

Introduction

The material in this *Discipline* is taken from *The Discipline of The Wesleyan Church* (primarily the 2004 to which the numbering matches). The purpose of this *Discipline* is to help pastors and other leaders in the church to understand the workings of the church and to make a condensed translation of *The Discipline* possible. The present authorized *Discipline of The Wesleyan Church* is the authority upon which this is based. For full understanding of any issue it should be consulted. This is a shortened and somewhat paraphrased version, and while the content is not meant to be different, it is not complete.

Some of the material in this edition will not be found in exact order or layout with *The Discipline*. In general, however, this manuscript will follow the outline of *The Discipline*.

Note: Paragraphs 2500 & 2550 (The Discipline of The Wesleyan Church – 2004). These paragraphs clarify the subordinate nature of mission unit governance to the Department of World Missions. This continues to apply until a mission unit has achieved established status (see paragraph 2610) as a regional/national conference.

PART 1

BASIC PRINCIPLES

Chapter 1

THE CONSTITUTION

Preamble

200. In order that we may wisely preserve and pass on to posterity the heritage of doctrine and principles of Christian living transmitted to us as evangelicals in the Arminian-Wesleyan tradition, and to insure church order by sound principles of ecclesiastical polity, and to prepare the way for more efficient cooperation with other branches of the church of Christ in all that makes for the advancement of God's kingdom among all people, we, the ministers and lay members of The Wesleyan Church meeting in official assemblies, do hereby adopt, establish and set forth the articles of religion and rules of Christian living here following:

Article 1. Name

205. The name of this communion is *The Wesleyan Church*. Wherever the use of this name is impossible or impractical, adaptation may be made by the authorized body.

Article 2. Articles of Religion

1. Faith in the Holy Trinity

210. We believe in the one living and true God, both holy and loving, eternal, unlimited in power, wisdom and goodness, the Creator and Preserver of all things. Within this unity there are three persons of one essential nature, power and eternity — the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

Gen. 1:1; 17:1; Ex. 3:13-15; 33:20; Deut. 6:4; Ps. 90:2; Isa. 40:28-29; Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; John 1:1-2; 4:24; 16:13; 17:3; Acts 5:3-4; 17:24-25; 1 Cor. 8:4, 6; Eph. 2:18; Phil. 2:6; Col. 1:16-17; 1 Tim. 1:17; Heb. 1:8; 1 John 5:20.

2. The Father

212. We believe the Father is the Source of all that exists, whether of matter or spirit. With the Son and the Holy Spirit, He made man, male and female, in His image. By intention He relates to people as Father, thereby forever declaring His goodwill toward them. In love, He both seeks and receives penitent sinners.

Ps. 68:5; Isa. 64:8; Matt. 7:11; John 3:17; Rom. 8:15; 1 Peter 1:17.

3. The Son of God

214. We believe in Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God. He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, truly God and truly man. He died on the cross and was buried, to be a sacrifice both for original sin and for all human transgressions, and to reconcile us to God. Christ rose bodily from the dead, and ascended into heaven, and

there intercedes for us at the Father's right hand until He returns to judge all humanity at the last day.

Ps. 16:8-10; Matt. 1:21, 23; 11:27; 16:28; 27:62-66; 28:5-9, 16-17; Mark 10:45; 15; 16:6-7; Luke 1:27, 31, 35; 24:4-8, 23; John 1:1, 14, 18; 3:16-17; 20:26-29; 21; Acts 1:2-3; 2:24-31; 4:12; 10:40; Rom. 5:10, 18; 8:34; 14:9; 1 Cor. 15:3-8, 14; 2 Cor. 5:18-19; Gal. 1:4; 2:20; 4:4-5; Eph. 5:2; 1 Tim. 1:15; Heb 2:17; 7:27; 9:14, 28; 10:12; 13:20; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 John 2:2; 4:14.

4. The Holy Spirit

216. We believe in the Holy Spirit who proceeds from the Father and the Son, and is of the same essential nature, majesty, and glory, as the Father and the Son, truly and eternally God. He is the Administrator of grace to all, and is particularly the effective Agent in conviction for sin, in regeneration, in sanctification, and in glorification. He is ever present, assuring, preserving, guiding, and enabling the believer.

