

FIFTH BUSINESS MEETING
Fifty-seventh General Conference Session
Toronto, Ontario, Canada
July 2, 2000, 3:00 p.m.

EUD/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO99AC/99AC/192-99G/00GCS to MV

139-00G OUTLINE OF DOCTRINAL BELIEFS - *CHURCH MANUAL*
AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 5, Church Membership, page 30, and the Appendix, page 189, changing the word “outline” referring to the doctrinal beliefs of the Church to read “summary” as this is more descriptive of the content referred to on those pages.

EUD/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO99AC/99AC/191-99G/00GCS to MV

140-00G TRANSFERRING MEMBERS, CLERK TO MAKE OUT
LETTER - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 5, Church Membership, page 33, Transferring Members, Clerk to Make Out Letter, to read as follows:

Clerk to ~~Make Out~~ Prepare Letter—When the church has granted the letter of transfer, the church clerk fills out the regular form used for this ~~purpose~~, purpose and forwards it to the clerk of the church which the member proposes to join. The clerk of this church passes the letter to the pastor or church elder, who presents it first to the church board for recommendation, after which the request is presented to the church at its next regular service. It is then held over for one week, when final action is taken by vote accepting the person into membership. The clerk of the receiving church then ~~writes~~ adds the member’s name and date of admittance to the church membership record. ~~in the church roll, with the date of admittance.~~ The clerk also fills out the return portion of the church letter, certifying that the member has been accepted, and sends it back to the clerk of the church from which the member was transferred. (See p. 56.)

ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO99AC/99AC/185-99G/00GCS to MV

141-00G ORGANIZED COMPANIES - *CHURCH MANUAL*
AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 5, Church Membership, pages 36 and 37, Organized Companies, to read as follows:

00-1024

July 2, 2000, p.m.

General Conference Session

Organized Companies

Where a number of isolated believers reside in proximity to one another, a company of believers may be organized for fellowship and worship with the objective of growing into an organized church.

Such a group of believers may be organized as a company by approval of the ~~conference or mission~~ conference/mission/field committee, and may subsequently be dissolved by action of the ~~conference or mission~~ conference/mission/field committee. When a ~~conference or mission~~ conference/mission/field committee approves the organization of a company, such organization may be effected by the district pastor or by some other minister appointed by the ~~conference or mission~~ conference/mission/field committee, who, in counsel with the local members, shall appoint from the baptized membership of the company a leader and a treasurer.

All other appointments such as Sabbath School officers, ~~Lay Activities~~ Personal Ministries officers, and Adventist Youth Society officers should be made by vote of the baptized members of the company at a meeting presided over by the district leader or by such person as may be authorized by the ~~conference or mission~~ conference/mission/field committee.

The leader of such a company shall not be ordained to that office and shall not have the authority to perform those functions that are vested in an elder of the church. However, where exceptional circumstances warrant, the ~~conference~~ conference/mission/field committee may appoint a person of church experience and leadership ability to serve as elder of that company.

The treasurer of the company shall keep careful record of all moneys received and disbursed. He/She shall send ~~promptly each month~~ promptly, at the time established by the ~~conference/mission/field,~~ all tithes and offerings, other than funds collected for local purposes, to the ~~conference or field~~ conference/mission/field treasurer, who is also the treasurer of the ~~conference or field~~ conference/mission/field church.

Since all baptized members of an organized company are members of the ~~conference or field~~ conference/mission/field church, the company does not possess the right to administer church discipline. All such matters must be referred to the ~~conference or field~~ conference/mission/field committee, which constitutes the board of the ~~conference, or field~~ conference/mission/field church, the president being the elder of that church.

Such a company of believers should grow and eventually develop to the point that would call for a regular church organization. The company leadership should therefore promote and foster all the church campaigns and activities that are usually carried forward by regular

churches, thus preparing the members for the wider responsibilities that are associated with full church organization.

