REGULATIONS FOR THE ERECTION OR ALTERATION OF BUILDINGS

- 10.47 Any proposal by a local Trust Properties Committee to erect new buildings or to make alterations or additions to existing buildings on Trust property must be submitted, together with the requisite plans and specifications, to the Quarterly Meeting and to the District Trust Properties Committee for approval. Where school buildings are involved the consent of the Board of Education must also be obtained.
- 10.48 No Superintendent or Circuit official shall enter into or sign any building contract, exceeding an amount to be determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time, until the permission of the District Trust Properties Committee has been obtained.
- 10.49 The District Committee shall satisfy itself that the Church has registered title to any land before approving any scheme to build thereon. Should the cost of the scheme be such that the permission of the Committee is not required, the Committee shall nevertheless ensure that the relevant plans have been approved by the appropriate secular authority.
- 10.50 Where the estimated cost exceeds an amount to be determined by Conference from time to time, the local Trust Properties Committee shall obtain the services of a registered Architect. Exceptions to this regulation may be allowed by the District Trust Properties Committee.
- 10.51 Where the estimated cost exceeds an amount to be determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time, the Trust Properties Committee shall call for at least two tenders for the building. Exceptions may be allowed by the District Trust Properties Committee.
- 10.52 The Trust Properties Committee shall have in hand not less than one-half of the estimated cost of any scheme before building operations are commenced, and shall satisfy the District Trust Properties Committee that not less than two-thirds of the estimated cost will have been obtained by the time the building is completed. The District Trust Properties Committee may relax this regulation in the following cases:
 - 10.52.1 where the property yields a fixed income and is of permanent value to the local Trust Properties Committee;
 - 10.52.2 where a Circuit is embarking on community self-help schemes, provided that plans are submitted in the usual manner, an estimate

of the cost of the project is provided together with details of finance available, a time limit is set for the completion of the project, and progress reports are submitted as required by the District Trust Properties Committee.

- 10.53 Any material alterations to a scheme which has already been sanctioned shall require the approval of the District Trust Properties Committee, which may call for proof of ability to carry out the conditions of the scheme. Any contravention of this regulation shall be reported by the Connexional Trust Properties Secretary to Synod and to the Connexional Executive.
- 10.54 A Superintendent who, upon entering a Circuit finds that building operations have been commenced without the necessary approval, shall forthwith give all available information to the District Trust Properties Committee.
- 10.55 Any proposal by a local Trust Properties Committee to install an organ costing more than an amount to be determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time shall require the approval of the Quarterly Meeting and the District Trust Properties Committee. The conditions of para. 9.55 shall *mutatis mutandis* apply.
- 10.56 The Church may be a member of a Section 21 Company (associated not for gain) in those cases where the Church wishes to participate in a project together with other participants, and neither the immovable property involved nor the project itself may fall within the exclusive domain of the Church. Membership shall be permitted on the following terms:
 - 10.56.1 The Circuit or Society seeking permission to Register a Section 21 company or to become a member of such a company shall obtain prior approval for such actions from the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, the District Trust Property Committee and the Official Trustee (para 9.1).
 - 10.56.2 In seeking such approval, the Circuit or Society shall provide all information and comply with all requirements set out as the guidelines issued from time to time by Conference or the Connexional Executive.
 - 10.56.3 All company documents shall reflect the member as the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, but the Official Trustee (para 10.1) may decide that the voting rights in respect of such company may be exercised by a Circuit Steward duly appointed thereto by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.
 - 10.56.4 Immovable property which is owned and controlled exclusively by the Church may not be registered in the name of a Section 21 Company without permission having been granted thereto by the Official Trustee (para 10.1).
- 10.57 Any loan application from an Organisation to erect or alter any building requires the approval of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and the District Trust Property Committee.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

10.58 Deeds of Sale

No valid binding Deed of Sale, whether for the sale or purchase of fixed property, can be entered into on behalf of the Church without the signature of the Presiding Bishop or the General Secretary. Such documents should be sent through the Bishop to the Connexional Office for signature and, on completion of the transaction, the documents, or a copy thereof, should be sent to the Connexional Office.

10.59 Permissions to Occupy

All Permissions to Occupy shall be lodged with the Connexional Office for safe keeping in the same way as Title Deeds.

Copies of such documents shall be supplied by the Connexional Office and to the Bishop and the Superintendent of the Circuit concerned.

Where permission to occupy a manse site is granted in a Minister's own name, the Minister shall sign an undertaking to vacate any building erected on the site when required to do so by any authorised representative of Conference.

Where it is difficult to obtain written permission to occupy a site, a deed of agreement may be used. Copies of such agreements shall be submitted to the Connexional Office.

10.60 Defunct Circuits

Wherever a Circuit becomes defunct the District Trust Properties Committee is responsible for re-allocation or disposal of immovable property after all liabilities of such Circuits have been met.

Proceeds from the sale of any such property shall be applied at the discretion of the Presiding Bishop in consultation with the Bishop and District Trust Properties Committee.

All registers relating to Circuits that cease to exist shall be lodged in the Church Archives.

10.61 Vacant Property

Local Trust Committees are encouraged not to leave Trust property unused but to consider making such property available to suitable organisations of a welfare or educational nature at a nominal rent, on the understanding that such organisations are responsible for maintenance of the buildings and will not use them in a manner that conflicts with the provisions of Laws and Discipline.

When property and stands are being purchased in the name of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa and the seller is prepared to accept a guarantee other than a Banker's, the Connexional Office should be requested to issue such a guarantee for the amount of the loan agreed upon.

10.62 **Freehold Mission and Church Sites**

Where the Church occupies land to which it has full title, it should not surrender the title in exchange for a Certificate of Permission to occupy such land;

Where freehold land is held for school and Church purposes, and subdivision of the land is required by the Department of Education, the land on which the school is situated should be donated or sold to the Department, provided that the Department pays all costs involved.

10.63 **Joint Trust Deed**

Where any Circuit or Society desires to enter into a Trust agreement with another Denomination or Denominations, a suitable Joint Trust Deed should be entered into.

The following essentials shall be embodied in any such Trust Deed:

- (a) the body constituted by the Deed should be a Universitas, i.e. a corporate body with an existence independent of its individual members and capable of holding property in its name and of suing and being sued;
- (b) the powers necessary for the proper functioning of the Trust should be set out;
- (c) equitable representation by all contracting parties should be provided for;
- (d) the rules governing meetings of Trustees should be laid down;
- (e) provision should be made for division of assets among the contracting parties upon dissolution of the Trust;
- (f) the Trust Deed so drafted shall be submitted to the Connexional Office for approval;
- (g) a copy of any Joint Trust Deed shall be lodged with the custodian of Deeds.

10.64 **Property Expenditure Limits**

No contract shall be entered into which exceeds the limit set from time to time by the Connexional Executive as recorded in the Yearbook, without District Trust Properties permission.

A registered architect shall be appointed where expenditure exceeds the limit as set by Connexional Executive annually. A registered architect or approved

build design consultant shall be appointed where expenditure does not exceed the said amount. To owner-build Societies shall obtain permission from the District Trust Properties Committee.

At least two (2) tenders are required for Schemes in excess of the amount determined from time to time by the Connexional Executive as recorded in the Yearbook.

Contractors all Risks and Public Liability Insurance must be arranged for all erections, alterations, additions or renovations to buildings.

Organs and other Church furnishings may be acquired without District Trust Properties Committee approval, provided that no debt is incurred.

10.65 **Applications to District Committees**

District Trust Properties Committees should consider no proposed building/property project unless the approved questionnaire has been completed and forwarded to the District Secretary in good time for the District Trust Properties Committee Meeting.

Before granting approval for any building projects, the District Trust Properties Committee must ensure that adequate insurance cover has been arranged with the Finance Unit.

The District Trust Properties Committee is charged with the responsibility of examining the various Circuit General Schedules submitted to the Synods to verify that all Connexional property is adequately insured and, where deficiencies exist, to take appropriate action to secure suitable insurance through the Finance Unit.

The District Trust Properties Committee is charged with the responsibility of ensuring that Circuits implement a plan for the adequate and ongoing maintenance of all Church properties within the Circuits.

No Society or Circuit shall engage the services of an architect without the prior consent of the Secretary of the District Trust Properties Committee.

10.66 **Buildings in Member Countries**

Circuits in member countries who intend erecting buildings in the name of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa shall ensure that they have satisfactory documentation of ownership.

CHAPTER 11

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND MINISTERS

- 11.1 The true spirit of Methodist discipline requires that it be exercised in harmony with the Grace of Christ, with tenderness, patience and fidelity, seeking rather to win Members (hereafter inclusive of Ministers unless the context indicates otherwise) back to Christ than to discontinue them.
- 11.2 Members who create or encourage dissension and strife in their own Circuit or any other part of the church, or who continuously rail against the Doctrine and Discipline of the Connexion and/or of the church's appointments/representatives/officeholders, or who lapse into sin, or who otherwise violate the law of God or of the church may have a complaint laid against them by another member with the District Discipline Registrar (DDR). This shall be in writing.
- 11.3 Ministers who have an accusation against them in respect of character, doctrinal beliefs, fitness for the work of the ministry, or observance of Methodist Laws and Discipline may have a complaint laid against them by another Member with the District Discipline Registrar. This shall be in writing.
- 11.4 The District Discipline Registrar shall decide within 30 days of receipt of a written complaint whether it demands the laying of a charge and a hearing. In reaching a decision the District Discipline Registrar shall consider, among other things, whether:
 - 11.4.1 a breach of Laws and Discipline is alleged;
 - 11.4.2 in the case of disputes between individuals or groups, all means of pastoral intervention and/or mediation and/or any other appropriate responses have been exhausted;
 - 11.4.3 the alleged offence damages the integrity, witness, governance or good name of the Church.
- 11.5 If it does demand the laying of a charge and a hearing, the District Discipline Registrar shall formulate a charge and shall deliver the charge within Fourteen (14) days as stipulated in para 11.11.
- 11.6 If the District Discipline Registrar decides that the complaint does not demand a charge and hearing the District Discipline Registrar shall inform the accuser accordingly within Fourteen (14) days and may refer it to another appropriate forum of the Church. The accuser may appeal to the Connexional Disciplinary Committee against this decision. Such appeal shall be in writing. The decision of the Connexional Disciplinary Committee shall be made in terms of 11.4 above and shall be final. If it decides the complaint warrants a

charge and a hearing it shall refer the matter back to the District Discipline Registrar who shall then act in terms of para 11.5 above.

11.7 If a charge is laid:

11.7.1 In the case of a lay Member, if the Superintendent considers the charge to be sufficiently serious and it is in the best interests of the Church, the said Superintendent shall instruct the Member in writing to cease to exercise the functions and privileges of membership and any official position during the hearing of the District Disciplinary Committee and review by the Connexional Disciplinary Committee, which shall be concluded as soon as possible. The Superintendent shall forthwith inform the Bishop of the decision to suspend the lay member. If the period of suspension is to exceed one month the written approval of the Bishop is required.

11.7.2 In the case of a Minister, the Bishop shall inform the Presiding Bishop of the charge. If, after consultation with the Bishop, it is deemed to be in the interests of the Church, the Presiding Bishop may direct that the Minister who is charged must cease to exercise any ministerial functions until the verdict has been reached. Such direction of the Presiding Bishop shall be delivered to the accused in writing. The Presiding Bishop shall not give the said Minister a prior hearing.

11.7.3 The Presiding Bishop shall decide whether the accused shall continue to receive the same stipend and to benefit from the Connexional Funds designated to assist ministers, during the period of cessation of such ministerial functions. This decision shall be reviewed if the matter has not been concluded within a period of ninety days of the delivery of the charge. The accused may continue to occupy the Circuit property unless the Presiding Bishop directs otherwise.

District Disciplinary Committee:

11.8 Each Synod shall appoint a District Disciplinary Committee of 7 (seven) persons of whom three shall be ordained Ministers and four Lay Members. The term of office for members serving on the District Disciplinary Committee shall be three years for up to three (3) consecutive three year terms. Synod shall appoint the Convener from among the members of the committee. A quorum shall comprise 3 (three) members of which at least one shall be an ordained minister and at least one shall be a lay person. Furthermore, at least one of the quorum shall have the applicable qualifications referred to in paragraph 11.41.

11.9 The Committee shall meet within 21 days of receiving a charge. If it does not meet within 21 days of receiving the charge, the charge must be withdrawn unless the delay is caused by circumstances beyond anyone's control. This will not preclude the District Discipline Registrar from forwarding the charge a second time to the District Disciplinary Committee provided that the District

Disciplinary Committees shall meet within 10 (ten) days of such an event. If it does not meet within this period, the charge shall be withdrawn permanently.

11.10 *The powers and duties of the District Disciplinary Committee, inter alia, are to:*

- 11.10.1 hear all charges referred to it by the District Discipline Registrar and, in the event of a conviction, to impose whatever sentence it deems appropriate, which shall include the suspension or termination of the membership of the accused;
- 11.10.2 call any witness or evidence it might require to reach a decision;
- 11.10.3 maintain a written record of decided cases;
- 11.10.4 recommend, when it considers that an offence it has dealt with places a legal duty on the Church, that the Bishop reports accordingly through the General Secretary to the relevant prosecutorial authority, or to any other relevant civil authority.

The Charge

11.11 ***Delivery of the Charge:***

- 11.11.1 The DDR shall notify the accused in writing of the terms of the charge and of the date, place and time of the meeting of the District Disciplinary Committee that will hear the charge. The charge shall be sent by Registered Post to the last known address of the accused, in which case the accused shall be deemed to have received the charge 10 days after posting, or, in the presence of at least one competent witness, handed to the accused or delivered to the last-known residential address of the accused, leaving it in the letter box or affixing it to the front door or putting it under the front door or handing it to a person apparently over the age of 16 who resides at the said premises.
 - 11.11.2 The District Discipline Registrar shall within 21 days inform the Superintendent(s) of the Circuit(s) in which both the accuser and the accused reside as well as the Bishop, of the charges that have been laid. The Superintendent shall treat the matter as strictly confidential and shall not interfere with the process;
 - 11.11.3 Unless the accused agrees to accept shorter notice, the hearing shall not be held less than 7 (seven) days after the accused has received the notice;
- 11.12 Should the accused refuse to accept service of the charge or be absent from the last known residential address, the charge shall be deemed to have been duly served if the terms of para. 11.11.1 have been fulfilled.

Trial Procedure:

- 11.13 All charges against accused persons shall be heard by the District Disciplinary

Committee of the District in which the accused resides. If the matter of complaint took place in another District, so as to make it difficult for witnesses to attend, or if some other good reason obtains, the Presiding Bishop may decide which District Disciplinary Committee shall hear the charge.

- 11.14 The District Discipline Registrar shall appoint a person to present the case against the accused at the hearing.
- 11.15 If any member of the District Disciplinary Committee is personally involved in or affected by the matter before the District Disciplinary Committee, that member shall temporarily withdraw from the Committee. If the Convener withdraws from a hearing, the Committee shall appoint another of its number as Convener for that hearing.
- 11.16 The accused may appoint a Member as a representative during the trial proceedings, provided that the unavailability of a specific person shall not be grounds for the delay/postponement of a hearing. No legal representation shall be allowed in the District Disciplinary Committee hearing.
- 11.17 **DISTRICT DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEE PROCEDURE**
 - 11.17.1 The Convener of the District Disciplinary Committee shall control its proceedings which shall include, but not be limited to, ensuring that all relevant evidence, is tested and presented to the District Disciplinary Committee. Any member who absents themselves during proceedings, except during an adjournment, shall not be allowed to return or to participate in the verdict or the sentence. The accused and the accused's representative (if any) and the accuser have the right to be present throughout the proceedings but not while the Committee considers the verdict or the sentence. No other person shall be present except a witness while giving testimony.
 - 11.17.2 The District Disciplinary Committee shall at its sole discretion be able to use any method of communication to facilitate its meetings, deliberations and any other duties and functions which it needs to perform.
- 11.18 No member of the Committee may divulge to anyone outside the Committee any of its deliberations or proceedings.
- 11.19 The Committee may proceed with the hearing if the accused neglects or refuses to attend.
- 11.20 In exceptional circumstances the Committee may take evidence on commission where, in the opinion of the Convener, good grounds exist. The accused and the accuser may be present. The accused may question the witness giving evidence on commission. Evidence so recorded forms part of the record of the proceedings.
- 11.21 A written record of the proceedings shall be kept by one of the members appointed thereto by the Convener. This person and no other may use electronic equipment to record the proceedings. The record vests in the

Official Trustee (see 11.1), shall be lodged with the Connexional Office, and shall be accessible to no one but the Connexional Disciplinary Committee, unless the Presiding Bishop is of the opinion that it is required for reasons consistent with the Laws and Discipline of the church.

- 11.22 At the conclusion of the evidence, and after hearing argument by the accused and the person presenting the case against the accused, the Committee shall declare its verdict by majority vote as to the guilt or otherwise of the accused. If the accused has been found guilty, the Committee may consider any previous disciplinary record relating to the accused to assist it in deciding the sentence.
- 11.23 The verdict and the sentence shall be in writing and the finding shall be delivered as soon as possible to the accused and the accuser as provided for in para.11.11.1 or 11.12. At the same time the Convener of the District Disciplinary Committee shall provide the accused with a copy of the regulations relating to an appeal. The full record of every hearing shall be sent to the Connexional Disciplinary Committee by the District Disciplinary Committee within seven (7) days of the delivery of its finding. The Convener of the District Disciplinary Committee shall advise the accused's Bishop of the charge, the verdict and the sentence.
- 11.24 The person presenting the case against the accused, the accused or the accuser, on good grounds being shown to the Convener of the District Disciplinary Committee, may obtain a copy of the record of the hearing, excluding discussion by the Committee while considering the verdict or the sentence. The applicant shall bear the costs.

Commencement of Sentence:

- 11.25 No sentence shall take effect until the Connexional Disciplinary Committee has reviewed the matter. The General Secretary shall ensure that the sentence is carried out.

Suspension of Ministers:

- 11.26 If found guilty by a District Disciplinary Committee, a Minister may be suspended by the Presiding Bishop from exercising any ministerial functions, without giving him/her an audience, before the Connexional Disciplinary Committee has reviewed the matter, if the Presiding Bishop is of the opinion that it is in the best interests of the church. The accused shall be informed of the suspension as provided for in para.11.11.1 or 11.12.
- 11.27 Where a Minister has been found guilty by a District Disciplinary Committee, unless the Presiding Bishop decides to the contrary, all stipends and other emoluments from the Church and all payments due to Church funds shall continue to be paid and the accused may continue to occupy any Circuit property. Before making a final decision adverse to the accused in this regard, the accused shall be given the opportunity to make submissions to the

Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop may make an interim decision in this regard without giving the accused the opportunity to make submissions.

- 11.28 A suspended Minister shall not exercise any of the duties of a Minister or of a Local Preacher or occupy any other official position in the Church.
- 11.29 Suspended Ministers are under the pastoral charge of the District Bishop.
- 11.30 If the Connexional Disciplinary Committee declares a Minister not guilty who has been suspended without emoluments and any other payments, the Church shall endeavour to make good the stipend, grants, and benefits from the Super-numerary and Furlough Funds the Minister lost as a result of the suspension.

Probationers at Seminary:

- 11.31 The Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Director of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit and the President of the Seminary, may suspend a Probationer pending the finding of the District Disciplinary Committee and review of the Connexional Disciplinary Committee if it is in the best interests of the church. During the suspension the Probationer may continue in residence at the Seminary unless the Presiding Bishop directs otherwise.

Connexional Disciplinary Committee:

- 11.32 Conference shall appoint a Connexional Disciplinary Committee consisting of not fewer than seven persons of whom at least two shall be ordained Ministers and at least three Lay Members, all appointed for a term of three years and not exceeding three (3) consecutive terms. The Conference shall appoint one of the members to be the Convener. At least one member shall have the equivalent of at least five (5) years highcourt experience as an attorney or advocate or five (5) years of litigation experience.
- 11.33 No legal representation shall be allowed in the proceedings of the Committee. The Committee shall meet as the need arises. The Committee, inclusive of the Convener, or member acting as the convener, shall at its sole discretion be able to use any method of communication to facilitate its meetings, deliberations and any other duties and functions that it needs to perform.
- 11.34 If any member of the Committee is personally involved in or affected by the matter before the Committee, that member shall temporarily withdraw from the Committee. If the Convener withdraws from a hearing, the Committee shall appoint another of its number as Convener for that hearing. Three members form a quorum. Of these, at least one shall be an ordained Minister and at least one shall be a Lay Member. Furthermore at least one of the quorum shall have the applicable qualifications referred to in 11.41.

Powers and Duties

- 11.35 *The Connexional Disciplinary Committee shall, inter alia:*
 - 11.35.1 hear all appeals against decisions of District Disciplinary Committees;

- 11.35.2 in the absence of an appeal, review every record of District Disciplinary Committees within 30 days of the District Disciplinary Committee's decision;
- 11.35.3 in consequence of 11.35.1 and 11.35.2 ratify, amend or reverse any decision, verdict or sentence imposed by a District Disciplinary Committee, or refer the matter back to it for retrial or make any other decision or give any other directive which justice requires;
- 11.35.4 maintain a record of decided cases;
- 11.35.5 prepare and maintain manuals of procedure for disciplinary hearings;
- 11.35.6 ensure that all records of the Connexional and District Disciplinary Committees are forwarded to the Methodist Connexional Office for safe keeping;
- 11.35.7 submit a report of its work to the Connexional Executive without breaching any confidences;
- 11.35.8 recommend, where it considers that an offence it has dealt with places a legal duty on the Church, that the General Secretary reports accordingly to the relevant prosecutorial authority, or to any other relevant civil authority;
- 11.35.9 hear cases where the Presiding Bishop has been charged.

Appeals:

- 11.36 Any appeal must be lodged in writing with the Convener of the Connexional Disciplinary Committee within twenty one (21) days of the date on which the decision appealed against is conveyed to the person entitled to appeal, and shall set out the grounds of appeal. The Connexional Disciplinary Committee must endeavour to finalise the appeal within 30 (thirty) days of the appeal being lodged.
- 11.37 Either the accused or the person presenting the case against the accused may appeal against a decision of a District Disciplinary Committee.
- 11.38 Such appeal may be made only on one or more of the following grounds:
 - 11.38.1 that the procedures set out in Laws and Discipline were not adhered to;
 - 11.38.2 that there was malice or prejudice on the part of those serving on the District Disciplinary Committee;
 - 11.38.3 that the sentence does not conform to previous sentences relating to similar matters;
 - 11.38.4 that proper account was not taken of the circumstances of the accused or of any mitigating factors;
 - 11.38.5 that the District Disciplinary Committee misdirected itself in reaching its decision.
- 11.39 All appeals shall be decided on the written record of the proceedings before the District Disciplinary Committee and on hearing such argument by

the accused and the person presenting the case against the accused as the Connexional Disciplinary Committee shall permit. No evidence shall be heard on appeal unless the Committee decides to call for such evidence.

- 11.40 The accused, and the accused's representative, the person presenting the case against the accused and the accuser are entitled to be present at the hearing of the appeal only while argument is being presented.

Appointment and qualifications of the District Disciplinary Committee, the District Discipline Registrar and Connexional Disciplinary Committee

- 11.41 The District Discipline Registrar and at least one member of a District Disciplinary Committee and one member of the Connexional Disciplinary Committee shall be persons who have the equivalent of at least five (5) years High Court experience as an attorney or advocate or five (5) years of commensurate litigation experience.
- 11.42 Synod shall appoint the District Discipline Registrar. The term of office for the District Discipline Registrar shall be 3 (three) years. The District Discipline Registrar is eligible for re-appointment. The same person can be appointed as the District Discipline Registrar for more than one District.

DISCONTINUED MINISTERS

- 11.43 Ministers who are discontinued after due trial, or who resign while under charges, or with such charges pending, shall not be allowed to be Local Preachers or Class Leaders without the consent of the Connexional Executive. The Connexional Executive may remove the membership of such a person who then becomes a Member on Trial in a Society decided by the Connexional Executive on the recommendation of the Bishop. The Connexional Executive may restore such a person to Full Membership or to any office in the Church but shall first consult the Superintendent and, if possible, the Synod.

MINISTERS SEEKING REINSTATEMENT

- 11.44 A Minister who has resigned or been discontinued and seeks re-instatement shall apply to the Connexional Executive through Synod. (Ref 4.122)
- 11.45 An ordained Minister who is reinstated shall not be ordained again but may be required to serve a period on trial before being restored to Full Connexion, as determined by the Connexional Executive.

PASTORAL OVERSIGHT IN THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS

- 11.46 Bishops and Ministers must exercise a pastoral role throughout the discipline process, especially after the discipline process has been completed.

DISCIPLINE OF BISHOPS

- 11.47 A complaint against a Bishop shall be forwarded to the Presiding Bishop who shall forward it to the District Discipline Registrar of any District, other

than the Bishop's District, who shall act in terms of 11.4 above. In the event of the District Discipline Registrar deciding that a hearing must be held, the Presiding Bishop shall decide which District Disciplinary Committee shall conduct the hearing, provided that it shall not be the District Disciplinary Committee of the District in which the Bishop was accused.

- 11.48 In all other respects the regulations for Disciplining Ministers/Members shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply.

DISCIPLINE OF PRESIDING BISHOP

- 11.49 An accusation made against the Presiding Bishop shall be submitted to the General Secretary who shall forward it to the District Discipline Registrar of the District wherein the Presiding Bishop resides and two other District Disciplinary Registrars appointed by the General Secretary. The said District Disciplinary Registrars shall act in terms of 11.4 above. In the event that the said District Disciplinary Registrars cannot reach agreement on whether or not there should be a hearing, a decision shall be taken by majority vote.
- 11.50 In the event of the District Disciplinary Registrars deciding that a hearing must be held, the Connexional Disciplinary Committee shall be the trial court.
- 11.51 Either the accused or the person presenting the case against the accused may appeal against the decision of the trial court. Such appeal shall be lodged with the General Secretary within 30 (thirty) days of the decision of the court. The appeal shall be decided by the Connexional Executive or by a special court appointed by the Connexional Executive consisting of at least five members. The Connexional Executive shall at its sole discretion be able to use any method of communication to facilitate its meetings, deliberations and any other duties and functions which it needs to perform in this regard.
- 11.52 The Presiding Bishop who most recently vacated that office, failing which the most recent Presiding Bishop who is available, shall preside over the Connexional Executive when it hears an appeal in a matter concerning the Presiding Bishop.
- 11.53 The record vests in the Official Trustee, shall be lodged with the Connexional Office, and shall be accessible to no-one but the General Secretary, unless the Connexional Executive is of the opinion that it is required for reasons consistent with the Laws and Discipline of the Church.
- 11.54 In all other respects the regulations for Disciplining Ministers or Members shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply.

CHAPTER 12

LOCAL PREACHERS

- 12.1 The work of Local Preachers shall operate as a sub-division of EMMU Lay Ministries unless a Connexional Local Preachers' Committee is appointed by Conference.

Connexional Local Preachers' Committee

- 12.1.1 The Connexional Executive shall annually appoint a Connexional Committee, which shall include a Connexional Local Preachers' Co-ordinator;
- 12.1.2 The Committee shall supervise the operation and promote the interests of Local Preachers so as to maintain their numbers and improve their effectiveness, and shall receive the Annual Report of each District Committee and report thereon to the Conference;
- 12.1.3 The Committee is represented at Connexional structures as directed in Laws and Discipline;
- 12.1.4 In the case of a Local Preacher, only a person who has been on Full Plan for at least five (5) years is eligible to represent the Committee at Connexional level;
- 12.1.5 The Committee shall oversee the training of Local Preachers in conjunction with EMMU.

12.2 District Local Preachers' Committee

Synod shall elect a Local Preachers' Committee consisting of the Bishop, the Vice-Chairman, the District Secretary, the Statistical Secretary, three other Ministers and five Local Preachers; one Minister and one Local Preacher shall be appointed Secretaries of the Committee. The Committee may co-opt other members.

12.3 *The functions and duties of the Committee are inter alia, to:*

- 12.3.1 co-operate with the Connexional Committee in promoting the general interests and effectiveness of Local Preachers and Circuit Local Preachers' Meetings;
- 12.3.2 receive from each Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting an annual report on the work of Local Preachers in the Circuit including statistics, and a full list of the names and addresses of Local Preachers;
- 12.3.3 report to Synod on Local Preachers' affairs;

- 12.3.4 apply the directions of Conference and the Connexional Executive with regard to Local Preachers;
- 12.3.5 undertake special Missions and Services where desired.

12.4 **Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting**

The Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting shall consist of the Local Preachers who are Society members in the Circuit, and the Ministers, Probationers and Deacons. Local Preachers on Trial and on Note are required to attend the meeting but shall not vote.

12.5 *The functions and duties are inter-alia, to:*

- 12.5.1 meet every quarter, using the prescribed Order and Form for Local Preachers' Meetings (Appendix 9);
- 12.5.2 consider the work of God in the Circuit as far as Local Preachers are concerned;
- 12.5.3 consider the character, fidelity to doctrine, and fitness of Local Preachers for their work;
- 12.5.4 apply the discipline of the Church as it affects Local Preachers;
- 12.5.5 receive or otherwise as a Local Preacher on Trial any person so nominated by the Superintendent;
- 12.5.6 receive as a Local Preacher on full plan any person who qualifies in terms of the regulations;
- 12.5.7 submit to the District Committee an annual report on the work of Local Preachers in the Circuit including statistics, the names of those who have died, the names of those who qualify for Long-service Certificates, and a full list of the names and addresses of Local Preachers;
- 12.5.8 report to the District Committee the examination results of Local Preachers in the Circuit;
- 12.5.9 appoint a Supervisor of Studies to direct and encourage the studies of all Local Preachers, especially those on Trial;
- 12.5.10 elect annually five (5) of their number to be members of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting;
- 12.5.11 elect annually two Local Preachers from each Society to be members of the Leaders' Meeting;

12.5.12 **Appointment of Supervisor of Studies**

To appoint a Supervisor of Studies who is a Minister or an accredited Local Preacher with preferably, a minimum of a diploma in theological studies to direct and encourage the studies of all local preachers, especially those on trial. The functions of the Supervisor of Studies shall be to:

- (a) pastor and tutor Preachers on Trial, or arrange for this to be done;

- (b) supervise and guide Preachers on Trial in their studies;
- (c) ensure timeous registration of Preachers on Trial for their courses;
- (d) encourage and assist upgrading and retraining of Full Preachers;
- (e) seek to establish a Local Preachers' library in the Circuit;
- (f) to be the liaison between the Preachers and Superintendent and EMMU or the department;
- (g) to establish a screening committee for candidates.

12.6 Local Preachers on Note

- 12.6.1 Anyone offering to become a Local Preacher shall be a member of the Church and shall receive from the Superintendent a Note to Preach. A Note to Preach is valid for one quarter but may be renewed.
- 12.6.2 A person receiving a Note to Preach shall assist an accredited Local Preacher in the conduct of services but may not conduct a service of worship without such supervision. The Local Preacher shall report to the Meeting on the services.
- 12.6.3 After at least one (1) quarter the Superintendent may nominate to the Meeting such a person for reception on Trial as a Local Preacher; the Meeting shall decide whether or not to receive the person on Trial.

12.7 Local Preachers on Trial

- 12.7.1 Adherence to regulations regarding Local Preachers On Trial is in the interest of a high standard of Local Preaching.
- 12.7.2 A person received on Trial as a Local Preacher by the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting shall be given a syllabus of the examinations required by the EMMU and shall be examined therein as decided by the Meeting.
- 12.7.3 The probation period is at least two years but not, except in very special circumstances, more than three (3) years.
- 12.7.4 Local Preachers on Trial who state their intention of offering for the Ministry may, at the discretion of the Meeting, be exempted from the requirements of the second year of probation, but shall comply with the full academic requirement of EMMU to candidate. No exemption shall enable them to be received on Full Plan before completing twelve (12) months on Trial, and until Synod has recommended their candidature.
- 12.7.5 Local Preachers on Trial who are fifty five (55) years of age or older and who are considered by the Meeting to have adequate experience of preaching and the conduct of worship may be exempted by the Meeting from the written examinations.

- 12.7.6 The examination requirements and conditions of probation are determined by Conference.
- 12.7.7 Throughout the probationary period one or more Local Preachers appointed by the Meeting shall attend and report to the Meeting on every Church service conducted by a Local Preacher on Trial.
- 12.7.8 At the end of the probationary period Local Preachers on Trial shall pass an oral examination which tests their knowledge of the Bible and of Christian Doctrine. They shall also give an account of their conversion, present spiritual condition and call to preach.
- 12.7.9 At the end of the probationary period a Local Preacher on Trial shall conduct a trial service attended by two (2) Local Preachers and a Minister, or by three (3) Local Preachers, who shall report on the service to the Meeting.
- 12.7.10 Local Preachers received on Full Plan shall be recognised at a Recognition Service and presented with a Bible by the Circuit.
 - (a) Newly-accredited Local Preachers who complete the requirements for Full Plan status shall receive the Letter from the Presiding Bishop and a Certificate issued by the Unit on the request of the Circuit Superintendent.
 - (b) These documents are obtainable from the Unit at the request of the Circuit Superintendent.
 - (c) Local Preachers may be robed when they have passed the Local Preachers examinations and been placed on Full Plan. The robing may take place in the Circuit or at the Annual Local Preachers District Convention.

12.8 Recognition Service for Newly-Accredited preachers

- 12.8.1 Superintendents conduct recognition services for Local Preachers reaching Full Plan status. The purchase of the Bible presented on such occasions is the responsibility of the Circuit.

Newly accredited preachers who complete the requirements for Full Plan status, should receive a letter from the Presiding Bishop and a certificate issued by the EMMU.

These documents are obtainable from the EMMU at the request of the Circuit Superintendent.

- 12.8.2 Local Preachers who choose to join the Local Preachers' Association may be robed when they have passed the Local Preachers examinations and been placed on Full Plan.

12.9 Local Preachers Candidating for the Ministry

Local Preachers who offer as Candidates for the Ministry, should complete their local preaching training and be received into Full Plan.

12.10 Mature Age Candidates

- 12.10.1 Mature Age Candidates, over the age of fifty five (55), may be exempted from the written examination ONLY;
- 12.10.2 Mature Age Candidates must be registered with the Unit, with proof of age, and must be tutored using the EMMU prescribed study guide;
- 12.10.3 A Mature Age Candidate, who is exempted from the written examinations, must complete the full two (2) years on trial. They must preach a Trial Sermon and be orally examined by the Circuit Local Preachers' Quarterly Meeting using the questions that EMMU prescribe. These results must be submitted to the unit;
- 12.10.4 Mature Age Candidates must be registered before 31st July each year to be examined during April of the following year;
- 12.10.5 An Administration Fee is payable for each candidate. Circuits can obtain the necessary Study Guides for each year from the Unit.

12.11 Local Preachers' Discipline

- 12.11.1 Local Preachers are accountable to the Leaders' Meeting and Circuit Local Preachers Meeting for their Christian character and conduct and for their fidelity to doctrine and their performance and fitness as preachers of the Gospel; they continue to hold their status as Local Preachers only so long as they accept this discipline;
- 12.11.2 The Meeting shall examine every Local Preacher each quarter concerning the matters of ability and acceptability as a preacher, and faithfulness in fulfilling preaching appointments;
- 12.11.3 The Meeting may censure, silence, or suspend Local Preachers or discontinue them as fully accredited Local Preachers;
- 12.11.4 No Minister who has been suspended or discontinued from the Ministry or who has resigned with charges pending may serve as a Local Preacher without the authority of the Connexional Executive;
- 12.11.5 Local Preachers who are aggrieved by the action of the Meeting affecting their status as Local Preachers have the right of appeal through the Bishop to a District Local Preachers' Court of Appeal that shall be appointed and convened by the Bishop to hear the appeal;
- 12.11.6 The Court of Appeal is presided over by the Bishop or a Minister in the District deputed thereto, and shall in addition consist of six Local Preachers from the District who have been on Full Plan for not less than three (3) years;
- 12.11.7 The appeal shall be considered on the record of the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting and no further evidence shall be permitted except that the Court of Appeal may refer the case back to the Circuit to be reheard. The verdict of the Court of Appeal is final;

- 12.11.8 The Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting shall not have jurisdiction over the Local Preacher's Church Membership, which is decided by the Local Leaders' Meeting;
- 12.11.9 Any complaint lodged against a Local Preacher which might affect their status as a member of the Church, must be dealt with in terms of Chapter 11.

12.12 Local Preachers and Divorce

- 12.12.1 A Local Preacher on Trial or on Full Plan if involved in divorce proceedings shall be:
 - (a) suspended forthwith by the Superintendent from all activities as a Local Preacher;
 - (b) The matter shall be referred, by the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting, to the Bishop who shall appoint a Pastoral Committee comprising two (2) Ministers and three (3) Local Preachers, to consider the case;
 - (c) The Superintendent or local Minister shall be invited to address the Committee;
 - (d) The Committee shall recommend to the Bishop whether the person should be discontinued as a Local Preacher or suspended and if so for what minimum period;
 - (e) The Bishop shall then decide the person's continuance or discontinuance as a Local Preacher, or suspension for a period;
 - (f) An appeal arising from the decision of the Bishop shall be referred to the Presiding Bishop, whose decision is final.
- 12.12.2 A divorced person offering as a Local Preacher shall have the case referred by the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting to the Bishop and to the Pastoral Committee described above.
- 12.12.3 A person discontinued as a Local Preacher on grounds of divorce may apply later for readmission; a Local Preacher suspended may apply for the lifting of the suspension after the lapse of the period decided by the Bishop. The application shall be dealt with as above. Should the Bishop agree to readmission, but not otherwise, the Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting shall decide whether the person should be readmitted immediately or placed on probation for readmission at a later time.

12.13 GENERAL REGULATIONS

- 12.13.1 If there are too few Local Preachers in a Circuit to sustain a regular Local Preachers' Meeting, the business of the Local Preachers shall be conducted by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.
- 12.13.2 Local Preachers who remove to another Circuit shall present a Note of Removal from their former Superintendent, giving their status

as Local Preachers. They shall be received with that status without further trial or examination.

- 12.13.3 No Local Preacher may preach in another Circuit without the permission of both Superintendents.
- 12.13.4 Local Preachers shall fulfil their preaching appointments; if unable to do so they are to provide duly accredited substitutes but only with the agreement of the Superintendent.
- 12.13.5 Long Service Certificates are given to all Local Preachers of forty years' service since first coming on to Full Plan. Certificates shall also be given to Local Preachers of 25 years' standing. Superintendents are requested to give the full names and surnames of all Preachers who claim forty years' service, together with the actual date of coming on to full plan. Full information on the Local Preachers' Schedule will constitute an application. No other Circuit or District generated certificates will be recognised
- 12.13.6 One Sunday in the year shall be set aside as Local Preachers' Sunday, to be used as Conference directs.

CHAPTER 13

METHODIST ORDER OF DEACONS

- 13.1 The mission of the Diaconate is to share Christ's love through service and to help the Church respond to the needs of the wider community.
 - 13.1.1 Deacons belong to an ordained ministry of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Their ministry may include working in a pastoral context in a Society or Circuit, or working in secular employment e.g. education, health care, welfare and social upliftment organisations. Deacons seek to be Christ's servants in the world and encourage the Church community to a ministry of servanthood. Apart from local pastoral ministry or church planting projects some practical aspects of service that the Order of Deacons could engage in are: poverty alleviation; care for the sick and dying; care for the aged or youth; evangelism and mission outreach; para-church organisations.
- 13.2 Members of the Order are known as "Deacons" a term reserved in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for members of the Order of Deacons.

CONNEXIONAL COMMITTEE

- 13.3 The Order is under the direction of a Connexional Committee consisting of the Presiding Bishop, the General Secretary, a Bishop, the Warden, and three Ministers, five lay members and two Deacons nominated by the Executive Committee.
- 13.4 The Connexional Committee shall report and make recommendations to the Connexional Executive on Candidates, Probationers, Candidates for Ordination, and the examinations.
- 13.5 An Executive Committee may be appointed consisting of the following members of the Connexional Committee: the General Secretary, the Warden, three Ministers and two Deacons. The Committee is also the Examining Committee and the Stationing Committee.

CONVOCATION

- 13.6 An annual Convocation of the Order shall be held at a time determined by the Warden in consultation with the Presiding Bishop. The Convocation consists of the Presiding Bishop, the General Secretary, the Warden and the members of the Order. The Presiding Bishop is the President of the Order. Probationers shall attend but may not vote.

The Agenda for the Convocation is contained in Appendix 7.

- 13.7 The Convocation shall nominate a Warden to the Connexional Executive who shall make the appointment. The Warden shall be appointed by Conference for a term of five (5) years and may be appointed for one further term. The Warden shall be the representative of the Order at Conference.

CANDIDATES

- 13.8 The primary qualifications for the Order are the sense of a divine call, spiritual and intellectual gifts, the graces of Christian character, and the fruits of Christian service. Candidates shall intend to give their life's service to the Order.
- 13.9 The minimum educational standard of Candidates is the Senior Certificate, Matriculation, or an equivalent. Where the primary qualifications are clearly evident, consideration may be given to those who have not yet reached this standard.
- 13.10 No age limit is laid down for candidates. Candidates must be willing and able to fulfil the conditions of probation that will include academic studies and internship training as laid down by the Order, under the general auspice of the Education for Mission and Ministry Unit.
- 13.11 A Candidate shall apply through the Superintendent to the Warden who shall supply an Application Form.
- 13.12 A Candidate shall also provide a recommendation from the Superintendent, and the name and address of the Minister of the Society and a Leader of that Society as referees.
- 13.13 Once the Candidature has been provisionally approved by the Examining Committee, the Superintendent may nominate the Candidate at the next Circuit Quarterly Meeting. The Superintendent shall forward the nature of the voting to the Warden.
- 13.14 If the Quarterly Meeting approves the candidature, the Warden shall provide the Superintendent with directions for the Candidate's appearance before the Examining Committee.
- 13.15 Prior to appearing before the Examining Committee candidates shall write two assignments as directed by the Examining Committee. One assignment shall be on The Word and the other on Service. A pass mark is 50% in each assignment.
- 13.16 The recommendation of the Examining Committee and the results of the examinations shall be considered by the next Synod which shall make a recommendation to the Connexional Executive, which shall accept the Candidate or otherwise. Candidates shall give testimony regarding their Christian experience, call to the Order, belief in Methodist doctrine and adherence to Methodist discipline at Synod.

PROBATION AND ORDINATION

- 13.17 Probation is normally four years. Part of the Probation may be in collegiate training as decided by the Connexional Committee. The cost of training is

borne by the Training Fund although the Probationer should bear as much of the cost as possible. Training shall be determined by the Order in consultation with the Education for Mission and Ministry Unit.

- 13.18 Probationers who have successfully completed their probation shall appear before the Connexional Executive for admission into membership of the Order. They shall be ordained at the annual ordination service.

APPOINTMENT OF DEACONS

- 13.19 The Connexional Executive, of which the Warden shall be a member, shall decide the appointment of Deacons after the recommendation of the General Committee. Deacons serve under the direction of the Quarterly Meeting and the Superintendent.
- 13.20 A Deacon may be invited to serve in a Circuit following the system applicable to Ministers, but the Warden shall be consulted at every stage of the negotiations.
- 13.21 If the Quarterly Meeting decides not to continue with the services of a Deacon, the Superintendent shall immediately inform the Warden.
- 13.22 A Deacon is a member of the Leaders' Meeting, the Quarterly Meeting and Synod.

STIPENDS AND ALLOWANCES

- 13.23 A Circuit providing an opportunity for service for a Deacon shall pay Connexional Assessments and stipends are paid in the usual manner. The Connexional Executive shall determine the stipends and allowances.
- 13.24 Deacons are members of the Supernumerary Fund, and contributions shall be made to the Fund and benefits received in terms of the rules of the Fund.
- 13.25 Deacons shall be admitted to the Long Leave Roster, the conditions and benefits being decided by the Connexional Executive.
- 13.26 Deacons who are paid a stipend through the Finance Unit participate in the Medical Plan and Extraordinary Affliction Fund on the same basis as Ministers.
- 13.27 A Circuit providing an opportunity for service for a Deacon shall provide suitable accommodation and shall make adequate provision for travelling.

DISCIPLINE

- 13.28 The disciplinary procedure provided for Ministers in Chapter 11 shall, *mutatis mutandis*, apply to Deacons.
- 13.29 **Rule of Life**
Deacons adhere to the Rule of Life as set out in Chapter 3.
- 13.30 **Status of Deacons**
13.30.1 Deacons are recognised by the Church as called of God, and trained and Ordained for the service of the Church;

- 13.30.2 Their service is primarily evangelistic and pastoral, but they should not be denied opportunity to exercise gifts of preaching, initiative and leadership;
- 13.30.3 They are colleagues on the staff of the Circuit to which they are appointed, responsible to the Superintendent, and thus share in the work of the Circuit.

13.31 **Administering the Sacraments**

Ordained Ministers may invite ordained or probationer Deacons to assist in the distribution of the elements at Holy Communion.