SPD/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO99AC/99AC/213-99G/00GCS to MV

142-00G QUERIES CONCERNING RECEIVING AND DROPPING
MEMBERS - *CHURCH MANUAL* AMENDMENT

VOTED, To amend the *Church Manual*, Chapter 5, Church Membership, pages 37 and 38, Queries Concerning Receiving and Dropping Members, to read as follows:

Queries Concerning Receiving and ~~Dropping~~ Removing Members

Receiving Members on Profession of Faith—There are four circumstances in which individuals who have accepted the Seventh-day Adventist message may be accepted into the local church by profession of faith:

1. A committed Christian coming from another Christian communion who has already been baptized by immersion as practiced by the Seventh-day Adventist Church. (See p. 28.)
2. A member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church who, because of world conditions, is unable to secure a letter of transfer from his/her home church. (See p. 34.)
3. A member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church whose request for membership transfer has received no response of any kind from the church where he/she is a member. In this case the assistance of the ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field shall be sought. In case the requesting church is located in another ~~conference/mission~~, conference/mission/field the assistance of both ~~conferences/missions~~ conferences/missions/fields should be sought.
4. An individual who has been a member, but whose membership has been misplaced or has been withdrawn because he/she was a missing member, yet who in reality has remained faithful to his/her Christian commitment.

Great care should be exercised in receiving members if they have formerly been members of some other church in the denomination. Instances are not lacking of persons ~~disfellowshipped from~~ removed from membership in one church, later presenting themselves to other churches for membership on profession of faith. When a person applies for membership on profession of faith, earnest inquiries should be made concerning the applicant's former experience. The church

00-1026

July 2, 2000, p.m.

General Conference Session

officers should seek the advice and help of the ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field president. Sufficient time should be taken to extend the investigation as far as needed to reveal all the facts.

When persons apply for membership on profession of faith, and it is found that they are still members of another church in the denomination, no steps should be taken to receive them into membership until the church holding the membership grants their letters of transfer. If after following the process of transfer (see p. 32), a church refuses to grant a letter of transfer, the member may appeal to the local ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field committee if it is considered that the letter has been unjustly denied. The church where membership is held, or the local ~~conference/mission~~ conference/mission/field committee, is the proper organization to decide whether the past conduct has been such that the applicant is entitled to a church letter of transfer. Following such a course will result in a higher appreciation of the sacredness of church membership and in wrongs being made right where this is called for. No church has the right to withhold transfer unless the person is under discipline.

When a ~~disfellowshipped~~ an individual whose membership has been removed seeks ~~membership~~, readmission to church membership, such readmission ~~to church membership~~ is normally preceded by rebaptism. (See p. 173.)

~~Dropping~~ Removing Names—Names should be ~~dropped~~ removed from the list only on a vote of the church, by granting letters of transfer, or by ~~disfellowshipping~~, removing from church membership, except in the case of deceased members. (See pp. 55, 56.)

No Retired Membership List—Each church should have but one membership list. Under no circumstances should the practice of keeping a retired list be followed. The church ~~roll~~ record should contain the names of all members. Names should be added to this list only on the vote of the church after the individual concerned has requested membership by profession of faith or baptism or letter.

ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO97AC/97AC/97AC/145-97G/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/ADCOM/
GCDO98AC/98AC/118-98G/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/ChMan/ChMan/ADCOM/GCDO99AC/
GCDO99AC/99AC/129-99Ga/00GCS to LCC-ChMan00GCS+00GCS

143-00G CHURCH OFFICERS AND THEIR DUTIES, MEMBERSHIP
REQUIRED FOR ELECTION - *CHURCH MANUAL* ADDITION

VOTED, To refer to the Church Manual Committee for further discussion the new section, Membership Required for Election, to be added to the *Church Manual*, Chapter 6, Church Officers and Their Duties, page 45 before the section, Term of Office.

00-1027
July 2, 2000, p.m.
General Conference Session

Adjourned.

Alfred C McClure, Philip S Follett, Chairmen
Donald R Sahly, Secretary
Athol H Tolhurst, Actions Editor
Rowena J Moore, Recording Secretary