Probationers authorised by the Presiding Bishop to administer the sacraments after approval of the Superintendent, may invite any Deacon or lay person to assist in distributing the elements without obtaining the Superintendent's approval, but shall obtain such approval in the case of probationer Deacons.

13.32 **Leave of Absence**

- 13.32.1 No Deacon shall be without appointment or be absent from the Circuit other than on leave provided for by the Connexional Executive/Conference;
- 13.32.2 A Deacon may apply for leave of absence through the Circuit superintendent and Circuit Quarterly Meeting. The Deacon must inform the Warden and the District Bishop of his/her application. The Bishop shall consult with the Warden if necessary. In case of emergency, the Presiding Bishop may grant leave of absence;
- 13.32.3 No leave of absence shall be granted unless suitable arrangements for a supply or replacement have been made in consultation with the Warden and Superintendent, and approved by the Circuit Quarterly meeting and Bishop;
- 13.32.4 Deacons on leave of absence shall attend the Convocation of the Order and the Synod of the District in which they reside, (unless dispensation is granted) and shall answer the Discipline Questions at both. A Deacon who resides outside the Connexion shall answer the questions to the Warden before Convocation and the Warden shall inform the District Bishop;
- 13.32.5 Any Deacon who fails to answer the Discipline Questions is guilty of not observing the discipline of the Church and may be deemed to have resigned from the Order and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa;
- 13.32.6 A Deacon, wishing to continue on leave of absence shall reapply annually, prior to the meeting of the Convocation, for continued leave of absence through the Warden who shall inform the Bishop or the Presiding Bishop if the deacon resides outside the Connexion;

- 13.32.7 A Deacon on leave of absence who wishes to return to work in the Circuit or elsewhere in the Connexion must give due notice to the Warden who shall inform the superintendent and Bishop or the Presiding Bishop;
- 13.32.8 A Deacon on leave of absence may continue to be a member of the MCSA pension and medical aid schemes but at no cost to the Circuit or Connexion;
- 13.32.9 A Deacon on leave of absence who resides in a circuit house must negotiate with the Circuit re occupancy or otherwise.

13.33 Deacons left without Appointment

The procedures provided for Ministers in Chapter 4 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*, to Deacons.

13.34 Deacons without Appointment (Marriage)

The procedures provided for Ministers in Chapter 4 shall apply *mutatis mutandis*, to Deacons.

13.35 Maternity Leave

The procedures provided for Ministers in Chapter 4 shall apply, *mutatis mutandis*, to Deacons.

Chapter 14

ORDER OF EVANGELISM

The Order of Evangelism is a Lay Ministry of the Biblewomen and Evangelists called into the service of God and the Church to assist in evangelisation, church planting/growth and pastoral care.

The Order shall operate in terms of their Constitution subject to the Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church. In case of conflict of interpretation, the Laws and Discipline takes precedence.

14.1 **General Committee of the Order of Evangelism:**

All affairs of the Order are administered by the General Committee consisting of a Chairman, who shall be one of the District Bishops appointed by Conference, the Warden, the Secretary who shall be a minister elected by the General Committee for a period of three (3) years and who may be re-elected for a further term on recommendation of the Warden in consultation with the Chairman; Co-ordinator of Lay Training, the Director of the Mission Unit, two Evangelists, two Biblewomen, two ordained Ministers in active service and two District Secretaries from neighbouring Districts, one representative each from the Connexional Women's Manyano, Young Women's Manyano, Women's Association, Women's Auxiliary and Young Men's Guild – all of whom shall be appointed by their General Committees every three years. No organisation that is not Connexional shall have representation in the General Committee. The Chairman (Bishop) and the Warden shall represent the Order of Evangelism at the Connexional Executive.

14.2 **The Warden**

14.2.1 The Warden shall be appointed by Conference for a term of five (5) years and may be appointed for one further term.

14.2.2 The Warden is a member of Conference and Connexional Executive.

14.3 **Duties of the Warden.**

The Warden shall manage and report on the affairs of the work of the Order as directed by Conference.

Candidature Procedure

14.4 **Requirements**

An Evangelist or a Biblewoman Candidate shall:

- 14.4.1 Be a full member in good standing of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for a period of not less than two (2) years.
- 14.4.2 Reside in the Circuit of candidature, for not less than (2) two years.
- 14.4.3 Display evidence of a living experience of the saving power of Jesus Christ.
- 14.4.4 Have the gift and zeal of evangelism, especially soul winning and love for all people, or of compassion and pastoral care to those in greatest need.
- 14.4.5 Be physically capable to discharge duties and responsibilities assigned to them.
- 14.4.6 Have preferably a Grade 12 educational level.
- 14.4.7 An Evangelist candidate shall be a fully accredited local preacher or must have completed the first year of local preacher's studies.
- 14.4.8 Be not more than 50 years of age at the time of candidature.
- 14.4.9 Only fulltime candidates shall be registered.
- 14.4.10 Circuits shall, for remuneration purposes, register candidates with the Finance Unit as soon as they assume duty.

14.5 **Process of Candidating:**

- 14.5.1 Prospective candidates shall be nominated by the Circuit Superintendent at the January Circuit Quarterly Meeting.
- 14.5.2 The candidates shall share testimony to their calling and be voted for at Circuit Quarterly Meeting.
- 14.5.3 If the Circuit Quarterly meeting affirms the calling and votes in favour, the Circuit Superintendent shall complete the application form and together with all required documents, forward them to the District Secretary of the Order of Evangelism, who shall forward the same to the Screening Committee.
- 14.5.4 The Screening Committee shall comprise the District Secretary of the Order, EMMU representative, District Supervisor of Studies, Psychologist or Social Worker, one minister appointed by the Bishop, one Commissioned Biblewoman and one Evangelist. Four (4) members of the Screening Committee shall be considered as the quorum necessary to proceed with screening.
- 14.5.5 All successful candidates' forms together with all other documents shall be forwarded to the Warden of the Order by the 15th March.
- 14.5.6 The Warden in collaboration with EMMU shall process the candidates through District Synods.
- 14.5.7 Evangelists and Biblewomen on transfer from other Churches or seeking reinstatement shall apply through their Circuit Superintendent who shall forward their names to the District Secretary and copy the Warden for processing through the Screening Committee to Synod.

14.6 Robing of Evangelists and Biblewomen.

- 14.6.1 In the first year after acceptance by the District Synod and Conference, the candidate shall be known as “an Evangelist or Biblewoman in training or a probationer”.
- 14.6.2 Evangelists and Biblewomen shall be robed on completion of their training at their Commissioning Service.
- 14.6.3 The Commissioning Certificate shall be signed by the Presiding Bishop, the Warden and District Bishop.
- 14.6.4 During the period of probation the Evangelists and/or Biblewomen shall not wear a clerical collar or Biblewoman uniform.

14.7 Remuneration and Leave

- 14.7.1 All registered Evangelists and Biblewomen shall receive their stipends and medical assistance through the Finance Unit, and travelling allowance from the Circuit as determined by Conference.
- 14.7.2 Biblewomen and Evangelists shall be registered with the Methodist Supernumerary Fund as designated by the Conference.
- 14.7.3 Evangelists and Biblewomen in consultation with Circuit Superintendents shall be entitled to thirty calendar days’ annual leave, one day off per week and one weekend off per Quarter. A weekend off shall not apply when annual leave is taken and days off shall not be accumulated.
- 14.7.4 Sick leave may be granted, but if for longer than two (2) weeks, a medical report shall be provided. Approved sick leave shall be granted with full emoluments, after which, the case shall be considered on merit.
- 14.7.5 Where sick leave is likely to exceed six (6) months, the District Bishop shall be consulted by the Circuit Superintendent for a decision.

14.8 General Rules

- 14.8.1 The Circuit Quarterly Meeting shall always receive the report of an individual Biblewoman’s and Evangelist’s work in the Circuit.
- 14.8.2 Any change in the stationing shall be reported to the District Secretary of the Order and District Committee. The Bishop shall then inform the Warden of the Order about such a change. The District Bishop shall ensure that Biblewomen and Evangelists are stationed.
- 14.8.3 No Circuit shall terminate the services of a Biblewoman or Evangelist except on disciplinary grounds, resignation and due retirement. In all these cases, the Warden and Connexional Office must be notified.
- 14.8.4 Circuits employing Evangelists or Biblewomen shall provide suitable accommodation, where required, although they shall normally live in their own homes.

- 14.8.5 Biblewomen and Evangelists may retire at the age of 60. The Circuit Quarterly Meeting may extend employment up to, but not exceeding, sixty five (65) years. The Warden shall be informed of all pending retirements and resignations.
- 14.8.6 Notwithstanding anything contained in the Laws and Discipline, any complaint against a Biblewoman or Evangelist which may affect their membership of the Church, must be conducted in terms of Chapter 11 and the provisions therein relating to Members.
- 14.8.7 Circuit Superintendents shall immediately report the resignation, disability or death of a Biblewoman or Evangelist to the Connexional Office and the District Secretary, who will in turn inform the Warden.

CHAPTER 15

CHAPLAINCY

15.1 **CONNEXIONAL CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE – GENERAL REGULATIONS**

The Connexional Chaplaincy Committee (CCC) is responsible to Conference for all matters concerning chaplaincy in the Security Services.

“Security Services” refers to the South African SANDF (SA National Defence Force), SAPS (SA Police Services) and DCS (Department of Correctional Services) and equivalents in Member Countries.

15.2 **COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE**

15.2.1 The Committee shall consist of The Presiding Bishop, the General Secretary, the Bishops of three (3) Districts (One of whom shall be Chairman), the Principal Chaplain, the Liaison Chaplains of the three Security Services, at least three ministers who are not chaplains, and at least three lay persons;

15.2.2 Members of the Committee shall be nominated annually by the Connexional Chaplaincy Committee and appointed by the Connexional Executive or Conference;

15.2.3 The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairman, the Secretary, the Principal Chaplain and the three (3) Liaison Chaplains.

15.3 ***Powers And Duties:***

The Connexional Chaplaincy Committee responsibilities are inter-alia, to:

15.3.1 have pastoral and discipline oversight;

15.3.2 see to the general well-being of all chaplains in the Security Services;

15.3.3 screen and recommend suitable candidates for chaplaincy to the Security Services.

15.4 During the tenth year of a chaplain’s service the Connexional Chaplaincy Committee will arrange for a Pastoral Committee to review the chaplain’s work and recommend whether or not they should continue in chaplaincy. This should normally take place in the District in which they reside. The review should also contain a recommendation from their Bishop.

15.5 PROCEDURE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAINS

- 15.5.1 Any Ordained Minister who feels a call to serve as a chaplain must first apply in writing to the Connexional Chaplaincy Committee for permission to explore the possibility of appointment with the Security Service concerned. The application should include a motivation and a CV;
- 15.5.2 The District Bishop shall appoint a Pastoral Commission to meet with the Minister concerned and make a recommendation concerning the Ministers' overall character and work, and their suitability for chaplaincy. Ministers will normally only be recommended for chaplaincy after they have served three years in Circuit after ordination. The Security Services do not accept new chaplains over the age of forty (40);
- 15.5.3 The names of the recommended Ministers shall be forwarded to the Security Service concerned. (NB. The Connexional Chaplaincy Committee does not make chaplaincy appointments. Each Security Service is responsible for its own appointments in terms of current labour legislation. In the case of SAPS, once a minister has received approval from the Connexional Chaplaincy Committee, they must themselves apply to the SAPS when posts are advertised);
- 15.5.4 When a Minister receives an appointment as a chaplain it is his/her responsibility to notify the Connexional Chaplaincy Committee.

15.6 CONDUCT AND OBLIGATIONS OF CHAPLAINS

- 15.6.1 Chaplains are representatives of the MCSA and must not conduct themselves in any way which will bring discredit on the good name of the Church;
- 15.6.2 Chaplains must remain faithful to the Methodist doctrines and values, especially in matters of conscience, and are encouraged not to bear arms;
- 15.6.3 Chaplains are in a unique position as employees of the State. They are employed by, and are in a contractual relationship with the Security Service and are therefore responsible in the first instance to the authority and discipline of the Security Service concerned;
- 15.6.4 Nevertheless they continue to be in a covenantal relationship with the MCSA through their ordination and are also subject to the discipline and regulations of the MCSA in order to remain in good standing with the Church;
- 15.6.5 Their job description, conditions of service, remuneration, pension and service benefits will be determined and administered by the Security Service concerned;
- 15.6.6 Chaplains are required to serve people of all denominations and faiths as well as members of the MCSA;

- 15.6.7 Chaplains shall not transfer to another Security Service or secondment without permission from the Connexional Chaplaincy Committee or Presiding Bishop. Nor shall they accept promotion to a position in the Security Service which has no relation to their primary calling as a chaplain without permission from the Presiding Bishop.

15.7 OBLIGATIONS TO THE MCSA

- 15.7.1 Whilst it is recognised that the Security Service has the primary call on the chaplain's time and work, chaplains are also required to attend their annual District Synod and at least one District ministers' retreat a year;
- 15.7.2 Chaplains are also required to involve themselves in and be members of their local Methodist Society and may be expected to attend Circuit and Society meetings, normally in their own time. Chaplains must negotiate this with their Commanding Officer.

15.8 PRINCIPAL CHAPLAIN AND LIAISON CHAPLAINS

- 15.8.1 The Connexional Chaplaincy Committee shall nominate a Principal Chaplain every three (3) years who shall be appointed by the Connexional Executive and who will have pastoral oversight of all chaplains.
- 15.8.2 The Connexional Chaplaincy Committee shall annually appoint a Liaison Chaplain in each Security Service who will be the liaison channel between the chaplains and the Security Service concerned.

15.9 SPECIAL PROVISION

- 15.9.1 The presence of Methodist Chaplains in the Security Services does not imply that the MCSA supports war, violence, militarism or the political ideology of the Government in power.

APPENDIX 1

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA (PRIVATE) ACT, 111/1978

(PRIVATE ACT, 111/1978 SINCE REPEALED BY ACT 45 OF 2008.)

To consolidate and amend the laws relating to the Methodist Church of South Africa; and to provide for matters incidental thereto.

PREAMBLE

Whereas the Yearly Conference of the people called Methodists in Great Britain was constituted by deed poll of the Reverend John Wesley dated 28 February 1784 and is the governing authority for Great Britain and elsewhere of the religious organisation known as the society of people called Methodists, the Wesleyan Methodist Church, or other like title;

And whereas by virtue of the powers conferred by the said deed poll as amplified by the provisions of an Act of the Imperial Parliament known as the Methodist Conference Act, 1876, the said Yearly Conference (hereinafter referred to as the Yearly Conference) in 1882 by resolution constituted a South African Conference of the people called Methodists (hereinafter referred to as the South African Conference) and defined its jurisdiction, powers and functions and delegated to or conferred upon it certain powers and privileges, providing however that the South African Conference should be affiliated to it and should in certain respects be under its control, and that the said constitution may be altered from time to time by the South African Conference with its concurrence;

And whereas in consequence thereof the South African Conference had jurisdiction over all the Wesleyan Methodist Ministers, preachers on trial, churches and missions in South Africa and was within the said area the governing authority of the said religious organisation, which was therein commonly called the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa;

And whereas there was a considerable quantity of movable and immovable property in South Africa held under various forms of trusts but all substantially for the use and benefit of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa, which was administered, controlled or dealt with by the South African Conference or by representatives or officials under its control and direction, but the said South African Conference acted

in the premises as a delegate of, and as affiliated to, the Yearly Conference and under its supervision and control;

And whereas the South African Conference desired that the delegation aforesaid should be made irrevocable, that the control and affiliation aforesaid should cease and that the power to alter the said constitution should be vested in it, and that it should become an independent and autonomous body in control of the foregoing property and of a religious organisation to be called the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa, consisting of the people called Methodists within the area of its jurisdiction, having the same doctrines and objects as the people called Methodists in Great Britain, and resolved accordingly;

And whereas the Yearly Conference was favourably disposed towards the desires of the South African Conference and by resolutions made irrevocable the said delegations, as empowered by the said Methodist Conference Act, 1876, agreed to waive the affiliation and control aforesaid and further agreed that the said constitution could thenceforth be altered by the South African Conference;

And whereas the Yearly Conference by resolution also agreed to the South African Conference becoming an independent and autonomous body as aforesaid;

And whereas the Yearly Conference passed the foregoing resolutions subject to the limitations imposed upon its powers in that behalf by its constitution and by section 7 of the said Methodist Conference Act, 1876, and to such safeguards as were necessary to ensure the maintenance by the South African Conference of the doctrines and general rules and usages of the people called Methodists;

And whereas the said South African Conference, having as its paramount object the maintenance of the doctrines and religious usages of the people called Methodists, was agreeable to the necessary safeguards in that behalf being imposed;

And whereas doubts had arisen as to whether the desires of the South African Conference, concurred in by the Yearly Conference, could be duly and properly realised and given effect to without legislative sanction in that behalf being obtained from the Parliament of the then Union of South Africa;

And whereas both the Yearly Conference and the South African Conference were agreeable that such legislative sanction be obtained;

And whereas such legislation ensuring the independence aforesaid and providing for incidental matters was duly enacted in terms of the provisions of the Wesleyan Methodist Church (Private) Act, 1927 (Act No. 17 of 1927); And whereas the name of the 'Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa' was altered to that of

‘The Methodist Church of South Africa’ by the Methodist Church of South Africa (Private) Act, 1932 (Act No. 12 of 1932);

And whereas the Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa is the governing authority of the said Church, having and exercising control and jurisdiction over all the property and concerns of, or relating to, the said Church in the Republic of South Africa;

And whereas the Primitive Methodist Connexion was constituted in Great Britain by deed poll dated 5 February 1830, executed by the Reverends Hugh Bourne, James Bourne and William Clowes, which deed was duly enrolled in the High Court of Chancery;

And whereas by the said deed poll there was constituted and set up an Annual Assembly or Conference of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, which said Conference was by the said deed poll made the governing authority of the said Primitive Methodist Connexion, with control and jurisdiction over all the property and concerns of, or relating to, the said Connexion;

And whereas the said Primitive Methodist Connexion had undertaken and carried on as a branch of its activities certain missionary work within the then Union of South Africa, which branch was known as ‘The Primitive Methodist Missions’, the said missions have been governed, controlled and administered by the aforesaid Conference of the Primitive Methodist Connexion functioning through one of its committees known as the Primitive Methodist Missionary Society;

And whereas there was within the said Union certain movable and immovable property held under various forms of trusts, but all essentially for the use and benefit of the said Primitive Methodist Connexion for the purposes of the Primitive Methodist Missions aforesaid;

And whereas the Conference of the Primitive Methodist Connexion decided as from 1 January 1931 to discontinue its control, conduct and administration of the said Primitive Methodist Missions within the Union of South Africa and resolved accordingly;

And whereas the Conference of the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa agreed, as from 1 January 1931, to assume and be responsible for the administration and control of the said missions within the Union, and resolved accordingly;

And whereas the religious doctrines and usage of the Primitive Methodist Connexion are in all substantial respects identical with those of the Methodist Church of South Africa, but the respective internal organisations of the two Churches differ in certain

respects in relation to the constitution, procedure and powers of their respective Conferences and otherwise;

And whereas the Conference of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, in pursuance of its resolution aforesaid in that behalf, has handed over and transferred to the Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa the conduct, control and administration of the said missions;

And whereas in terms of the Methodist Church of South Africa (Private) Act, 1932, provision was made for transferring to, and vesting in, the Methodist Church of South Africa the right, title and interest of the said Primitive Methodist Connexion relating to any property, movable and immovable, within the Republic possessed or utilized for the purposes of the said mission, subject to the trusts and obligations affecting the said property, pursuant to resolutions by the respective Conferences;

And whereas it is desirable that the said Church should possess statutory power and authority to incorporate within itself, or to unite or amalgamate with, any other Church or religious body, or association, or branch thereof, whether existing within or outside the boundaries of the Republic;

And whereas the work and activities of the said Methodist Church of South Africa extend beyond the borders of the Republic into certain neighbouring States;

And whereas the Conference of the said Church, at its Sessions during October 1975, resolved that it is desirable and expedient that the name of the said Church be changed to 'The Methodist Church of Southern Africa';

And whereas it is expedient that the laws relating to the constitution, powers and affairs of the said Methodist Church of South Africa should, with certain amendments and modifications, be embodied in one consolidating measure;

And whereas it is expedient that provision be made also for incidental matters:
BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED by the State President, the Senate and the House of Assembly of the Republic of South Africa, as follows:

REPEAL OF LAWS

1. The Wesleyan Methodist Church (Private) Act, 1927 (Act No. 17 of 1927), and the Methodist Church of South Africa (Private) Act, 1932 (Act No. 12 of 1932), are hereby repealed.

'THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTH AFRICA' TO BECOME 'THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA' AND REFERENCES TO FORMER TO BE DEEMED REFERENCES TO LATTER

2. (1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any law contained, from and after the commencement of this Act the Church, Denomination or Connexion now designated 'The Methodist Church of South Africa' (formerly the 'Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa') shall for all purposes whatsoever become, and be designated by the name of, 'The Methodist Church of Southern Africa' (hereinafter referred to as 'The Church').
- (2) Subject to the provisions of this Act, any appointment or regulation made or action taken or deemed to have been made, taken or done under or by virtue of any provision of any Law repealed by section 1 of this Act, including all resolutions approved by the Conference of The Church, shall be deemed to have been made, taken, done or approved under or by virtue of the corresponding provision of this Act, and shall be as valid as if this Act had not been passed.
- (3) Any reference to the 'Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa' or 'The Methodist Church of South Africa' in any fund, contract, deed, bond, instrument, certificate, debenture, security, receipt, voucher, record, deposit, or other book, document or writing of whatsoever nature established, issued, executed, or made prior to the date of commencement of this Act, shall for all purposes be construed as a reference to 'The Methodist Church of Southern Africa'.

INCORPORATION AND CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF 'THE CHURCH'

3. (1) The Church as originally established and constituted under the laws referred to in the Preamble hereto shall, notwithstanding the repeal of the said laws, continue under the name of 'The Methodist Church of Southern Africa', and shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession.
- (2) The Church shall be capable in law of suing and being sued, and of acquiring, holding and alienating movable and immovable property, and of doing and performing such other acts and things as bodies corporate may lawfully do and perform, subject to the provisions of this Act or any other law.

VESTING IN THE CHURCH OF EXISTING RIGHTS AND LIABILITIES

4. (1) All movable and immovable property of whatsoever kind or nature, including all interests and rights in and to movable and immovable property, and all mortgage bonds, debts, securities and obligations and the benefit of all existing contracts which immediately prior to the date of commencement of this Act were owned or were held by or vested in The Church as formerly constituted and designated, shall at the commencement of this Act continue to vest in and be owned by and be receivable, recoverable and enforceable by The Church as constituted by this Act without the necessity of any transfer, conveyance or other

continuing or connecting title or separate investiture other than this Act, and nothing in this Act shall be deemed to alter or affect the continued corporate existence or the rights or liabilities of The Church.

- (2) All causes and rights of action, suits, references, arbitrations or other proceedings which existed and were in any manner enforceable by or against The Church immediately prior to the commencement of this Act shall be and remain as good, valid and effectual by or for or against The Church as they might or would have been by or for or against The Church if this Act had not been passed.
- (3) All debts, liabilities and obligations of whatsoever kind incurred or undertaken by The Church or by the officers thereof or by any other person in the name and on behalf of The Church and valid and subsisting against The Church immediately prior to the commencement of this Act, shall be and are hereby declared to be valid and subsisting against The Church as if the said debts, liabilities and obligations had been incurred or undertaken by The Church under this Act, and any person entitled to any right, claim, demand, or other relief against The Church immediately prior to the commencement of this Act shall continue to be so entitled.

OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES TO CONTINUE IN OFFICE

5. All officers and employees of The Church who were in office or in the employ of The Church immediately prior to the commencement of this Act, shall continue to hold and enjoy their respective offices and employment as officers and employees of The Church, and shall be subject to the like terms, conditions, obligations and penalties and to the like powers of removal, and to the like rules, restrictions, and regulations in all respects as if they had been appointed under this Act and had been and were at all times officers and employees of The Church.

INDEPENDENCE OF SOUTH AFRICAN CONFERENCE OF METHODISTS, AND ITS AREA OF JURISDICTION

6. The South African Conference of the people called Methodists, otherwise known as the Conference of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, is hereby declared to be an independent body and the governing authority in and for Southern Africa of The Methodist Church of South Africa (consisting of the people called Methodists from time to time within Southern Africa), with full jurisdiction over all the Methodist Ministers, preachers on trial, Churches and missions within the said area.

ALTERATION OF CONSTITUTION OF SOUTH AFRICAN CONFERENCE, AND POWER TO MAKE RULES AND REGULATIONS

7. Subject to the provisions of this Act, the said South African Conference shall have power to alter its constitution, to make rules and regulations for the good

government of The Church and for the due and proper exercise of its jurisdiction aforesaid, and to do all such acts, matters and things as are expedient and necessary for the maintenance, advancement and benefit of the said Church and its objects, and the constitution, rules, procedure and organisation of the said South African Conference and the said Church shall, except where in conflict with the provisions of this Act, remain of force and effect until altered in pursuance of the powers hereinbefore conferred to the extent to which they are from time to time unaffected by such alteration.

VESTING OF CHURCH PROPERTY IN PRESIDENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN CONFERENCE

8. All the movable and immovable property at present administered, controlled and dealt with by or under the control or direction of the said South African Conference for the use and benefit of The Church shall, upon the commencement of this Act, vest, without payment of transfer or stamp duty, in the President of the said South African Conference from time to time for the benefit of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, but subject always to any existing charge, obligation, or special trust upon or over such property or otherwise lawfully affecting the same, in trust for such of its uses and purposes as the said South African Conference may from time to time appoint, and in trust to exercise such acts of full ownership of any kind there over and to allow the same to be managed and administered by such representatives or officials of the said Church, lay or otherwise, as the said South African Conference may from time to time by resolution prescribe.

SAVING

9. Nothing in this Act contained shall affect any person who is entitled to a vested or accruing right to any pension, gratuity or like payment or advantage from any fund administered or controlled by the South African Conference at the date of commencement of this Act.

METHODIST DOCTRINES AND USAGES SAFEGUARDED

10. Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, the South African Conference, as the governing authority within its area of jurisdiction of The Church shall at no time be entitled to do, perform, suffer or permit any act, matter or thing which is repugnant to the doctrines and religious usages of the people called Methodists.

POWER TO UNITE OR AMALGAMATE WITH ANOTHER CHURCH

11. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any law contained, The Church may from time to time, in pursuance of a resolution of the Conference, incorporate within itself, or unite or amalgamate with, any other church or religious body or association or organisation or branch thereof, whether the same shall be within or outside the borders of the Republic:

Provided that

- (a) any such incorporation, union or amalgamation shall be upon such terms and conditions as the said Conference of The Church may by resolution decide;
- (b) nothing in this Act or in any other law contained shall be deemed to curtail or restrict the power and capacity of The Church (whether with or without making any such incorporation, union or amalgamation) to extend its organisation or to carry on work beyond the borders of the Republic;
- (c) nothing in this Act contained shall be deemed in any manner whatsoever to alter, amend or vary, or to authorise or empower any provision contained in any deed or other document governing or relating to any place of worship or school vested in or administered or controlled by The Church, insofar as any such provision defines or relates to the doctrinal standards required by that deed or other document to be maintained or observed at, or in respect of, any such place of worship or school.

SHORT TITLE

12. This Act shall be called the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (Private) Act, 1978.

APPENDIX 2

RESOLUTION ON PASTORAL WORK

OUR FAMILIES AND OURSELVES

We, on this solemn occasion, devote ourselves afresh to God (1820, p. 147); and resolve, in humble dependence on His grace, to be more than ever attentive to personal religion, and to the Christian instruction and government of our families. And we further resolve (1848, p. 108) to cultivate more fully the spirit of Christian Pastors, so that all our intercourse with our people may be to edification; and as ‘overseers of the flock’, to give ourselves to the work of ‘warning everyone, and teaching everyone in all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ Jesus’. And in order to do this (1820, p. 147), let us frequently read and carefully study Mr Wesley’s Twelve Rules of a Helper, and other parts of the Large Minutes that relate to the duties of a Preacher and Pastor.

Let us daily consecrate ourselves fully and entirely to our proper work as the servants of Christ and of His Church, giving ourselves wholly to it, both in public and private. Let us strictly guard against all occupations of our time and thoughts which have no direct relation to our great calling, and which would injuriously divert our attention from the momentous task of ‘saving them that hear us’, and ‘taking care of the Church of God’ (1820, p. 147).

Let us afresh, solemnly and heartily, recognise the original purpose of Methodism ‘to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land’, and ever regard this as the first and great calling of the Methodist people, and especially of the Preachers. And let us determine, in the name of God, that this idea shall rule our whole life, and that every pursuit and design shall be subordinated to this our high and special calling (1835, p. 551).

THE STUDY

Let us humbly and earnestly seek a more complete preparation for the great work of the ministry, and especially that richer ‘unction of the Holy One’ which is vouchsafed only to those who live near to God. This anointing for our office would yield what most of all we ourselves need and desire: a large increase of ardent piety and of vigorous faith, holy importunity in prayer, and irresistible persuasiveness in preaching (1848, p. 108).

Let us ‘covet earnestly the best gifts’ to qualify us for an effective and useful ministry, and let us seek them in fervent prayer to Him who is the Father of lights and the

fountain of wisdom. Let us meanwhile ‘stir up the gift of God which is in us’, and improve our talents by close study and diligent cultivation; and especially let all of us ‘study to show’ ourselves ‘approved unto God, workers that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth’. Let us take care that, whatever other qualifications we may acquire and use, our ministry shall at least be always marked by sound, evangelical doctrine, by plainness of speech, and by a spirit of tender affection and burning zeal (1820, p. 127).

THE PULPIT

Let us preach constantly the leading and vital doctrines of the Gospel: repentance toward God; a present, free and full salvation from sin (1820, p. 147) – a salvation flowing from the grace of God alone, ‘through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus’, and apprehended by the simple exercise of faith; a salvation which begins with the forgiveness of sins (this forgiveness being certified to the penitent believer by the Holy Spirit) and (by means of this witness, but by the power of that Divine Spirit who bears the witness) a change of heart; a salvation which is itself the only entrance to a course of practical holiness (1821, p. 250).

And let us preach these cardinal doctrines in our primitive method, evangelically and experimentally, with apostolical earnestness and zeal, and with great simplicity. Let us ‘labour in the word and doctrine’; applying our discourses closely and lovingly to the various classes of our hearers, and ‘by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God’ (1820, p.147).

Remembering that the prominence which is properly given in the Methodist pulpit to the doctrine of present salvation is ever liable to antinomian abuses, let us diligently and evangelically preach the precepts as well as the privileges of the Gospel, expounding them carefully and applying them faithfully (1835, p. 552).

Let us build up our people in knowledge and holiness; urging them to fidelity in family duties, and especially in the godly training up of their children; and in general to ‘follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another’ (1835, p. 552).

In every place let us speak plainly and pointedly on the duty and the advantage of Christian communion, and exhort all who are seeking salvation to avail themselves, without delay, of the help of our more private means of grace (1820, p. 148).

In particular, let us urge upon all our people a conscientious and frequent observance of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; expounding its nature, instructing the young and reasoning with the timid and the doubting, and setting forth the duty and blessedness of ‘showing the Lord’s death till He come’ (1820, p. 150).

SOCIETY MEETINGS

Being fully persuaded that the regular and frequent meeting of our Societies is of vital importance to the prosperity and perpetuation of the work of God amongst our people, let us meet the principal Societies regularly on the Lord's Day, and frequently on the week evenings in country places (1836, p. 86). And let us make such meetings interesting and profitable to our Members by information as to the state of the work of God in the Circuit generally; by reference to the special circumstances of the Society then present; and by explaining our own rules and 'putting the members in remembrance' of their specific duties, both personal and domestic (1820, p. 149). And from time to time let us exhort our Members, in the event of their removing into other Circuits, to secure a Note of Removal, and to seek immediate connexion with the Society in the place whither they go to reside (1848, p. 108).

And inasmuch as religion in our Societies depends largely upon the cultivation amongst us of family religion, let us earnestly press upon our people the regular and devout observance of family worship, accompanied by the reading of Holy Scripture. And in order to a due discharge of this most important domestic duty, a suitable and sufficient portion of time should be conscientiously set apart in the morning and evening of each day, when the attendance of all the members of the household, servants included, should be arranged for and required (1821, p. 250).

Let us also at such Meetings earnestly exhort our Societies to make the best and most religious use of the rest and leisure of the Lord's Day (1820, p. 150). Let us urge upon our members to sanctify the Lord's Day, not only personally, but in their families, by 'commanding their children and their households to keep the way of worship of Almighty God, both morning and evening, and by arranging that, in their families, as few persons as possible are kept at home' (1821, p. 250).

And let us show to our people the evil of wasting, in visits or in receiving company, those hours of the holy Day which are not spent in public worship; and that such a practice tends to a neglect of private prayer, of the study of the Scriptures, and of the religious instruction of children, and also to the spiritual injury of domestic servants, who are thereby needlessly kept at work on the day of rest, and deprived of the public means of grace (1820, p. 150).

And, lastly, let us guard our people against the danger of expending all their time and energy on local and subordinate enterprises and works of charity, to the neglect of the public preaching of the Gospel, the weekly meeting for prayer and intercession, and the class meeting. Let us show them that, by a wise economy of time, they may 'fulfil their course' of benevolent activities without robbing God of the public worship which He demands. And on this question let us, as occasion serves, remind our members that, under the divine blessing, the prosperity of the spiritual work of God depends upon the regular and conscientious use of His institutions, for it is

through the means that we reach the end; and our own history shows, in the success of the spiritual work of God, all other good undertakings among us had their origin, and have ever had their principal support. ‘These ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone’ (1820, p. 151).

LEADERS’ MEETINGS

Let us regularly meet the class-leaders both in town and country (1820, p. 149); and at each Leaders’ Meeting let us carefully examine the entries made in the class-books relative to the attendance of the Members (1826, p. 168) in order that prompt and practical measures may be taken in cases which, on enquiry, shall be found to demand the exercise of discipline, ‘the word of exhortation’, or kindly counsel and Christian sympathy.

From the beginning, Leaders’ Meetings have been found essential to the pastoral care and spiritual prosperity of our Societies (1826, p. 168), and also to the orderly transaction of their financial concerns. Where Leaders’ Meetings are frequently held, the work of the Leaders is done more perfectly. And by a minute examination of the class books, in the presence of the Leaders, we learn who are sick, the careless, or the lukewarm (1820, p. 149); and then, in making pastoral visits, we are prepared to go, ‘not only to those who want us, but to those who want us most’. Let us therefore see to it that Leaders’ Meetings are held regularly, and as often as practicable, not only in the towns in which Ministers reside, but also in the principal country places (1820, p. 168).

As much depends, under the blessing of God, on the piety, zeal, and devotion, the Scriptural knowledge and Christian temper of our Leaders, and also on their intelligent and hearty approval of the Doctrines and Discipline of Methodism, let us, before nominating a new Leader, satisfy ourselves, by previous enquiry and personal examination, as to the character and qualifications of the person proposed (1820, p. 149).

Whenever a new Leader, nominated by us and accepted by the Leaders’ Meeting, is first introduced to the meeting, let us take that opportunity of stating the duties that belong to the office (1820, p. 150). And in particular, let us urge upon our Leaders the vital importance of seeing or communicating with each of their Members once a week (1820, p. 150).

Let us promote in every place the observance of those parts of our Discipline that refer to watch-nights, private and public bands, and quarterly fast days (1820, p. 149).

PASTORAL VISITATION

We recognise the absolute obligation which is laid upon us and which was solemnly acknowledged at the time we received ordination to secure, by mutual consultation and arrangement, such a general, stated, and efficient visitation of our people at their

own dwellings as is involved in the scriptural command to ‘feed the Church of God’, and in the example of St Paul, who ‘taught’ the people ‘publicly, and from house to house’; and also in those other Scriptures which, in varied language, represent Christian Ministers as the under-shepherds of the flock of God, Jesus Christ Himself being the ‘chief shepherd’ (1847, p. 548).

We are persuaded that the unity and edification of our Societies and the good feeling of our people generally would be promoted by increased pastoral intercourse with them at their own homes (1835, p. 552). And, in the present day, the perilous exposure of our Members to the manifold fascinations of worldliness demands unremitting diligence on our part (1847, p. 549); and especially that, in connection with our pastoral visits, there should be, whenever practicable, the reading of a suitable portion of holy Scripture and prayer (1847, p. 550).

We do not forget that the cares and labours both spiritual and economical, which devolve upon Ministers, and in particular upon Superintendents are steadily increasing (1847, p. 549); but at the same time the proportion of Ministers to Members is also increasing. And we are convinced that, by a wise economy of time, by energy and perseverance, and especially by system and method, much more pastoral visitation may be accomplished.

We therefore resolve to give ourselves afresh and more fully to this part of our work (1830, p. 612); and we agree to devote regularly certain portions of our time for the purpose of visiting the Members of our Societies ‘from house to house’. And we will strive to make our visits profitable to the people by kindly enquiry into their Christian experience, by giving seasonable counsel, and by exhorting them to a faithful and loving observance of all the duties of personal and family religion (1821, p. 249).

In particular, let us care for the aged, the infirm, the sick, and the poor (1835, p. 552); let us keep watch over the lukewarm and the careless; and let us pay special attention to backsliders. ‘In the Spirit of meekness’, and in much patience, let us endeavour to ‘restore’ them that have been ‘overtaken in a fault’, and seek by private efforts, as well as by our public ministration, to recover the fallen ‘out of the snare of the devil’ (1820, p. 150). And lastly, when we go to our country appointments on week evenings, let us secure time, before the public service, for the pastoral visitation of village Methodists (1847, p. 557).

OVERSIGHT OF THE YOUNG

In order that the work of God may be perpetuated among us, let us, in public and in private, pay particular spiritual attention to the young people of our Societies and congregations (1820, p. 149). Let us frequently and affectionately speak to them on their peculiar dangers and duties, and seek to enlist their sympathy with our Doctrines and Discipline; and that they ‘may be delivered from this present

evil world, according to the will of God', let us strive to lead them to an earnest consecration of themselves to the service of Christ and His Church (1827, p. 281).

And to secure increased facilities for such ministrations, let us, wherever practicable, make arrangements for obtaining pastoral access, at stated times, to the young persons of Methodist families between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, with a view to promote their spiritual welfare by personal instruction, exhortation, appeal, and prayer (1845, p. 242).

CARE FOR THE CHILDREN

We are convinced of the obligation which rests on all Christian Pastors to feed and take oversight of the lambs, as well as of the sheep, of the flock of Christ (1847, p. 546); and we agree to hold, wherever practicable, weekly meetings with the children of our people (1875, p. 711).

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

Let us afford to our Sunday Schools all possible encouragement and aid; by attending their Committee and Teachers' Meetings; by visiting the principal schools at least once in every quarter; and by giving as occasion serves, advice and counsel to the officers and teachers (1826, p. 170).

CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION

Let us recommend, both in Sunday Schools and in the families of our people, the practice of catechetical instruction, in order that 'being rooted and grounded' in 'those things which are most surely believed among us', our children may in after years 'hold fast the form of sound words'. And let us commend everywhere our own Catechisms (1820, p. 150).

COTTAGE PRAYER MEETINGS

Let us encourage prayer-meetings in the houses of our friends at such times as will not interfere with attendance at our chapels and other preaching places; for when prudently conducted by persons of established piety and competent gifts, and duly superintended by the Ministers and the Leaders' Meetings, such services are productive of much good among the poor, and have often proved the means of grace and salvation to many who could not, at first, have been reached in any other way (1820, p. 148).

COTTAGE PREACHING

In populous neighbourhoods where there is a general neglect of the means of grace already established, let us preach in private houses, especially in the cottages of the poor; that so we may gain access to 'them that are without', and, by the divine blessing, bring them under concern for salvation, and win them over to attendance on public worship in the house of God (1821, p. 249).

FORMING NEW CLASSES

In our old and large Societies especially, let us from time to time appoint new Leaders, active and zealous men and women, ‘of honest report, and full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom’, and encourage them to form new Classes in suitable neighbourhoods; and let us seek thus to gather into the fold of Christ those persons who, it may be, live at a distance from any chapel, yet are ‘not far from the kingdom of God’, but who need special invitation, and are not likely to ‘give themselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God’, without more than ordinary enterprise and spiritual attention (1820, p. 148).

VISITATION OF VILLAGES

In country places, where it is not possible at present to appoint Preachers regularly, let suitable persons attend, under the direction of the Superintendent, for the purpose of public prayer and exhortation, and occasionally to read to the congregation a short and plain sermon, until such places can be supplied regularly with Local Preachers (1820, p. 148). And let us conscientiously care for and watch over the country places already on the Plan (1820, p. 147).

OPENING NEW PLACES

In every Circuit, let us try to open new places, and let us try again places that have not been recently visited; and let us not be satisfied until every town, village and hamlet shall be blessed, so far as we can accomplish it, with the means of grace and salvation. And with a view to a revival and extension of the work of God, let us have recourse, even in our old established Circuits, to the practice of preaching out of doors; seeking, in order to save, that which is lost (1820, p. 147).

EXTENSION OF METHODISM

In a word, let all of us consider ourselves called to be, in point of enterprise, zeal, and diligence, Home Missionaries; and to enlarge and extend, as well as keep, the Circuits to which we are appointed (1820, p. 148).

OFFICIAL MEETINGS

In conducting Quarterly Meetings and all other official meetings, let us steadily discourage the spirit of strife and debate, and firmly disallow the introduction of all topics of irritating discussion not legitimately arising out of the proper business of the meeting. Let us remember that the only way to live in peace is to walk by rule; and in the administration of all our affairs, in the Society and in the Circuit, let us cultivate the spirit and exhibit the manner of those who are acting for God in the Service of His Church (1820, p. 150).

PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY

Whilst we readily and cheerfully protect our office-bearers and Members, in meetings over which we preside, in the exercise of such functions as belong to them, according

to our Laws and Usage, let us not forget that we are under obligation to act on such occasions, not merely as those who preside at public meetings but also as the Pastors of Christian Societies; who, by the ordinance of God, and by their own voluntary association with us, are 'put in trust with' the Scriptural oversight of their spiritual affairs and are directly responsible to the great Head of the Church for the discreet and faithful discharge of the duties of that 'trust' (1820, p. 151).

CATHOLICITY

Let us ourselves remember, and from time to time impress upon our people, that we, as a Connexion, do not exist for the purpose of party (1820, p. 148). If at any time we are tempted to 'entangle ourselves with affairs' which are foreign to the exclusive calling of Methodist Ministers, let us resolve, in dependence upon the grace of God, to keep aloof from all merely party purposes, and from party spirit (1835, p. 552). By the example of our Founder, by the original principle on which our Societies are formed, and by our professions before the world, we are bound to beware of a sectarian spirit, to avoid the appearance of bigotry, and to abstain from disputes on minor subjects of theological controversy (1820, p. 148). In our occasional intercourse with the Ministers and Members of other churches, 'let all of us please our neighbours, for their good, to edification'; and towards all denominations of Christians 'holding the Head'. Let us maintain the kind and catholic spirit of primitive Methodism, and ever show ourselves 'the friends of all, the enemies of none'.

CONCLUSION

And being deeply sensible that, in order to the revival and extension of the work of God, the great thing to be desired is an abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit on ourselves and our families, our Societies and our congregations, we solemnly agree to seek that blessing by humble and earnest prayer (1820, p. 152), in our private supplications, in our family devotions, and in the pulpit; and we desire to 'continue with one accord in prayer and supplication until the Spirit be poured on us from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest' (1822, p. 338).

QUARTERLY VISITATIONS

Believing that, next to the public 'ministry of the word', the Quarterly Visitation of the Classes is our most important official work; and remembering that to those of our Members who are not accessible for visitation at their own homes, the visitation of the Classes is probably their only opportunity of direct intercourse with their Ministers, let us be careful each quarter to meet personally every Class, never sending the tickets to the Leader (1847, p. 550).

And in making the ticket plan, let us so arrange the visitation as not to crowd too many Classes together; but rather, by beginning the work early in the quarter, allow sufficient time in meeting each Class for a careful examination of the Members as to

their Christian religion, experience and practice, and for enquiry as to family religion; and also for suitable pastoral advice, encouragement or admonition, for 'consolation in Christ', for 'comfort of love', for 'fellowship of the spirit' (1821, p. 250).

And in connection with the visitation of the Classes, let us on the one hand enquire particularly into the experience and habits of those whom we find 'On Trial', and receive into Society those only who, after probation, may fairly be 'counted worthy'. And on the other hand (1847, p. 550) let us not, upon slight grounds, return any person as having 'ceased to meet', but before writing off such a one, let us enquire particularly into the case; and, wherever practicable, let us ourselves visit the person; and thus, 'by all means save some' of the many who 'forsake the assembling of themselves together'.

APPENDIX 3

RULES OF A HELPER

1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time, or spend more time at any place than is strictly necessary.
2. Be serious. Let your motto be 'Holiness to the Lord'. Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talking.
3. Be guarded in your conversation and friendships lest you be led into temptation.
4. Take no step towards marriage without solemn prayer to God, and consulting your colleagues.
5. Believe evil of no one unless fully proved; take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction you can on everything. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side.
6. Speak evil of no one else your word, especially, would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast till you come to the person concerned.
7. Tell everyone what you think wrong in them, lovingly and plainly and as soon as may be else it will fester in your own heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.
8. Do not pretend to be of high station. A Preacher of the Gospel is the servant of all.
9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin, no, not of cleaning your own shoes when necessary.
10. Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time. And do not mend our Rules but keep them, and that for conscience' sake.
11. You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always not only to those who want you but to those who want you most.
12. Act in all things not according to your own will but as a child in the Gospel and in union with your colleagues.

As such it is your part to employ your time as our Rules direct, partly in preaching and visiting from house to house, partly in reading, meditation and prayer. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord's vineyard it is needful that you should do that part of the work which the Conference shall advise at those times and places which they shall judge most for His glory.

Observe: it is not your business to preach so many times and to take care merely of this or that Society but to save as many souls as you can, to bring as many sinners

as you possibly can to repentance and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord.

And remember, a Methodist Preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist Discipline. Therefore you will need all the grace and all the sense you have and to have all your wits about you.

APPENDIX 4

RULES OF DEBATE

Much of the business in the courts of the Church is conducted in the form of Conversation. Therefore the Rules of Debate should be applied only when necessary, and then in such a way as not to impair the spirit of the meeting. The following Rules of Debate, while primarily of application to Conference, may be applied to all formal Church meetings.

1. Any Member wishing to address Conference shall rise and address the Presiding Bishop, and shall not proceed until called on.
2. All speeches shall be directed to the Presiding Bishop.
3. No Member shall remain standing during a discussion except the Member recognised by the Presiding Bishop.
4. No Member shall speak more than once on the same matter without the leave of Conference, except that the proposer of a resolution has the right to speak last in reply to the debate. The seconder of a motion may either speak in support when seconding or reserve the right to speak later. The proposer and seconder of an amendment have no right of reply.
5. The Presiding Bishop shall rule out of order any Member who violates the rules of debate or the regulations of Conference.
6. Where the formal business is not conducted by answer to Questions, it proceeds by way of proposing or moving a resolution which is then seconded, debated and voted upon. Only one motion shall be before Conference at a time.
7. No major matter may be brought before a Church meeting unless due notice has been given to the Members by including it in the notice of the meeting. In Synod or Conference notice of motion shall be given at the commencement of the meeting or, if the meeting agrees, one day's notice shall be required. Notice is not required for matters introduced by any Department or Committee when dealing with its business. Where there are several notices of motion dealing with the same subject, Synod or Conference may draw them together in a single motion which seeks to capture the spirit of all the notices of motion.
8. No proposal shall be considered which is in conflict with an existing regulation or previous decision unless the existing regulation or previous decision is first considered and amended or rescinded.
9. Once a resolution has been moved and seconded it shall not be withdrawn without the consent of Conference.

10. The report of a Committee is received without motion but its adoption shall be moved and seconded.
11. During the debate, any Member may move an amendment to the motion. The amendment should not simply be a negative of the motion. When an amendment has been proposed and seconded, debate on the substantive motion ceases in favour of debate on the amended motion. The Presiding Bishop should ensure that Conference understands the entire motion, as amended, before debate on the amended motion begins.
12. The Presiding Bishop should not allow more than one amendment to be before Conference at a time.
13. If the amended motion is not agreed to by Conference, debate resumes on the original motion. If the amended motion is agreed to by Conference it becomes the substantive motion and may be further amended. If there is no further amendment or debate the amended motion, which is now the substantive motion, is voted on (again).
14. A Member may ask a question at the conclusion of any speech, thereby interrupting the proceedings.
15. A Member may interrupt the proceedings at any time by raising a Point of Order, which means that the Member believes that the rules of debate or the regulations of Conference have been violated. The Member who was addressing Conference shall be seated until the Presiding Bishop has decided the Point of Order.
- 16.. At any time between speeches, a Member may propose closure of the debate. This shall be put to Conference without debate and if it is carried by a majority of two-thirds the Presiding Bishop shall allow the Member to speak who has the right of reply and shall then immediately put the motion to Conference.
17. At any point between speeches, a Member may propose that 'the motion be not put'. If this is carried by Conference, with or without debate, the motion or amendment before Conference cannot be put and Conference proceeds to the next item of business.
18. The Presiding Bishop may decide when to close the debate, and unless Conference decides otherwise the vote shall then be taken. At the close of the debate (and after the proposer has had the right of reply) the motion or the motion as amended shall be read to Conference and the vote taken. No one should thereafter speak on the motion.
19. Voting may be by voice, show of hands, or ballot. If, after a vote by voice, the Presiding Bishop declares the result and no one challenges the decision then the result becomes final.
20. Members may abstain from voting but should do so only for good reason and not simply to avoid the duty to make a decision.
21. Reports submitted to Conference may be adopted if Conference approves them, or received if Conference wishes to include them in its records without approving or rejecting them, or merely noted when no further action is taken.

22. The proposer of a resolution or, where it is amended, the proposer of an amendment, should reduce the resolution to writing and submit it to the Secretary.
23. Conference may appoint Committees to deal with matters brought before it. Conference should decide the members of the Committee, its convener, powers of co-option if any, terms of reference and power to act. Committees shall report as required by Conference.
24. When an election is made, except where otherwise provided, each nominee should be nominated and seconded before the next nomination is taken. Before voting takes place the Presiding Bishop should announce the position to be filled, the names of the persons nominated and the number of votes each Member has (when more than one position has to be filled from the same list of nominations). After the vote the Presiding Bishop shall announce the result.
25. Unless otherwise specified, a quorum for any meeting is one more than half the Members. Decisions taken at a meeting when no quorum is present could be set aside if challenged in a court of law.
26. Conference may resolve 'to meet in Committee' whereupon only members of Conference may be present. Conference shall resume after adoption of the motion that 'Conference now resumes, and the acts and decisions of Conference in committee be the acts and decisions of Conference'.

APPENDIX 5

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR SYNODS

ORDER OF OPENING

Devotions

Calling of the Roll

Appointment of Assistant Secretary

Appointment of Precentor

Appointment of Scrutineers

Appointment of Letter Writer

Appointment of Reporters

Presentation of all Necessary Papers

Resolution of the Hours of Session

Notices of Motion

1. MISSION

- 1.1 What measures can we adopt for the increase of Spiritual religion in our Circuits and Societies with special reference to:
 - 1.1.1 deepening the spirituality of our members;
 - 1.1.2 planning for mission and growth;
 - 1.1.3 involvement of our lay people;
 - 1.1.4 empowerment of the laity in church leadership;
 - 1.1.5 effective expression of our life as a Church which is one and undivided?
- 1.2 What is the report of the year's work in each Circuit?
- 1.3 What are the returns of Church membership from the Circuits?
- 1.4 Whom do we appoint Representatives to the Bible Society of South Africa or another Member State?
- 1.5 What is the report and what are the recommendations of the District Executive?
- 1.6 What recommendations do we make and what mandate do we give to the District Executive for the extension of our work in the District?
- 1.7 Whom do we appoint to be members of the District Executive and of the other Committee(s) of the District?
- 1.8 What is the report on Youth work in the District?
 - 1.8.1 What recommendations do we receive from or remit to the Youth Synod?

- 1.9 What is the report on Women's work in the District?
- 1.10 What is the report on Men's work in the District?
- 1.11 What is the report of the Church Choir Music Association?
- 1.12 What is the audited financial report of each organisation?
- 1.13 What is the report of the branch of the Christian Connexion Resource Centre in the District (or Methodist Publishing House)?
- 1.14 What Assessment on the Circuits do we propose for the Units for the ensuing year?
- 1.15 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?
- 1.16 What is the judgement of Synod on the state of the work of God in this District?

2. **EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY AND MISSION UNIT**

- 2.1 What is the report of the Training for Ordained Ministries Section of this Unit?
- 2.2 What is the report of the Training for Lay Ministries Section of this Unit?
- 2.3 What is the audited financial statement of this Unit?
- 2.4 What recommendations do we make to this Unit for the extension of our work in the District?
- 2.5 Whom do we appoint Supervisor of Studies in the District?
- 2.6 What is the report of any Seminary in the District?
- 2.7 What is the report of Synod concerning each Candidate for Ordination?
 - 2.7.1 Report on Written Examinations
 - 2.7.2 Report on Oral Examinations
 - 2.7.3 Report on Trial Services
 - 2.7.4 Report of District Supervisor of Studies
 - 2.7.5 Report and recommendation of Superintendent
- 2.8 What Ministers do we recommend for admission into Full Connexion with Conference?
- 2.9 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?
- 2.10 What is the report of Synod concerning the examination of Probationers in the District?
 - 2.10.1 Report on Written Examinations
 - 2.10.2 Report on Oral Examinations
 - 2.10.3 Report on Trial Services
 - 2.10.4 Report of District Supervisor of Studies
 - 2.10.5 Report and recommendation of Superintendent
- 2.11 Whom do we recommend to be continued on Probation for our Ministry?

- 2.12 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?
- 2.13 What Candidates for our Ministry do we recommend to the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit?

3. **ORDERS**

- 3.1 Order of Deacons
 - 3.1.1 What Candidates for the Order of Deacons do we recommend to the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit?
- 3.2 Order of Evangelism
 - 3.2.1 Has the question on Discipline been satisfactorily answered in the Local Preacher's Meeting by all Evangelists?
 - 3.2.2 What Evangelists and Biblewomen have retired since last Synod?
 - 3.2.3 What Evangelists and Biblewomen have died since last Synod?
 - 3.2.4 Whom do we recommend as Candidates on Probation for the Order?
 - 3.2.5 Whom do we accept as full members of the Order?

4. **LOCAL PREACHERS**

- 4.1 What is the report on the state of Local Preaching in this District?
- 4.2 Has any Local Preacher in this District died?
- 4.3 Does any Local Preacher qualify for a Long-service Certificate?
- 4.4 What Assessment on the Circuits do we propose for this Unit for the ensuing year?
- 4.5 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?
- 4.6 Whom do we appoint as member of the Committee?

5. **THE ORDAINED MINISTRY**

- 5.1 How can we care for our Ministers and their families?
- 5.2 How can we free our Ministers to exercise their calling to preach, teach and give spiritual guidance?
- 5.3 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive or Conference?
- 5.4 Is there any objection to any Minister or Probationer?
 - 5.4.1 Is there any objection to their moral and religious character?
 - 5.4.2 Do you believe and teach sound Christian Doctrine as held by the Methodist Church?
 - 5.4.3 Do you duly observe and enforce our discipline?
 - 5.4.4 Have they competent abilities for our work?
 - 5.4.5 Before any objection may be raised against the name of a minister in terms of para 5.4 the following shall apply:
 - (a) the objector has informed the minister before-hand in the presence of a witness of the nature of the objection;

- (b) the objector has appraised the Bishop before-hand of the intention and nature of the objection;
 - (c) At no stage may these questions be used to humiliate any minister of the Church. Any person who misuses this procedure in a manner which vilifies any other person may be charged.
- 5.4.6 Does Synod recommend that any Minister or Probationer Minister ceases to be recognised by the Connexional Executive?

Communications Unit:

- 5.4.7 What is the report on the Communications Unit in the District?
- 5.4.7.1 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive or Conference?

6. GENERAL

The questions under this heading should, where possible, be dealt with by the District Executive for report to Synod.

Circuit and District Boundaries and Stationing Ministers:

- 6.1 Do we recommend any alteration in the District boundaries?
- 6.2 Do we authorise and record any alteration in the boundaries of existing Circuits?
- 6.3 Do we authorise the division of any Circuit or the amalgamation of any Circuits?
- 6.4 Do we authorise the change of a Circuit name?
- 6.5 Do we approve and record any new stations?
- 6.6 Do we recommend to the Stationing Committee the appointment of an additional Minister or Probationer to any Circuit?
- 6.7 Do we recommend reducing the number of Ministers or Probationers in any Circuit?
- 6.8 What is the Draft of Stations of the Ministers of this District which we recommend to the Stationing Committee?

Special Institutions:

- 6.9 What are the reports relating to:
 - 6.9.1 Children's Homes in the District?
 - 6.9.2 Homes for the Aged in the District?
 - 6.9.3 Methodist Schools?
 - 6.9.4 Other caring Institutions?

Ministers:

- 6.10 What are the names and dates-of-birth of Ministers' children born during the year?

- 6.11 What Supernumeraries and Ministers' surviving spouses reside in the District? Have any removed, married, or died during the year?
- 6.12 Does Synod recommend that any Minister now becomes a Supernumerary?
- 6.13 What Ministers have married since the previous Synod?
- 6.14 Has any Minister died since the previous Synod?
- 6.15 What Ministers without Circuit appointment are resident in this District?
- 6.16 What are the reports on the work of seconded Ministers?

Finance:

- 6.17 What is the audited financial report of the District?
- 6.18 What is the audited financial report of the respective Circuits and Institutions for the past year?
- 6.19 What is the amount of the contribution from each Circuit to the Mission and Extension Fund?
- 6.20 What grants from the Mission and Extension Fund does Synod make to the Circuits and Institutions?
- 6.21 Whom do we appoint the District Treasurer of the Mission and Extension Fund for the ensuing year?
- 6.22 What are the amounts contributed by the Circuits to the Ministerial Students' Fund for the past year?
- 6.23 Whom do we appoint the District Treasurer of the Ministerial Students' Fund for the ensuing year?
- 6.24 What bequests have been received?
- 6.25 What special Funds are administered by Synod and what is the report concerning them?
- 6.26 Whom do we appoint District Treasurer?

Trust Property:

- 6.27 What is the report and what are the suggestions of the Trust Properties Committee as to the condition of Connexional Property in the District?
- 6.28 What defects are there in title to or tenure of Connexional Property?
- 6.29 What Connexional Property has been acquired by purchase, grant or donation, and what property has been leased during the year?
- 6.30 What Connexional Property has been sold, mortgaged or let during the year?
- 6.31 What erection, enlargement, renovation, purchase, lease, sale or mortgage of Connexional Property has been approved during the year? What are the main points of each scheme?
- 6.32 What Churches, school-rooms, dwelling houses or other buildings have been erected or renovated during the year?
- 6.33 What renewals of permission have been granted during the year?

- 6.34 Is all Connexional Property adequately insured through the Connexional Office?
- 6.35 What joint trusts have been established or dissolved during the year and were our regulations observed in each case?
- 6.36 What is the Report on Glebes in this District?
- 6.37 What residences for Supernumerary Ministers are in the District?
- 6.38 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive in regard to Connexional Property?
- 6.39 Whom do we appoint Secretary and members of the District Trust Properties Committee?

7. ELECTIONS

- 7.1 What Minister do we elect Bishop, to take office after the end of next year?
- 7.2 What Minister do we elect Vice-Chairman for a term of three years?
- 7.3 What Minister do we appoint District Secretary for a term of three years?
- 7.4 Whom do we appoint Statistical Secretary of the District for a three (3) year term?
- 7.5 Whom do we appoint as District Lay Leader for a term of three (3) years?
- 7.6 Whom do we appoint as District Discipline Registrar and as members and Convener of the District Disciplinary Committee?
- 7.7 Whom do we appoint as Convener and members of the Mediation panel?
- 7.8 Whom do we elect as the District Finance Committee?
- 7.9 Whom do we elect Representatives, and Alternates of this District, to the ensuing Conference?

8. MISCELLANEOUS

- 8.1 What reports does the Connexional Executive or Conference require from Synod?
- 8.2 What matters are referred by the Connexional Executive or Conference to Synod? What is our judgement thereon?
- 8.3 What is our report concerning the suggestions and recommendations of the Quarterly Meetings on the subjects remitted to them by the Connexional Executive or Conference?
- 8.4 What New Legislation, adopted by the Conference is now submitted to Synod? What is our judgement thereon?
- 8.5 What other miscellaneous resolutions do we adopt?
- 8.6 When and where shall the next Synod be held?

9. CLOSING CEREMONIES

- 9.1 What are our resolutions arising from the customary reading of the 'Twelve Rules of a Helper' (App 3)

ORDER OF CLOSING**Thanks****Confirmation of Minutes****Hymn****Prayer****Benediction**

APPENDIX 6

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR YOUTH SYNODS

Devotions

Calling of the Roll

Appointment of Recording Secretary, Precentor, Scrutineers and Letter Writer Notices of Motion

1. MISSION

- 1.1 What is the report on the work of children's ministry?
- 1.2 What resolutions do we adopt on the work the work of children's ministry?
- 1.3 What is the report on Wesley Guilds?
- 1.4 What resolutions do we adopt on Wesley Guilds?
- 1.5 What other reports do we receive on youth work?
- 1.6 What other resolutions do we adopt on mission work among youth?

2. MATTERS REFERRED BY AND TO THE YOUTH SYNOD

- 2.1 What resolutions do we refer to the Synod of this District?
- 2.2 What matters are referred by Synod to the Youth Synod?
- 2.3 What matters are referred by the Connexional Executive or Conference to the Youth Synod?

3. ELECTIONS

- 3.1 Whom do we elect as representatives to Synod?
- 3.2 Whom do we elect as representatives to the Connexional Youth Consultation?
- 3.3 Whom do we elect as representatives to Conference?
- 3.4 Whom do we recommend to Synod for election to the District Youth Committee?
- 3.5 Whom do we nominate to the Synod as District Co-ordinator?

4. ADMINISTRATION

- 4.1 What audited financial reports do we receive?
- 4.2 What other reports do we receive?
- 4.3 What other administrative matters do we attend to?
- 4.4 When and where will the next Youth Synod be held?

Thanks
Confirmation of Minutes
Bible Reading and Prayer
Benediction

APPENDIX 7

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR THE CONVOCATION OF THE DIACONAL ORDER

ORDER OF OPENING

Devotions

Calling of the Roll

Appointment of Secretary, Scrutineers, Letter Writer, Reporter

Presentation of all Necessary Papers

Resolution of the Hours of Session

Notices of Motion

The Minutes of the previous Convocation shall be considered for adoption.

QUESTIONS

1. Is there an objection to any Deacon or Probationer?
 - 1.1 Is there an objection to their moral and religious character?
 - 1.2 Do they believe and preach our doctrines?
 - 1.3 Have they duly observed and enforced our discipline?
 - 1.4 Have they competent abilities for our work?
2. Have the directions of the Connexional Executive as to the places of residence of Deacons been observed?
3. What Deacons have married since the previous Convocation?
4. Has any Deacon resigned?
5. Has any Deacon died?
6. Does this Convocation recommend that any Deacon be received on transfer from another Connexion and/or be transferred to another Connexion?
7. Does this Convocation recommend that any Deacon ceases to be recognised by the Connexional Executive?
8. Does this Convocation recommend that any Deacon retires?
9. Has any Deacon entered into business during the year?
10. Has any Deacon whose name is not recorded in the Connexional Yearbook come to reside in the Connexion?
11. What Deacons without Circuit appointment are in the Connexion?
12. What is the report of the Convocation on the Examinations of Probationers?
13. What is the report of the Convocation on each candidate for ordination?

14. Whom do we recommend for ordination?
15. What training shall each Probationer receive?
16. Whom do we recommend for reception as Probationers?
17. What audited financial statements does the Convocation receive and who is appointed Treasurer?
18. Whom do we nominate to the Connexional Executive for appointment as Warden of the Order?
19. What matters are referred by the Connexional Executive or Conference to the Convocation and what is our judgement on them?
20. Has the Convocation any suggestions to offer through the Connexional Committee to the Conference?
21. Is there any other business?

Hymn
Prayer
Benediction

APPENDIX 8

CIRCUIT QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The business to be transacted at each Quarterly Meeting includes:

1. Opening devotions.
2. Conversation on the Work of God in the Circuit.
3. Discussion of ways of extending the mission of the Church in the Circuit, including the staffing of the Circuit.
4. What measures can we adopt for the increase of Spiritual religion in our Societies with special reference to:
 - 4.1. deepening the spirituality of our members;
 - 4.2. making clear plans for mission and growth;
 - 4.3. full involvement of our lay people;
 - 4.4. effective expression of our life as a Church which is one and undivided;
 - 4.5. how can we serve the community and each other;
 - 4.6. how can we set our Minister(s) free for the most important work of ministry?
5. Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous Meeting.
6. Consideration of matters arising from the Minutes.
7. Report and discussion of each Mission Group's work, including the work of Evangelists, Biblewomen and other Lay Agents, and the Quarterly Financial Statement.
8. The mandate to be given to each Mission Group.
9. Trust Properties affairs.
10. Any other business.
11. Date and place of the next meeting.

NB: Invitations to Ministers may be introduced at any Quarterly Meeting but not later than the April Meeting prior to the year to which the Invitation applies.

The following special business should be dealt with at the Meeting indicated:

JANUARY

12. Circuit Reports to Synod including 4C schedule.
13. Nomination for Bishop in the year that it is required from the District.
14. Numerical returns of Society and Sunday School members.
15. Election of Representatives to Synod.

OCTOBER

16. Election of Circuit Stewards.
17. Election of Secretary of Quarterly Meeting.

NB: In all elections nominations are received from any member of the meeting, and then voted on.

In addition, the following business is dealt with annually at the appropriate meeting:

18. Nomination of Candidates for the Ministry.
19. Election or re-election of Mission Groups to do the work of the Circuit.
20. Report on Women's Work in the Circuit.
21. Report on Men's Work in the Circuit.
22. Consideration of matters referred by Conference, the Connexional Executive or Synod.
23. Appointment of Circuit Treasurer, if necessary.
24. Appointment of Circuit Auditor.
25. Appointment of Circuit Treasurer for the Ministerial Students' Fund.
26. Appointment of lay staff and review of their accommodation and conditions of employment.

APPENDIX 9

CIRCUIT LOCAL PREACHERS' QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The business to be transacted at each Local Preachers' Quarterly Meeting includes:

1. What is the state of the Work of God in the Circuit as it relates to the work of the Local Preachers?
2. How can we further prepare ourselves and improve our Gospel preaching, so that the Gospel may come to the people 'not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit'?
3. Consideration and adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting.
4. Is there any objection to a Local Preacher or Evangelist in the Circuit? (The names are read):
 - 4.1 Is there any objection to their moral and religious character? (Any objection is to be referred to the relevant Society Leaders' Meeting for attention)
 - 4.2 Is there any objection on the ground that they do not believe and preach our doctrines? (Preachers answer this question for themselves but others may object or enquire).
 - 4.3 Is there any objection on the ground that they do not observe our Discipline or faithfully keep their preaching appointments?
 - 4.4 Have they competent abilities for our work? (This question includes efficiency and general acceptance as well as other competence).
5. Has any Local Preacher died during the quarter?
6. Has any Local Preacher resigned?
7. Has any Local Preacher removed to another Circuit? If so, to what Circuit and has the transfer been duly made?
8. Has any Local Preacher moved into this Circuit?
9. Is anyone now on Trial to be received as a Local Preacher on Full Plan?
10. Who are continued on Trial? (The names of the Local Preachers on Trial are to be entered in the Minutes, with the number of Quarters each has been on Trial).
11. Does this Meeting recommend that anyone receives from the Superintendent a Note to preach?
12. What is the report on those who are on Note?
13. Who are received on Trial?
14. Who is appointed Supervisor of the studies of Preachers on Trial or on Note?
15. What five Local Preachers do we elect as our representatives to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting?

16. Are there any matters relating to the Connexional or District Local Preachers' Committee which require the attention of the Meeting?
17. Does the Meeting recommend the opening of any new Preaching Place?
18. Does the Meeting recommend that the Circuit Quarterly Meeting closes any Preaching Place?
19. When and where shall the next Meeting be held

APPENDIX 10

PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING A PRESIDING BISHOP

1. When an election is to be held for a Presiding Bishop, the Synods shall all meet on the same day, as determined by the General Secretary.
2. At a time set by the General Secretary the Synods shall vote by ballot, without nomination, for a Presiding Bishop.
3. Conference Appointed Seminarians, though not at Synod, may vote in the election for a Presiding Bishop at the Seminary.
4. A signed copy of the full result of the ballot shall be transmitted immediately to the office of the General Secretary.
5. The General Secretary shall ensure that the reception and collation of the results is done in the presence of at least two persons beside the General Secretary. Such two persons shall be present throughout the process until a Presiding Bishop has been elected.
6. Results not received three hours after voting was due to commence in the Synods shall not be counted. The General Secretary shall immediately remit to each Synod electronically, failing which by telephone, the aggregate results of the voting of all the Synods.
7. The Synods shall then, if necessary, immediately vote a second time and transmit the result of the ballot to the General Secretary.
8. The Secretary shall immediately remit to each Synod electronically, failing which by telephone, the aggregate results of the voting of all the Synods.
9. The Synods shall vote for the final time on the two persons who received the greatest number of votes and convey the results to the Secretary.
10. The person who obtains the majority is the Presiding Bishop-elect.
11. If a Candidate receives an absolute majority (when the vote for one person exceeds the total number of votes for all other candidates combined) of all votes cast after any round of voting there is no need for further voting and that person shall be Presiding Bishop-elect.
12. If the General Secretary at any stage receives votes during a ballot, the General Secretary shall forthwith recuse him/herself from the rest of the election process, which process shall then be overseen by the two persons in 5 above.
13. If a District Bishop receives votes during a ballot, such Bishop shall forthwith hand over the chair for the voting process to the Vice-Chairman of the District or to some other person at Synod, who has not received any votes during the ballot.

APPENDIX 11

PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING A BISHOP

1. The election or re-election of a Bishop shall take place at Synod in the second-last year of the incumbent Bishop's current term of office and is for a five (5) year term, renewable for one (1) final term.
2. The District Secretary shall invite all Circuit Quarterly Meetings within the District to nominate any Minister in Full Connexion, whether or not in the District concerned, at the January Quarterly Meeting. Anyone who receives two such nominations qualifies for further consideration.
3. These nominations shall be submitted to the General Secretary by 31 March.
4. The General Secretary shall ascertain whether each such nominee is available for election. No person shall declare at the same time availability to be elected Bishop in two Districts. A Minister who is in breach of this rule shall be disqualified for election in that year as Bishop in any District.
5. Nominees who declare their availability shall submit to the District Secretary a Curriculum Vitae on a form supplied by the General Secretary. The District Secretary shall supply each member of Synod with a copy of each Curriculum Vitae.
6. No discussion of nominees shall be allowed in the Synod.
7. The Synod shall proceed to vote by ballot. The Required Majority for a nominee to be elected is 50% of the votes cast plus one vote.
8. If no nominee secures the Required Majority in the first ballot, Synod shall vote again on the three persons who secured the greatest number of votes in the first ballot. A nominee who secures the Required Majority in the second ballot is thereby elected.
9. If no nominee secures the Required Majority in the second ballot, the two nominees who secured most votes on the second ballot go forward to a third ballot. In the third ballot, whoever receives a simple majority of votes cast shall be elected.
10. The Conference retains the right to veto the election of a Bishop by a Synod, in which case the Connexional Executive shall, *mutatis mutandis*, follow the above procedure in making the election.

APPENDIX 12

PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING THE LAY PRESIDENT

1. The election of the Lay President shall take place at Conference. The term of office is three (3) years and shall be renewable once.
2. Circuits should nominate Candidates by 31 March to the District Secretary. Such candidates shall be interviewed by a Committee appointed by the District Executive. A report on each nominee shall be made at Synod.
3. Synods may nominate any member in the Connexion.
4. The Interviewing Committee shall brief Synod on each person nominated and answer any questions for clarification.
5. The nominee who secures the greatest number of votes cast becomes the Synod's nominee to Conference.
6. Each Synod shall be required to make their nomination to the General Secretary. Such nomination must be accompanied by a completed CV.
7. The General Secretary shall supply each member of Conference with a copy of the CV of the nominees.
8. No discussion of the nominees shall be allowed on the floor of Conference.
9. The Conference shall proceed to vote. The required majority for election is fifty percent (50%) of the votes cast plus one (1).

APPENDIX 13

PROCEDURE FOR THE ELECTION OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

1. The General Secretary shall be appointed for a five (5) year term, renewable for one (1) five (5) year term.
2. The election of the General Secretary shall take place at Conference.
3. No discussion of names shall be allowed in the Conference.
4. The Conference shall proceed to vote. The Required Majority for election is fifty percent (50%) of the votes cast plus one vote.
5. If no person secures the Required Majority in the first ballot, Conference shall vote again on the three (3) persons who secure the greatest number of votes in the first ballot.
6. If no nominee secures the Required Majority in the second ballot, the two (2) nominees who secured the most votes on the second ballot go forward to a third ballot. In the third ballot, whoever receives a simple majority of votes cast shall be elected.

APPENDIX 14

MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION PROCESSES

1. Mediation

1.1 Connexional Panel

- (i) a Connexional panel (hereafter ‘the mediation panel’) of not less than 5 persons but not more than 9 persons must be appointed by Conference. The Conference shall establish criteria for the appointment of such persons.
- (ii) the mediation panel must serve in that capacity at the pleasure of Conference.
- (iii) there shall be a Convener of the mediation panel appointed by Conference.
- (iv) all disbursements of the panellists in the exercise of their mediatory service shall be borne by the Connexion at the rates determined by the General Treasurers from time to time.

1.2 Referral to the Mediation Panel and Procedure

- (i) Society, Circuit and District Structures are encouraged to try and resolve disputes or conflicts internally whenever these arise.
- (ii) a matter must be referred to the mediation panel by the Presiding Bishop or the Convener of the Arbitration Panel. Once a matter has been referred to the Convener of the mediation panel, the Convener of the mediation panel, after consultation with the District Bishop, shall decide whether a dispute must be referred to the mediation panel or to a District/Circuit/Society structure or any other forum/process for mediation. If the said Bishop is party to the dispute the Presiding Bishop must take the Bishop’s place. If the Presiding Bishop is a party to the dispute then the Secretary of Conference shall take the place of the District Bishop.
- (iii) in the event of the Convener of the mediation panel referring the dispute to a Society/Circuit or District structure for mediation or any other process which might be called for and the matter is not resolved, the matter can thereafter once again be referred to the mediation panel for mediation.
- (iv) the Convener of the mediation panel shall determine if a mediation requires more than one of the panellists.

- (v) the person/s presiding over the mediation shall follow whatever procedure they deem necessary to settle the matter by mediation. Similarly they may give any directions to the parties they deem necessary.
- (vi) at the end of the mediation the panellist/s must submit a report of the outcome of the mediation to the Convener of the mediation panel and the Bishop of the District. This must be done within 5 days of the process being completed.
- (vii) if mediation fails, the matter must be referred forthwith back to the Presiding Bishop or the Convener of the Arbitration Panel by the Convener of the Mediation Panel, depending on who referred the matter to the Mediation Panel. If it is referred back to the Convener of the Arbitration Panel, then the Convener of the Arbitration Panel's ruling at this stage, even if the matter does not go to arbitration, shall be final and binding on all members of the Church. If the matter is referred back to the Presiding Bishop, the Presiding Bishop shall decide on the future conduct of the matter which shall include, but not be limited to, referring the dispute to the Convener of the Arbitration Panel.
- (viii) where one party refuses to be part of the mediation process or refuses to co-operate in the mediation process, the convener of the mediation panel may use such refusal as a basis for finding that the mediation process has failed and may then refer it to Arbitration.
- (ix) the Convener of the mediation panel (and any other panellist) shall not divulge anything, which was said or done or handed in during the mediation process, to the Convener of the Arbitration Panel in the event of the matter being referred back to the said Convener.

2. Arbitration

The Arbitration Act, 1965 shall apply to all arbitrations in the MCSA.

2.1 Panel

- (i) a Connexional panel (hereafter 'the Arbitration Panel') of not less than three (3) persons and not more than five (5) persons shall be appointed by Conference. The Conference shall establish criteria for the appointment of such persons.
- (ii) there shall be a Convener of this panel appointed by Conference.
- (iii) all disbursements of the panellists in the exercise of their arbitration services shall be borne by the Connexion at the rates determined by the General Treasurers from time to time.

2.2 Referral and Procedure

- (i) any member or minister may refer a matter to the Convener of the Arbitration Panel.
- (ii) the Convener shall determine and clarify what the issues are from the party/ies. The Convener shall thereafter decide what the correct forum or process is for the matter. The Convener's decision in this regard shall be binding on all members of the church. If it is not arbitration, the Convener shall direct how the matter shall be dealt with and/or refer the matter to the correct Church forum, which shall include but not be limited to mediation. If arbitration is the correct forum, the Convener shall finalise a written arbitration agreement which both parties shall sign. If either party refuses to sign the said agreement, the Convener shall have the power to sign on their behalf. If the Convener is to be the arbitrator in the particular matter, the said Convener shall designate another arbitrator to this responsibility.
- (iii) the arbitrator shall follow whatever procedure is deemed necessary to arrive at a decision. The Convener shall have the power to make and issue directives as to the procedures to be followed at any stage of the process, inclusive of the initial referral of the matter to him/her.
- (iv) all members of the church shall be obliged to co-operate fully with the arbitrator, including but not limited to, the giving of evidence and the production of documentary evidence.
- (v) the disbursements of witnesses shall be covered as in 2.1 iii above where the Arbitrator deems it appropriate.
- (vi) the arbitrator's decision shall be final and binding on all members and structures of the church.
- (vii) unless agreed to otherwise by the parties, the arbitrator shall submit a ruling with reasons to the Presiding Bishop and parties involved within seven (7) days of the completion of the arbitration hearing.
- (viii) no legal representation shall be allowed at the arbitration.
- (ix) the Convener shall decide whether more than one arbitrator is necessary for an arbitration.

APPENDIX 15

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa: HARASSMENT POLICY (2015)

1. POLICY STATEMENT

- 1.1 God, our creator and redeemer, has called each of us to a basic and deep respect for all humankind. We desire to give leadership in holding each other accountable to this call as well as calling society to this standard. Sexual harassment and abuse violate this sacred call, as does all harassment based on race, gender, religion, national origin, disability or any other class protected by discrimination laws. We seek to apply our values of communication, community, diversity and integrity to our work in a harassment-free environment.
- 1.2 The MCSA subscribes to the provision on harassment as set out in section 6 of the Employment Equity Act (“the EEA”). This policy will be applied with due regard to the Book of Order, the MCSA staff policies and procedures, and the provisions of the EEA.
- 1.3 The MCSA is committed to creating and maintaining programmes, facilities and a community in which members, friends, staff and volunteers can worship, learn and work together in an atmosphere free from all forms of discrimination, harassment, exploitation or intimidation. All persons associated with the MCSA should be aware that the MCSA is strongly opposed to Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Harassment and that such behaviour is prohibited by church policy.
- 1.4 Sexual harassment or any form of harassment in the work place and or church will not be permitted or condoned in any way.

2. OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 To eliminate sexual harassment or any other form of harassment and to provide an environment where all may pursue their studies, careers, duties and worship free from sexual harassment. Sexual harassment constitutes serious misconduct, and will result in disciplinary action.

3. SCOPE

- 3.1 This policy applies to the following persons in the working environment and anywhere else as a result of employment responsibilities, employment relationships or church relationships:
 - Paid employees at all levels

- Church Members
 - Volunteers and or lay leaders elected or appointed to the MCSA
 - Clients, suppliers and contractors who are sourced for specific tasks or services by the MCSA
 - Visitors to the Church
 - All Ministers–, Deacons, Evangelists, Bible Women, persons in elected and appointed positions, Seminarians, student Ministers or any other person employed or Covenanted, representing the MCSA in any way (hereafter called Covenanted staff)
 - Any other person/s who have dealings with the MCSA.
- 3.2 No employee, volunteer, member or Covenanted staff member may harass and abuse any adult or child. In addition to employee, volunteer and visitor relationships within the MCSA's offices, staff members and volunteers also have contact with people outside the office that may present a potential arena for sexual or other kinds of harassment to occur. This includes the MCSA's employees and volunteers working from remote locations, travelling together, as well as staff and service relationships with other people. The same standards and expectations apply to these situations as apply within the office or church among employees, volunteers, leaders, Covenanted staff and visitors.
- 3.3 Any individual within or outside of the organisation can use these guidelines to register a complaint of harassment against a person falling under the jurisdiction of the MCSA as listed above.
- 3.4 Complaints against service providers or church visitors: The MCSA also recognises that its employees, Covenanted staff, members, leaders and volunteers may be subjected to harassment by its vendors, constituents and office visitors. In these cases MCSA has a duty to support the complainant and assist in resolving these situations wherever possible.

4. POLICY

- 4.1 Definition – Sexual Harassment begins with behaviour that is unwelcome, personally offensive and that is directed against a person because of his or her sex.
- 4.2 Harassment may include the following type of behaviour:
- (a) threats, intimidation or verbal abuse;
 - (b) unwelcome remarks or jokes about a person's ancestry, nationality or ethnic origin, colour or perceived race, religion, disability, gender determined characteristics, marital or family status, sex, or age;
 - (c) displaying or circulating sexist, racist or other offensive pictures, posters or written jokes;
 - (d) unnecessary physical contact such as touching, patting, pinching or punching;
 - (e) physical assault.

4.3 The MCSA recognises two areas of sexual harassment:

4.3.1 A quid-pro-quo type of harassment – where sexual favours are expected or requested from or offered in exchange for some benefit, or where discrimination or discipline or sanctions are imposed or threatened if requests for sexual favours are not met. This kind of conduct generally involves a person in a position of authority.

4.3.2 Maintaining, condoning or contributing to an offensive work environment which may include, but is not limited to, a variety of unwelcome behaviours (listed below) which may create a hostile or intimidating atmosphere.

- (a) Unusual and overly friendly attention, including such things as gifts, frequent social telephone calls, letters, private visits, etc.;
- (b) Persistent shadowing or following; repeated or prolonged staring;
- (c) Sexual talk and innuendo, dirty jokes and offensive gestures;
- (d) Sexual or intrusive questions about the individual's personal life;
- (e) Use of familiarities or diminutives such as "honey", "baby", "dear", etc.;
- (f) Whistling, catcalls, leering;
- (g) Unsolicited or unwelcome flirtations, romantic gestures, advances, propositions, manner of dress or display of body;
- (h) Graphic, degrading, excessive or unwelcome comments about another individual's appearance, dress or anatomy;
- (i) Display of sexually suggestive objects or pictures;
- (j) Explicit descriptions of the employee's own sexual experiences;
- (k) Unnecessary, unwanted physical contact such as touching, hugging, pinching, patting, kissing;
- (l) Verbal and emotional manipulation and control;
- (m) Exposing genitalia;
- (n) Physical or sexual assault;
- (o) Sexual intercourse or rape.

4.4 Victimisation – For the purposes of this policy, retaliation against an individual for having invoked this policy, for having participated in the investigative process or for associating with a person who has invoked this process will be treated as harassment.

4.5 False Accusations – Because of the seriousness with which the Church views sexual harassment and because of the severity of the

penalties which may be imposed on offenders, false accusations will not be tolerated. However, this statement is not intended to discourage individuals from coming forward with any complaints. The Church recognises and expects that some claims may be difficult to prove or support, or may not in fact be found to rise to the level of seriousness deemed necessary to constitute sexual harassment. These are not the types of claims which are considered to be false accusations. Rather, anyone found to have purposefully and intentionally brought allegations which he or she knows to be untrue will be deemed to have made false accusations, and will be subject to disciplinary action.

5. PROCEDURE

- 5.1 All employees, Covenanted staff, members, leaders and volunteers of the MCSA have a responsibility to ensure that the MCSA is free from harassment.

- 5.2 **Structure**

Each Circuit Executive in the Connexion as well as the MCO shall establish with immediate effect a three-member Anti-harassment team, comprising two women and a man with some professional experience, e.g. teaching, nursing, social work. One of the members of this team shall be from outside the Circuit. The members of this team shall all be screened according to the Child Protection Register, as per the Regulation 44, Section 126 of the Children's Act 38 of 2005 in South Africa. This is done through the local police station. Residents of the sovereign states in the Connexion are to check their local protocols in this regard.

- 5.2.1 The team shall be appointed annually and may be re-appointed. The Team members shall therefore sign a Confidentiality declaration (Attached hereto as an annexure). Circuits shall inform all their members of the availability of the Circuit Anti-harassment Team.

Superintendents shall report annually the names of their team to the Bishop, and the Bishop's Office and the Superintendent shall both retain a copy of the Confidentiality declaration signed by members of the Team. The work of the team shall be confidential and they shall not be required to report to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, other than that they are available at all times to assist in cases of harassment or abuse.

- 5.3 **Processing Complaints**

- 5.3.1 Any employee, Covenanted staff member, member, leader or volunteer of the MCSA who believes that he or she has been

the subject of sexual harassment (as defined in para 4 above) should report it immediately in accordance with the following procedure. All information disclosed pursuant to this procedure will be held in strictest confidence, and will only be disclosed on a need to know basis.

- 5.3.2 Any employee, Covenanted staff member, member, leader or volunteer of the MCSA who has a concern, grievance or complaint about sexual harassment in the workplace or church or place where the church is represented (such as field work etc.) should report it directly to the Anti-Harassment Team.
- 5.3.3 Persons experiencing harassment within the MCSA are urged to report harassment to the Anti-Harassment Team. This may be done in person or in writing. It may be reported to one member of the team, who will then inform the rest of the team in order to proceed with seeking to understand the complaint and the circumstances surrounding it. The complainant may be accompanied by a person in a supportive role who may remain with the complainant throughout the process if needed.
- 5.3.4 **The Anti-harassment Team shall:**
 - (i) Listen to the individual reporting the harassment;
 - (ii) Establish the circumstances and ascertain the severity of the case as far as possible, in order to find the best way of resolving the complaint. This shall be done by listening to the complainant.
 - (iii) Embark on an informal procedure of finding resolution if this is appropriate, in which case the respondent is called and shall comply with the process as determined by the team, and agreed to by the complainant.

Informal Procedure:

- (a) Where a person might reasonably be unaware that his or her comments or actions are unwelcome, the complainant may first clearly make known to the other person that such comments and conduct are unwelcome and ask that they cease. It is often helpful to write down such conversations and actions.
- (b) Facilitated Assistance – It will not always be possible for the offended person to directly confront the perpetrator, often because of power dynamics. In such a case, consultation with another member of the MCSA may be helpful in facilitating a resolution. If such person should agree to act, he/she should do so as an impartial third party

and assist the complainant and the respondent to explore resolution of the conflict. Facilitators cannot and should not promise complete confidentiality in matters that may constitute harassment, since in certain situations they may be required by this policy to file a report to a member of the Investigative Team.

- (iv) In cases that require such action, the Anti-Harassment team shall draft a complaint (with the permission of the complainant) to the District Disciplinary Registrar.
- (v) Normal disciplinary procedures will follow as set out in the Laws and Discipline (chapter 11).
- (vi) In addition, if the case is heard by the District Disciplinary Convener, a member of the Anti-Harassment team may accompany the complainant throughout the hearing.
- (vii) Seek pastoral care or counselling for the complainant with the permission of the complainant.

6. FURTHERMORE

6.1 Throughout the investigation, communications between the team and the concerned parties will be conducted in a balanced and impartial manner. Care will be taken on the part of the team not to let a person who has easier access to the team unduly influence the investigation or take advantage of closer relationships with the investigators to communicate.

6.2 Any person wishing to contest the outcome of the process is entitled to appeal to the Connexional Disciplinary Committee.

6.3 Criminal and Civil Charges

A victim of sexual harassment has the right to press separate criminal and/or civil charges against an alleged perpetrator, and the legal rights of the victim are in no way limited by this policy.

6.4 Confidentiality

6.4.1 All complaints of harassment will be investigated with reasonable confidentiality.

6.4.2 The Anti-Harassment Team will determine what information and documents obtained through the examination will be shared with the parties involved. Throughout the process, the Team will ensure that the complainant and the respondent receive timely updates about the progress of the investigation when appropriate, and the sharing of information, copies of the written allegations and written responses, and any other documents or

summary documents as necessary. Information sharing will be done with prudence and discretion, balancing the desire for open communication and reconciliation with the importance of maintaining the safety of all parties. In instances where the safety of a party is jeopardised, a summarised form of the information may be given.

- 6.4.3 During the proceedings of the Team, no party should make any public comment.

6.5 **Personal Support**

- 6.5.1 Although not required, the parties to the complaint are welcome to bring a personal supporter of their own choosing to any interview proceedings in order to provide emotional support and act as an observer.
- 6.5.2 Acknowledging that the investigation of harassment is a stressful event, the MCSA understands that both the complainant and the respondent may need help to identify the necessary and appropriate pastoral supports to be put in place. If these supports are not easily identified through discussion with the Human Resources Department, the Denominational Minister may be asked to assist.
- 6.5.3 In cases of serious sexual harassment where a person, on medical advice, requires trauma counselling but where his/her existing sick leave entitlement has been exhausted, due consideration will be given to the granting of additional sick leave.

ANNEXURE TO HARASSMENT POLICY DOCUMENT

The Methodist Church of Southern Africa

CONFIDENTIALITY DECLARATION – ANTI SEXUAL HARASSMENT TEAM

We request that you read carefully and sign the following statement acknowledging the confidentiality required as a Member of the Anti-Harassment Team.

I,,
having accepted the position of being a Member of the Anti-Harassment Team for the
..... Circuit,

Hereby acknowledge that I am fully aware of the confidential nature of this position and my obligations to the complainants and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to safeguard all information pertaining to Sexual Harassment cases with which I am entrusted and to release such information only to the parties involved in Sexual Harassment cases. I realise that any breach of the foregoing responsibility would be a violation of the obligations that I have undertaken and could be injurious to the employees, all covenanted staff, members, leaders and volunteers of the MCSA and would be deemed as a violation of the Sexual Harassment policy.

Accordingly, I pledge that I will strictly maintain confidentiality with regard to all parties involved in Sexual Harassment cases of which I have knowledge. I pledge that information sharing between parties involved will be done with prudence and discretion balancing the desire for open communication and reconciliation and the importance of safety of all parties. Also upon expiration of my term of office as an Anti-Harassment Team Member, I will never reveal to anyone confidential information, unless specifically authorised and directed to do so in writing.

I have read, understood and will comply with this statement.

.....	
Name and Surname	Signature and Date

.....	
Witness Name and Surname	Signature and Date

**MISCELLANEOUS
CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS
OF THE
METHODIST CHURCH
OF SOUTHERN AFRICA**

CONTENTS

	Page
1. Tithing and Planning Giving (1985)	221
2. Glebes (1985)	222
3. Church Records (1992)	222
4. Central and Inner City Mission (1987)	222
5. Sunday Observance	223
6. United Congregations.	223
7. Church Public Relations	223
8. Methodist Educational Institutions.	223
9. A Place of Contemplation and Retreat	223
10. Accessibility of Buildings	223
11. HIV/Aids and the Organisations of the Church	224
12. Mission Imperatives	224
13. The Prophetic Calling of the Church	224
14. Ministries of Healing	225
15. Naming of Institutions (1992)	225
16. Same-Sex Debate	225
17. Same-sex Relationships	227
18. Alcohol	229
19. Use of Alcohol	229
20. Christian Love and Obedience (Racism) (1988)	229
21. Racism	230
22. One And Undivided	230
23. Geographic Circuits Programme (1992)	230
24. Liturgical Wear.	232
25. Membership Records	232
26. The Ecological Crisis	232
27. Abortion (1994)	232
28. Death Penalty/Abortion	233
29. Capital Punishment	233
30. Guidelines for Interfaith Observances (1995)	233
31. Politics and Religion (1995).	235
32. Membership of Political Parties by Ministers	236
33. Flags in Church	236
34. Ministers as Assessors	236
35. Weaponry and Gun-Free Campaign	237
36. Statement on Women	237
37. Pornography and Censorship	238
38. Sexual Rape.	238

39.	Crime and Corruption.	238
40.	Revival of Family Values	238
41.	Gambling	238
42.	Pensions	239
43.	Poverty	239
44.	Conference 1958	239

MISCELLANEOUS CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

1. TITHING AND PLANNED GIVING

- 1.1 Conference recognises that there is a need to increase the financial, material and personpower resources of the church in order to meet the increasing needs and demands placed upon the church and its people, not least of which is the necessity to increase the basic minimum stipends of ministers to a reasonable level.
- 1.2 Furthermore, believing in the principle of Stewardship that every material thing we possess actually belongs to God and that when we plan our giving to God's church we are setting aside for God's work a portion of God's resources that has been entrusted to us, Conference strongly urges:
 - (a) that in order to achieve more reasonable levels of financial and other commitments by members, Circuits and Societies actively organise Scripturally based education and Stewardship training programmes utilising the material and people available in the Mission Department's divisions of Evangelism, Holiness and Stewardship;
 - (b) that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa move close to the Biblical example of the Stewardship of money, namely, giving on a proportional, sacrificial and regular basis.
Conference commends to all our people the practice of tithing and calls on every Methodist to give serious consideration to adopting such a practice as part of their commitment to Jesus Christ;
 - (c) that the doctrine of tithing be proclaimed throughout our Church and that where members prayerfully consider that they are unable to achieve this level, that they are able to contribute weekly a minimum of one hour of their weekly income to the church, or alternatively a minimum of 2.5% of their income.
- 1.3 The Societies and Circuits which are responsible for the finances of Societies therein be requested to accept as their responsibility to the overall budget of Connexional needs, an amount not less than 10% (a tithe) of the total income, and urged to reach the target as soon as possible.
- 1.4 **Proportional Giving**
Conference disapproves of a system of giving where all members contribute the same amount as "pledge" or "dues" each month or quarter. Conference therefore urges all Circuits to discontinue this practice in favour of proportional giving, according to their means, by all of our members.

2. GLEBES

In the light of the responsibility the Church has for the various pieces of land under its controls, Conference resolves that:

- 2.1 no further alienation of Glebe lands be permitted;
- 2.2 the necessary steps be taken to secure all boundaries and fence all Glebes;
- 2.3 Glebes be developed as far as possible for the benefit of the whole community;
- 2.4 all matters affecting relationships with Government authorities be referred to the Chairman of the District concerned;
- 2.5 that Glebe committees continue to consult with Government authorities in matters involving the development and use of Glebes;
- 2.6 the Mission and the Christian Citizenship Departments together organise further consultations and seminars on the development of Glebe lands;
- 2.7 all Circuits with Glebe lands to report annually to the Missionary Department.

3. CHURCH RECORDS

Conference resolved that Superintendent Ministers ensure that Probationer Ministers in their charge are duly instructed in the laws regarding Marriages and the keeping of Registers of Baptisms.

4. CENTRAL AND INNER CITY MISSION

Conference recognising that Central City and Inner City Churches have a specialised mission and Missionary distinct from the suburban style, resolves:

- 4.1. that selected congregations be designated Central Methodist Missions and Inner-City Methodist Missions, charged with developing ministries to all people in the central and inner city;
- 4.2. that they be staffed where possible with multi-racial ministry teams and that the senior minister in such missions be given sufficient tenure to develop effective long-term projects of ministry to the city;
- 4.3. that such missions be considered as missionary endeavours of the whole Church, authorised to raise financial support beyond their own membership, as is the practice with other mission projects in Methodism;
- 4.4. that they be permitted to appoint up to five persons from other Methodist Societies to their Leaders' Meetings or Church Council;
- 4.5. that suburban churches be encouraged to develop dynamic links with the work of the Church in the city;
- 4.6. that Central Methodist Missions and Inner-City Methodist Missions be designated as such in the list of stations, upon the recommendation of any District Synod in whose area the work is situated in consultation with the Mission Department.

5. SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

All Methodists should hallow the Lord's Day and desist from entertainment or commercial activity on Sundays that hinder their participation in worship or conflict with the spirit of worship. On the second Sunday in November special reference should be made in all our places of worship to observance of the Lord's Day.

Conference resolves to direct all Connexional and District agencies and offices to refrain from engaging its members in any form of business other than worship and service (eg. Book rooms, car washes and other means of employment) on Sunday and Holy Days. This would include, for instance, travelling to and from Conference.

6. UNITED CONGREGATIONS

The Connexional Executive reaffirms its acceptance of United Congregations as an expression of unity.

7. CHURCH PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Presiding Bishop is the Chief Public Relations Officer of the Connexion. Statements on matters of national importance shall be issued by him. In matters of public concern, he may consult the Bishops. Officers of Connexional Departments shall communicate with him if needs be on matters which may require his consideration.

Bishops are Public Relations Officers within their areas. Superintendents may communicate with them on matters which require their consideration. A Bishop may appoint liaison officers with the local Press and News Broadcasters.

8. METHODIST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS

The Connexional Executive encourages all Methodist Educational Institutions to reflect the demography of the country in the composition of their governing bodies.

9. A PLACE OF CONTEMPLATION AND RETREAT

Conference reaffirms the call for deepened spirituality within the lives of all Methodists. We therefore encourage all the people called Methodist to:

- (a) The exercise of daily personal devotional discipline;
- (b) Attend an annual retreat under a retreat director;
- (c) Recover our Christian contemplative heritage.

10. ACCESSIBILITY OF BUILDINGS

Conference calls all Circuits to strive to make our churches more accessible to people with disabilities by building ramps, providing hearing aids, reading material, sign language, interpreting etc.

11. HIV/AIDS AND THE ORGANISATIONS OF THE CHURCH

The Connexional Executive instructs that the men's organisations of our church do reflective work on the issue of HIV/AIDS, paying particular attention to the role men play in fighting the growth of this epidemic. Furthermore the Connexional Executive requests all organisations to institute programmes which specifically address issues that relate to HIV/AIDS.

12. MISSION IMPERATIVES

Conference reaffirms the four imperatives that have emerged out of the Millennium Mission Campaign and which are expressed in the mission policy, and endorses them as the framework for holistic mission within our church. Conference stresses, in the clearest and strongest terms, that these mission imperatives are not a list of options from which the local church can pick and choose, but that every local church needs to embrace and engage all four imperatives if we are to be faithful to this mission calling.

Therefore Conference resolves that these four mission imperatives form the primary focus for the business of Leaders' Meetings, the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, District Synods, Bishops Meetings, the Connexional Executive and Conference.

The Mission Imperatives as set forth by the Mission Congress are:

1. Evangelism and Church Growth
2. Spirituality
3. Justice & Service
4. Human Economical Development and Empowerment

Following the Presiding Bishop's address to Conference the following Imperative was added:

5. Education and Christian Formation

13. THE PROPHETIC CALLING OF THE CHURCH

The Connexional Executive notes the following resolution:

- 13.1 The Church of Jesus Christ, of which The Methodist Church of Southern Africa is a significant part, is called upon to exercise its prophetic voice in Society.

Therefore:

The leadership of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa is requested to seek to fulfil the prophetic calling of the Church by:

- 13.2 Taking a strong and very public stance on God's will on issues like:
 - (a) Crime
 - (b) Corruption
 - (c) AIDS
 - (d) Abuse of women and children

- 13.3 Mount a concerted information campaign within the church so that individual members will be well informed and well equipped to speak out on these issues in their particular circles of influence.

14. MINISTRIES OF HEALING

Conference resolves to encourage local Circuits and Societies to give greater priority to ministries and services of healing and to explore in greater depth means by which this vital aspect of Christian Ministry may be exercised within our Connexion in a manner that is scriptural, contextual, inclusive and holistic. In this vein, it is our hope that the healing wisdom inherent within African spirituality be further explored to foster ministries of healing that are authentically rooted in a spirituality that is both deeply Christian and deeply African.

15. NAMING OF INSTITUTIONS

Conference resolves that no Methodist Building be named without the sanction of the Synod or the Bishop.

16. SAME-SEX DEBATE

- 16.1 Conference reaffirms the current theological position of the MCSA with regards to the same-sex debate. This position has evolved over a number of years, as reflected in the various Conference resolutions that have been adopted on this issue:
 - (a) At the Conference of 2001, a foundational principle in the same-sex debate was adopted, that the MCSA seeks to be a “community of love rather than rejection.”
 - (b) At the Conference of 2003, a discussion guide on Christians and same-sex relationships was adopted as a tool for the Church’s engagement on this issue, and was referred to the Methodist people for their study, comment and response.
 - (c) The robust debate generated by this discussion guide made it clear that within the MCSA there are widely divergent convictions on this issue that are sincerely and passionately held by both clergy and laity who are deeply committed to following Christ and who hold to the authority of Scripture.
 - (d) This recognition of the divergent convictions within the MCSA on this issue prompted the Conference of 2005 to commit the MCSA “...to an ongoing journey of discovering what it means to be part of a Church which embraced many different and even opposing views on the issue” (Yearbook 2006, para 8.3, pg 75) and to affirm that “the one body of the church is enriched and strengthened by the differing views and perspectives of its members”. (Yearbook 2006 para 8.5.5, pg 76)

- (e) The Connexional Executive of 2006 reaffirmed the 2005 Conference resolutions on the same-sex debate, and directed that until Conference has pronounced on the matter the MCSA continues to recognise marriage as only between a man and a woman, and urged Ministers to refrain from officiating at same-sex unions. (Yearbook 2007 Para 4 , pg 50)
 - (f) The Conference of 2007 declared its determination not to permit different viewpoints around the same sex debate to further divide the church, and sought "...a way forward that both respects and holds in tension differing views among our Ministers and people". (Yearbook 2008, para 2.5.1 pg 81). This Conference further resolved that "any decision and subsequent action on the issue of civil unions between same sex partners must await the outcome of the ongoing process of engagement as specified by Conference 2005 ... and, in the interim expects Methodist Ministers to continue to offer pastoral care to homosexual individuals". (Yearbook 2008 para 2.5.1 (vi), pg 82.)
- 16.2 There are many who mistakenly assume that the MCSA does not have a formal position on the same-sex debate. This is clearly not the case as the Conference decisions referred to above plainly indicate. The MCSA, in fact, has adopted a very clear position on this issue which:
- (a) Affirms that the MCSA is seeking to be a community of love rather than rejection;
 - (b) Recognises the diversity of conviction within the church when it comes to same-sex relationships, and celebrates the diversity as a challenge but potentially life-giving gift;
 - (c) Calls for an ongoing process of respectful dialogue and truthful engagement between those holding differing views, not with the intention of ultimately having one mind on the issue, which is unlikely, but rather to come to a deepened understanding of what it means to be the one body of Christ;
 - (d) Takes seriously the Church's ongoing pastoral responsibility to homosexual people.
- 16.3 In the light of the above, Conference notes the following:
- (a) The MCSA is, de facto, a Church with divergent convictions on this issue which have Theological integrity;
 - (b) There is a current theological inconsistency within the MCSA where it allows the divergence of conviction to be held without the freedom for such divergence of conviction to be exercised.
- 16.4 Conference thereby resolves that:
- (a) The bible-study material entitled "In search of Grace and Truth; Christian Conversations on Same-Sex Relationships" which represents an intentional engagement between the divergent

convictions referred to above – be adopted as a discussion document for the MCSA and be referred to the Methodist people for their study and response.

- (b) Districts find ways in which this material can be engaged and bring concrete suggestions to the 2012 Conference as to how the MCSA can create the space for such divergence of conviction to be exercised in ways that will preserve the integrity and unity of the Church.
- (c) Conference asks that this material be translated into various languages for accessibility. Conference notes that it is not possible for some to engage this matter due to different countries' laws and constitutions. The Church continues its prophetic work in these places to have open discussions and transparency on any issue.

17. SAME-SEX RELATIONSHIPS

Conference affirms the profession of faith developed by DEWCOM and asks that it be used in education and worship in our churches to affirm our unity in diversity and the journey that we have travelled as a church.

A profession of the MCSA's unity and diversity within the context of the Church's conversation on same-sex relationships

We believe in one God who created all things in love and for love, who has ordered the world so that life in all its fullness can be enjoyed by all.

We believe in Jesus Christ who embodies the whole presence of God before humanity and the whole presence of humanity before God. In loving obedience to God He endured the injustice of the cross, so that through His death and resurrection all people can be freed from sin to live whole and holy lives.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, who enlivens the Church in every generation to discover afresh what it means to be the one body of Christ given in love for the world.

We believe that all people have been created in the image of God and that every man, woman and child is a person of sacred worth with the capacity for great love. Yet, each one of us has fallen short of God's intention for our lives and is in need of God's saving grace.

We believe that our deepest identity as the children of God is affirmed in our baptism as we are claimed as God's own to partner God in the work of new creation within the world.

We believe in the authority of Scripture and that the Divine revelation contained therein is the supreme rule of our faith and practice.

Among us are those who believe that the Bible is clear in its condemnation of all homosexual acts as contrary to the will of God. Also among us are those who believe that the Bible does not condemn all homosexual acts, namely those between two consenting adults in a mutually loving, faithful and committed relationship.

Among us are those who believe that the biblical norm for marriage is between one man and one woman only and that any deviation from this pattern is against the express will of God. Also among us are those who believe that God's primary concern is for the quality of our loving, and that two people of the same gender who truly love each other can enter into the bonds of marriage with the blessing of God and the Church.

Among us are those who believe that those in loving, faithful and committed same-sex relationships can serve as leaders of the Church and be ordained as Ministers of the gospel. Also among us are those who believe that those in such relationships cannot serve in these ways.

All of us believe that the Church is called to be a community of love and not rejection with a responsibility to extend pastoral care to all people irrespective of their sexual orientation, and that no-one should be excluded from any aspect of the Church's life and ministry solely on the basis of their sexual orientation.

We believe that any form of victimization, hatred or violence towards homosexual people should be condemned in the strongest possible terms.

We believe that there is far more that binds us together than what divides us, and that not even our different convictions on this issue need compromise the essential unity that is ours in Christ.

We believe that the grace of God is such that even in the shortcomings that are ours as people, we can still point others to the great truth of the unconditional love of God that Christ has made known and the Spirit has brought near.

We re-affirm that the MCSA is not yet ready to apply for its ministers to officiate at same-sex unions because there is still a need for further conversation in relation to the theology of marriage, the exercise of conscience, pastoral implications and the perceived marginalisation of people in same-sex relationships. Conference directs ministers to facilitate a conducive environment for the church to listen to the silent voices.

Conference directs Districts and Circuits to prioritise this work and DEWCOM to continue its work in developing a theology of marriage and present it to the 2016 Conference.

18. ALCOHOL

- 18.1 Conference is deeply perturbed by the increasing disregard of the ‘Principle of Abstinence’.
- 18.2 In the light of the three-fold obligation as Christians – a commitment to God, love for one’s neighbour and self-discipline:
The Conference draws the attention of Methodists to the fact that:
- 18.2.1 alcoholic indulgence impairs conscience, judgement and the sense of responsibility of the individual;
- 18.2.2 alcoholic indulgence inflicts heavy loss and damage to the community, through deterioration of character, health, efficiency and discord in family life, as well as intensifying poverty within the society;
- 18.2.3 there is undue influence of the Liquor Trade on public affairs.
The Conference therefore urges our Ministers and Laity to promote by word and example the advantages of an alcohol free way of life.
Conference directs Superintendent Ministers to ensure that their candidates for the ministry are made aware of the dangers of alcohol.
- 18.2.4 The Conference calls upon our Ministers and Laity to remain faithful to the principle of Total Abstinence, and directs that wherever possible visual aid be used in order effectively to educate our members concerning the dangers and implications of drinking alcoholic beverages.
- 18.2.5 Conference further directs that these statements be brought to the attention of all our people on Temperance Sunday.

19. USE OF ALCOHOL

The Connexional Executive, noting the devastating effects of alcohol on family life, calls upon Methodists to recommit themselves to an alcohol free way of life. Further, all Methodist Ministers and Local Preachers are requested to preach on the effects of alcohol regularly and where possible at least once a month as a focus or as part of a sermon.

20. CHRISTIAN LOVE AND OBEDIENCE (Racism)

The Conference notes with the deepest distress the state of the nations, especially at this time.

Conference affirms that Christians can contribute to a solution of South Africa’s problems with true Christian obedience, especially to Christ’s commandment to ‘love one another, even as I have loved you’, and calls on all Methodists to actively demonstrate this love in their public business and private lives by inter alia, and wherever practical:

- 20.1 identifying, and then affirming and supporting, all organisations and businesses which have publicly and effectively done away with all forms of discrimination in their employment, customer/client relations, and public pronouncements;
- 20.2 pressurising, in love, all organisations and businesses which are not striving toward these goals;
- 20.3 utilising every opportunity to establish and develop personal relationships with members of other races, especially fellow Methodists.

Conference further notes that Christ's love was effective, and involved faith and self-sacrifice, and encourages all Methodists to be mindful of the example of their Saviour at this time.

21. RACISM

Conference, in denouncing racism, calls on all Methodists to continue striving against all forms of racism in Church and Society and commits The Methodist Church of Southern Africa to co-operate with all agencies working towards similar objectives.

22. ONE AND UNDIVIDED

In the light of the 50th year anniversary of the MCSA's "One and Undivided" statement:

- 22.1 Districts and Circuits initiate conversations on the practices of the disunity (ethnic and racial) in our Connexion, right down to Society level and seek actively to bring to truth our divisions and effect Healing and Reconciliation for Transformation.
- 22.2 Circuits are encouraged to actively engage in programmes of managing diversity.
- 22.3 Progress reports will be brought to Conference through Synod 2010.
- 22.4 The Structures Committee investigate divisive practices in our structures, and propose a new way forward.

23. GEOGRAPHIC CIRCUITS PROGRAMME

Conference adopts the report of the Department on the progress of the Geographic Circuits Programme.

- 23.1 Conference reaffirms its conviction that the visible and structural unity of our people is the will of God and that it reflects the mind of Christ in his prayer that 'they all be one; ... that the world may believe that you sent me' (John 17:21), and asserts that:
 - (a) racially integrated Circuits and Societies are a natural expression of the true Church of Christ, and an integral part of our mission strategy;
 - (b) it is consistent with our mission policy of 'becoming a one-and-undivided Church' (Conference 1958);

(c) the Geographic Circuits Programme is an important step in this direction.

23.2 Conference recognises that:

the uni-racial nature of most of our Circuits can be attributed to a number of factors, such as the historical development of the Church along parallel lines as a 'Mission Church', language barriers, distinctive forms of worship, as well as the results of worship, as exacerbated by the oppressive policy of Apartheid;

The suffering of the majority of our Members as a result of racial prejudice and Apartheid has necessitated their solidarity in the ongoing struggle for the justice and liberation which can lead to reconciliation in South Africa.

23.3 Conference nevertheless believe that non racial Circuits and Societies, because they express the essential nature of the Church, and the reconciliation which Christ has won for all the Creation, are an essential part of the Church's prophetic witness in the struggle for justice, liberation and reconciliation in this divided land.

23.4 Conference resolves that the term 'Geographic Circuit' be defined as a Circuit consisting of all Societies in a geographic area without regard for race. Because the Group Areas Act effectively separated our people in many places, Conference calls upon Districts and Circuits to cross racial and natural barriers where possible when forming Geographic Circuits.

23.5 Conference notes that various levels of progress toward Geographic Circuit status has been attained by our Circuits.

Conference commends those Circuits which have struggled through in trust and obedience to the establishment of Geographic Circuits. Conference applauds and encourages the Circuits where the process of becoming one and undivided has extended to Societies within the Circuit.

Conference notes that some Circuits have become Geographic, but that the process has stalled at the level of Circuit Administration and little is being achieved in brining local Society members together in true unity.

Conference expresses its deep concern that some Circuits, often not far removed from Methodists of other races, have made little or no progress towards Geographic Circuit status.

Conference recognises that unrest and other circumstances have delayed this process in some well-intentioned Circuits.

Conference reminds those Circuits which are avoiding becoming geographic, and particularly the Ministers and Circuit Stewards involved, that as resurrection is possible only after crucifixion, so the new Church in a new South Africa will emerge only from costly struggle, in obedience and sacrifice.

24. LITURGICAL WEAR

Conference accepts and adopts the following principles regarding Liturgical wear:

- (a) That the stole signifies the two orders of Ordination, namely Ministry of Word and Sacrament (the Presbyterate) and Ministry of Word & Service (The Diaconate) ;
- (b) That the stole may be worn only by Presbyters and Deacons who are ordained and in full Connexion with the MCSA;
- (c) The wearing of a suitable medallion of office for lay officials;
- (d) That a phasing out period of three years be set for the implementation of the above recommendations so that the process is completed by the 2015 Conference.

25. MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

Conference resolves that permanent records be kept of all persons received into full membership.

26. THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

Conference calls on all Methodists to co-operate with environmental organisations in their attempts to alert the public through a vigorous education campaign to the urgency and extent of the ecological problem and to actions that can be taken to deal with it, and to save our environment by reducing pollution, waste and destruction of the ozone layer.

Conference requests Societies to monitor environmental issues in their areas and to publicise and oppose any moves which could displace people as has happened in Bushmanland, where people were removed to allow the dumping of nuclear waste; and to embark on programmes of action to save our earth and to report through Quarterly Meetings to Synods.

27. ABORTION

Conference affirms the Christian view of the sanctity of human life as a God-given gift; recognises the considerable divergence of opinion among Christians on the issue of abortion, especially in circumstances of deprivation and trauma; believes that it is morally wrong to use abortion as a means of birth control; and acknowledges that the issue is complicated by social circumstances;

Conference resolves:

- 27.1 to encourage Societies to provide counselling and support both to those who are struggling to decide whether or not to have an abortion and to those who have made such a decision;
- 27.2 to continue to study and discuss the issue of abortion and the appropriate response to legislation on the subject, bearing in mind the need to consider the right of women to make decisions about their own body, the interests of the father, and the rights of the foetus;
- 27.3 that anybody making recommendations on proposed legislation consist of a majority of women and be fully representative of all viewpoints.

28. DEATH PENALTY/ABORTION

Conference urges its ministers to promote the theology of sacredness of life through a series of sermons, seminars and education material.

29. CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

The Conference considers capital punishment to be contrary to the Christian Gospel and calls on the Government of the Republic of South Africa, Mocambique, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Transkei, Bophutatswana, Ciskei and Venda to set up commissions of inquiry to investigate the desirability of abolishing capital punishment. The Conference resolves to invite other Christian Churches to join this call to these Governments and make the Study Document on Capital Punishment available to such Churches.

30. GUIDELINES FOR INTERFAITH OBSERVANCES

30.1 Principles

- (e) The existence of different faiths in our countries is recognised and accepted;
- (f) While these faiths differ fundamentally in doctrine, understanding and practice, there are occasions when they can act jointly because of a common goal;
- (g) These common goals, such as striving for peace and justice, the preservation of the environment, family life and facing some major crisis or calamity, may be formed at both national as well as at local and civic levels;
- (d) The installation of leaders representing national and local communities are other such occasions;
- (e) Christians may find that joint observations by different religions would compromise their faith and in particular the unique claims that are made of Jesus Christ. There is ample biblical support for the exclusive acknowledgement of the one Lord God and of God's Son, Jesus Christ;
- (f) The Bible nevertheless witnesses to a developing understanding

of God and that this monotheistic understanding may be found among those who do not believe in Jesus Christ;

- (g) Interfaith observance can never be fully corporate. Yet meeting for a common purpose is one act of solidarity. Having a time of silence is another. The offering of prayers, readings and songs by each faith in serial is a way in which all can participate without expecting agreement from those of other faiths;
- (h) Meeting on neutral territory makes it easier, as the premises of one particular religion are bound to appear preferential and its constitution may disallow it.

30.2 Steps to be taken

- (a) The purpose of the occasion should be made clear in the introduction. All present must be assured that they are to feel free to take part or merely be present as members of the community;
- (b) Each inter-faith observance needs to have a specific purpose and not be for the proselytising of people of other faiths;
- (c) Care should be taken to ensure that such observances are not supporting a controversial political issue or implying support of a new inter-faith religion. Neither should they include elements from many religions or a lowest common denominator of them all;
- (d) It is important to be sensitive and allow everyone present to express the worship of God in a way that is honest in experience and understanding;
- (e) No part of the observance should be designed so that people will feel obliged to participate in responses;
- (f) The venue for each observance should be carefully selected. A cathedral or large local church may be seen as the focal point of the community but Christian symbols may be offensive to many present and give the impression that the Christian faith is propagated. There are churches within the Christian faith that forbid observances to be held on their premises unless they are of a Christian nature;
- (g) A neutral venue such as a City Hall would allow people of different faiths to meet on equal terms;
- (h) Readings from the sacred writings of each participating religion may be presented. These readings, which could include poetry, should be appropriate to the occasion and helpful, without being offensive to others who are participating. The readers should be people of that particular faith; discretion should be exercised when civic dignitaries are expected to participate. Such readings may be followed by a time of silent reflection and prayer according to each tradition;

- (i) Prayers may be offered from a particular tradition or be universal in intention. It may be appropriate for the congregation to join in saying a prayer such as that attributed to St Francis of Assisi or another of similarly wide acceptability. Silent reflection and prayer according to each tradition might be the most acceptable. This avoids the possibility that the prayers become either amorphous or syncretistic and allows Christians to be faithful to the Good News of Christianity;
- (j) Music items may be included, preferably without words. Music is always a good aid to meditation;
- (k) Serial multi-faith observances permit people to be present at each others' observance without necessarily taking part. Each observance is complete in itself and people of other faiths are present without feeling obliged to take part. A variation could include a multi-faith pilgrimage from one place of worship to another;
- (l) Symbolism should be handled with great care. It would be unwise to include Baptism or the Eucharist in a Christian observance, but the lighting of candles or the giving of flowers and the exchanging of appropriate greetings, for instance 'Peace be with you', would probably be acceptable without causing offence.

31. POLITICS AND RELIGION

Conference received as an interim measure, the following Guidelines for the Church in relation to matters of a political nature:

- (a) It is our belief that the lordship of Christ extends to all of life, including the political, social and economic areas of our existence.
- (b) In this regard, we reaffirm on the basis of Romans 13 that 'there is no authority except from God', and that where rules are obedient to the law of God we are obliged to obey them. We further reaffirm that it is incumbent upon us in all matters to obey God rather than humans (Acts 5:29). It is clearly as wrong to quote a part of Romans 13 that the nature of the rule of such authority, is 'of God', as it is to quote Revelation 13, in isolation from all other Scripture, to suggest that all government authority is the incarnation of evil as symbolised by the beast.
- (c) Where it is the considered and prayerful conviction of the courts of our Church or its leaders that the government of the day is acting contrary to the declared purpose of God, they are constrained to minister both to the government and to the people of this land by declaring what in their informed and considered opinion is hurtful and sinful about a particular policy or practice.
- (d) In so doing, The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, in keeping with its theological tradition, needs to act cautiously and humbly but also resolutely and in obedience to Scripture and its understanding of the will of God in

this situation. The Wesleyan tradition is clear: ‘The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort. We think and let think’. In this spirit, we recognise that there are widely differing interpretations of the precise way in which the justice of God may be manifest in political or economic structures. Yet precisely because of the Incarnation the Church is to guard against making pronouncements which are merely of an ethereal and abstract nature, remote from the stubborn concreteness of life. It is therefore obliged from time to time to express its mind on specific political and economic matters. It does not decree in an absolutist or in an uncompromisingly prescriptive manner. Rather it does so with tolerance, understanding, and mutual respect for all who seek to live responsibly before God but disagree with the mind of the Church at that particular time.

- (e) Methodists, in common with Christians throughout the ages and in all parts of the world, hold to certain essential and non-negotiable beliefs concerning human existence under God. Where and when the situation requires it, Methodists are obliged before God to affirm and strive for the ideals of human dignity, justice and equity. Conference has in recent times felt itself compelled under the Gospel to make such affirmations and in the light thereof to condemn certain practices and laws of this land in the strongest possible way. In doing so, we acknowledge that these are our interpretations of the will of God which are offered as a responsible contribution toward the welfare of our society. We need to continue to search our minds and be open to further persuasion, but we dare not neglect our responsibility in proclaiming the political, together with other, implications of the Gospel in society today.
- (f) Each Methodist is called upon to appreciate the spirit in which such resolutions are made, to note their content and background, and to understand why our Church has felt obliged to express itself on a particular issue at a particular time.

32. MEMBERSHIP OF POLITICAL PARTIES BY MINISTERS

The Church has an obligation to act as mediator on behalf of God in society and therefore Ministers should seriously examine their conscience whether to be seen to be members of any political party.

33. FLAGS IN CHURCH

No Flags, international, national or political, shall be on display in any of our Church buildings.

34. MINISTERS AS ASSESSORS

Ministers approached by a Magistrate to serve as an assessor may accept such nomination only with the approval of their Bishop.

35. WEAPONRY AND GUN-FREE CAMPAIGN

Trust in lethal weapons is a sign of our failure to fashion a society free of violence and fear. The only long-term answer to this problem lies in obeying God's teaching about caring human relationships and respect for life.

The Methodist Church therefore:

- (a) Calls on all in civil society, especially Methodists, to turn away from firearms;
- (b) Requests the Government to ban private ownership of firearms;
- (c) Affirms the Gun Free South Africa Campaign designed to achieve the voluntary surrender of firearms and calls on all Methodists to participate in the campaign;
- (d) Directs our Ministers not to assist people to gain firearm licences;
- (e) Directs that no firearms be brought to worship services and other meetings of our church;
- (f) Calls on toy manufactures to stop manufacturing gun replicas of any kind;
- (g) Methodists should work for the conversion of the arms industry in South Africa to the production of humane civilian products, with due consideration to existing employment levels and/or adaption of present skills;

The Gun Free Campaign should address the increase in the advertising of handguns with a view to having such advertising banned in our violence-ridden society;

36. STATEMENT ON WOMEN

In 1988 Conference endorsed the Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women and now notes that Churches and Society continue to treat gender concerns lightly, and because the Church is immersed in the problems of violence and economic and political issues, women's issues are treated as peripheral, that women are frequently the victims of violence and of misinformation by media and anti-justice structures, and that women continue to be under-represented.

Women are created in God's image, are in the majority in the Churches and in society at large, and have great potential that needs to be unlocked for the benefit of the Church and Southern Africa.

Therefore all structures within the Church should include at least 40% women, the Church should play a meaningful role in preparing women through education for elections and voting, should encourage awareness campaigns in our Churches on the issues of violence against women, rape and child abuse, should open its doors for open debates on public issues, which should include AIDS, reproductive rights for women, family planning and family life; all new documents, reports, publications, liturgies, prayers, songs, hymns and sermons should use inclusive

language; the Doctrine Committee in consultation with the Unit should prepare a study document on the issue of gender in the Scriptures; a co-ordinating committee should deal with issues concerning women in the Church.

37. PORNOGRAPHY AND CENSORSHIP

All members are called to take an active stand against the relaxing of censorship laws in areas of violence and pornography, and to challenge or boycott any local outlet that distributes pornography material.

38. SEXUAL RAPE

Conference reaffirms its condemnation of all kinds of rape in the strongest terms. It expressed its dismay at the increase in incidents of rape in our Southern African countries as it is inhumane, un-African, and un-Christian. Furthermore, Conference condemns the use of the term “corrective rape” when referring to lesbian rape and directs all Districts and Circuits to educate Methodist people on this subject.

39. CRIME AND CORRUPTION

Conference, in the quest for the realisation of the presence of the Kingdom of God in our midst, calls upon members of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa to strive to uphold the norms and values of the Kingdom. In striving for this, we pledge ourselves to work towards the eradication of crime and corruption within our church, and together with government and other agencies, for the eradication of crime and corruption within society.

40. REVIVAL OF FAMILY VALUES

Conference calls Methodists to be committed to the revival of sound moral values in their families and their church families.

41. GAMBLING

- 41.1 Conference 1995 notes with deep concern the recommendation of the Gambling and Lottery Board, and reiterates its opposition to all forms of gambling due to its destructive influence on community and family life.
- 41.2 Conference notes that this deep concern is well founded, and is a growing tragedy in our communities. More and more people are becoming addicted to gambling, with the resultant poverty and consequent disastrous effects on family life. The moral fibre of our communities is degenerating with the expectation of gain without having to earn.
- 41.3 While the gambling industry does provide employment for a limited number of people in the vicinity of gambling outlets, a far greater number of people in the community are impoverished, while the owners of gambling schemes get rich.

- 41.4 Therefore Conference calls upon Methodist members to maintain a Christ-like influence in the midst of this growing epidemic and tragedy by:
- (a) Abstaining from all forms of gambling
 - (b) To seek help and counselling for themselves and their families from relevant agencies when experiencing problems, either directly or indirectly, in this area.
- 41.5 Conference calls upon our Districts, Circuits, Societies and individual members to equip themselves for ministry to those so afflicted.
- 41.6 Conference recommends to the Connexional Executive that The Mission Unit and our Connexional Leadership continue to confront the Governments of the six countries in our Connexion with a view to eliminating this scourge from our sub-continent.

42. PENSIONS

- 42.1 Conference resolves to call upon Government Officials to cease the practice of paying pension grants on Sundays, thereby debarring the congregants from attending services and interfering with their rights to worship freely.
- 42.2 The Church has consented to the use of Church halls as pay-out points where there are no suitable facilities for the payments of pensions and disability grants. This further strengthens our call for pensions payments to be made on any other day during the week which will not conflict with our worship services.

43. POVERTY

- 43.1 Given the inequalities that exist in our Southern African context, human and financial resources are required to redress poverty.
- 43.2 Conference stresses that the challenges of fighting and eradicating poverty does not lie solely with governments. Faith-based organisations are ideally positioned to address poverty amongst our people.
- 43.3 Conference renews the commitments of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa in keeping with the original Wesleyan imperative, to be in solidarity with the poor.
- 43.4 Conference therefore requests all Circuits, Societies and Districts to strengthen ministry alongside the poor in united determination to combat poverty.

44. CONFERENCE 1958

‘The Conference declares its conviction that it is the will of God for the Methodist Church that it should be one and undivided, trusting to the leading of God to bring this ideal to ultimate fruition, and that this be the general basis of our missionary policy’.

Index

	<i>Page</i>
Abortion	232
Accessibility of Buildings	223
Accommodation for Ministers	115
Adherents	27
Admissions and Public Reception of Members	26
African Language Study	42
Alcohol	229
Alcohol – use of	229
Alteration of Buildings	132
Annual Leave for Ministers	113
Annual Society Meeting	83
Appointment and Removal of Ministers	39
Arbitration and Mediation Process	206
Area of Operation	24
Assessments – non-payment	111
Assessors – Ministers as	236
 Baptism	 13
Beginnings of the Church	22
Bequests Fund	119
Bishop	67
Bishop – Election	69
Bishops – Election Procedure	203
Borrowing of Money	124
 Candidates for the Ministry	 31
Capital Punishment	233
Cash Management Scheme	120
Central and Inner City Mission	222
Chaplains – Appointment Procedure	163
Chaplains – Conduct and Obligations	163
Children and Holy Communion	18
Children of Ministers	107
Children of Ministers	116
Children of Ministers – Bursaries	122
Children of Ministers – School Uniforms	117
Children’s Ministries	101

Children's' Homes	99
Church buildings – Use of	129
Church Membership	25
Church Records	222
Circuit Finances	82
Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting	147
Circuit Local Preachers' Order of Business	200
Circuit Quarterly Meeting	73
Circuit Quarterly Meeting – Membership	73
Circuit Quarterly Meeting Order of Business	198
Circuit Stewards	80
Circuits Without Agency	110
Class Leaders	87
Class Meetings	27
Committees of the Church	89
Communications Unit	90
Compassionate Leave	114
Conditions of Membership	25
Conference	53
Conference – Membership	54
Confirmation	26
Connexional Assessment Fund	105
Connexional Chaplaincy Committee	162
Connexional Disciplinary Committee	142
Connexional Executive	60
Connexional Office Capital Fund	118
Connexional Registrar	62
Connexional Trust Properties Committee	125
Connexional Youth Conference	100
Contemplation and Retreat	223
Continuing Ministerial Education	42
Corruption	238
Crime and Corruption	238
Deacons and Holy Communion	156
Deacons – Appointment of	155
Deacons Candidates	154
Deacons Connexional Committee	153
Deacons Probation and Ordination	154
Deacons – Status	155
Deacons' Convocation	153
Deacons' Discipline	155
Deacons' Leave of Absence	156

Deacons' Stipends and Allowances	155
Death Penalty	233
Deeds of Sale	134
Defunct Circuits and Buildings	134
Diaconal Order Convocation Order of Business	196
Discipline – Local Preachers	150
Discipline – Pastoral Oversight	144
Discipline – Appeals	143
Discipline – Delivery of a Charge	139
Discipline of Presiding Bishop	145
Discipline of Bishops	144
Discipline of Members and Ministers	137
Discipline of Probationers at Seminary	142
Discipline – Trial Procedure	139
Disciplining Ministers	46
Discontinued Ministers	144
Dispensation to Probationer Ministers	17
District Bishop	67
District Disciplinary Committee Procedure.	140
District Disciplinary Registrar	137
District Executive	66
District Finances	71
District Lay Leader	70
District Secretary	70
District Statistical Secretary	70
District Treasurer	72
District Trust Properties Committee	125
District Vice-Chairman	69
Divorce and Ministry	47
Divorce of Local Preachers.	151
Doctrine	13
Duties of Ministers	41
Ecological Crisis	232
Ecumenical Affairs Unit.	91
Education – General Regulations	102
Education for Ministry and Mission Unit	94
Educational Institutions	223
Election Procedure for Bishop	203
Election Procedure for General Secretary	205
Election Procedure for Lay President	204
Election Procedure Presiding Bishop	202
Erection of Buildings	132

Examination Leave	114
Expenditure Limits on Property	135
Family Values	238
Finance Unit Exec	103
Financial forms 4S and 4C	121
Flags in Church	236
Freehold Sites	135
Funeral Grants.	117
Furlough	113
Gambling	76
Gambling	238
General Secretary	59
General Secretary Election Procedure	205
General Treasurers	104
Geographic Circuit Programme	230
Glebes	222
Gun-free Campaign	237
Harassment Policy	209
Healing Ministries	225
HIV/AIDS and the Organisations of the Church	224
Holy Communion	15
Homes for the Aged	99
Human Resources Unit	95
Incorporation of the Transvaal Missions	23
Independence and Autonomy	22
Insurance	109
Interfaith Observance Guidelines	233
Investment of Money	124
Invitations to Ministers	76
Invitations to Visiting Preachers	42
Joint Trust Deeds	135
Lay President	58
Lay President Election Procedure	204
Lay Staff Pension Fund	117
Leaders' Meeting	85
Leave of Absence.	46
Legal Proceedings and Status	63
Legislation	55
Liaison Chaplain	164

Liturgical Wear	232
Loans	119
Local Preachers and Divorce	151
Local Preachers on Note	148
Local Preachers on Trial	148
Local Preachers' Circuit Meeting	147
Local Preachers' Discipline	150
Local Preachers' District Committee	146
Local Preachers' Order of Business	200
Local Trust Properties Committee	127
Long Leave	113
Long Leave Allowances	108
Manse Furnishings	115
Marrying Members of another Society	42
Maternity leave	40
Mediation and Arbitration process	206
Medical Plan for Ministers	115
Memorials to Conference	82
Methodist Discipline	28
Methodist Ethos	25
Methodist Origins	12
Methodist Rule of Life	25
Methodist Schools	102
Methodist Witness	12
Ministerial Students' Fund	108
Ministers left without Appointment	40
Ministers Without Appointment (Marriage)	40
Ministers seeking Reinstatement	144
Ministry and Ordination	19
Mission and Extension Fund	98
Mission Groups	84
Mission Imperatives	224
Mission Unit	96
Name of the Methodist Church	22
Naming of Institutions	225
National Councils of Churches	93
Non-Itinerant Ordained Ministers – full-time	48
Non-Itinerant Ordained Ministers – part-time	50
One and Undivided	230
Order of Deacons	153
Order of Evangelism Candidature	158

Order of Evangelism General Committee	158
Order of Evangelism Remuneration	160
Order of Evangelism Robing	160
Order of Evangelism Warden	158
Ordinands' Examinations	36
Ordination	37
Ordination and Admission into Full Connexion	36
Organisations of the Church	89
Pastoral Commission	62
Pastoral Exchanges	93
Pension Grants	239
Permission to Occupy Buildings	134
Political Party Membership	236
Politics and Religion	235
Poor Fund Stewards	87
Pornography and Censorship	238
Poverty	239
Presiding Bishop	56
Presiding Bishop Election Procedure	202
Presiding Bishop-Elect	58
Primitive Methodist Church	23
Principal Chaplain	164
Prisoners – Care of	76
Private Act – The Methodist Church of Southern Africa	165
Probationer Ministers Regulations regarding Studies	35
Probationers	33
Property Acquirement and Alienation	123
Property Expenditure Limits	135
Property Protection Fund	118
Prophetic Calling of the Church	224
Provident Fund	117
Public Reception of Members	26
Public Relations	223
Pula Fund	98
Purchase, sale, encumbrance or mortgage of landed property	130
Racism	229
Rape	238
Registration of Titles	124
Reinstatement of Ministers	144
Relief and Development Fund	98
Removals	107

Removals	119
Resignation of Ministers	43
Resolution on Pastoral Work	173
Review of Ministry	42
Rule of Life	25
Rules of a Helper	182
Rules of Debate	184
Sale, purchase encumbrance or mortgage of landed property	130
Same-sex Debate	225
Same-sex Relationships	227
Secondment	43
Sick Leave for Ministers	114
Society	83
Society Leaders' Meeting	85
Society Stewards	86
Stationing of Deacons	155
Stationing of Ministers	76
Stipend Augmentation Fund	110
Study Leave	46
Sunday Observance	223
Superintendent Minister	79
Supernumerary Fund	117
Supernumerary Ministers	42
Supervision of Probationers' Studies and Work	34
Suspension of Ministers	141
Synod	64
Synod Mission Groups	66
Synod Order of Business	187
Synod-Membership	64
Synod – Powers	65
The Lord's Supper	15
Tithing and Planned Giving	221
Training Costs of Ministers	108
Transfer from other Churches	37
Transfer of Members	27
Transfer to other Churches	38
Travelling Allowance	113
Union with the Primitive Methodist Church	23
United Congregations	92
United Congregations	223

Units of the Church	89
Use of Church Buildings	129
Vacant property	134
Weaponry and Gun-free Campaign	237
Weekends off for Ministers	114
Women	237
Youth Representation	101
Youth Synod	100
Youth Synod Order of Business	194
Youth Unit	99