Job 33:4; Matt. 28:19; John 4:24; 14:16-17; 15:26; 16:13-15; Acts 5:3-4; Rom. 8:9; 2 Cor. 3:17; Gal. 4:6.

5. The Sufficiency and Full Authority of the Holy Scriptures for Salvation

218. We believe that the books of the Old and New Testaments constitute the Holy Scriptures. They are the inspired and infallibly written Word of God, fully inerrant in their original manuscripts and superior to all human authority, and have been transmitted to the present without corruption of any essential doctrine. We believe that they contain all things necessary to salvation; so that whatever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man or woman that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation. Both in the Old and New Testaments life is offered ultimately through Christ, who is the only Mediator between God and humanity. The New Testament teaches Christians how to fulfill the moral principles of the Old Testament, calling for loving obedience to God made possible by the indwelling presence of His Holy Spirit.

The canonical books of the Old Testament are:

Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, Deuteronomy, Joshua, Judges, Ruth, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel, 1 Kings, 2 Kings, 1 Chronicles, 2 Chronicles, Ezra, Nehemiah, Esther, Job, Psalms, Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, The Song of Solomon, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Lamentations, Ezekiel, Daniel, Hosea, Joel, Amos, Obadiah, Jonah, Micah, Nahum, Habakkuk, Zephaniah, Haggai, Zechariah and Malachi.

The canonical books of the New Testament are:

Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Acts, Romans, 1 Corinthians, 2 Corinthians, Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1 Thessalonians, 2 Thessalonians, 1 Timothy, 2 Timothy, Titus, Philemon, Hebrews, James, 1 Peter, 2 Peter, 1 John, 2 John, 3 John, Jude and Revelation.

Ps. 19:7; Matt. 5:17-19; 22:37-40; Luke 24:27, 44; John 1:45; 5:46; 17:17; Acts 17:2, 11; Rom. 1:2; 15:4, 8; 16:26; 2 Cor. 1:20; Gal. 1:8; Eph. 2:15-16; 1 Tim. 2:5; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; Heb. 4:12; 10:1; 11:39; James 1:21; 1 Peter 1:23; 2 Peter 1:19-21; 1 John 2:3-7; Rev. 22:18-19.

6. God's Purpose for Humanity

220. We believe that the two great commandments which require us to love the Lord our God with all the heart, and our neighbors as ourselves, summarize the divine law as it is revealed in the Scriptures. They are the perfect measure and norm of human duty, both for the ordering and directing of families and nations, and all other social bodies, and for individual acts, by which we are required to acknowledge God as our only Supreme Ruler, and all persons as created by Him, equal in all natural rights. Therefore all persons should so order all their individual, social and political acts as to give to God entire and absolute obedience, and to assure to all the enjoyment of every natural right, as well as to promote the fulfillment of each in the possession and exercise of such rights.

Lev. 19:18, 34; Deut. 1:16-17; Job 31:13-14; Jer. 21:12; 22:3; Micah 6:8; Matt. 5:44-48; 7:12; Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:27-29, 35; John 13:34-35; Acts 10:34-35; 17:26; Rom. 12:9; 13:1, 7-8, 10; Gal. 5:14; 6:10; Titus 3:1; James 2:8; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 John 2:5; 4:12-13; 2 John 6.

7. Marriage and the Family

222. We believe that every person is created in the image of God, that human sexuality reflects that image in terms of intimate love, communication, fellowship, subordination of the self to the larger whole, and fulfillment. God's Word makes use of the marriage relationship as the supreme metaphor for His relationship with His covenant people and for revealing the truth that that relationship is of one God with one people. Therefore God's plan for human sexuality is that it is to be expressed only in a monogamous lifelong relationship between one man and one woman within the framework of marriage. This is the only relationship which is divinely designed for the birth and rearing of children and is a covenant union made in the sight of God, taking priority over every other human relationship.

Gen. 1:27-28; 2:18, 20, 23-24; Isa. 54:4-8; 62:5b; Jer. 3:14; Ezek. 16:3ff.; Hosea 2; Mal. 2:14; Matt. 19:4-6; Mark 10:9; John 2:1-2, 11; 1 Cor. 9:5; Eph. 5:23-32; 1 Tim. 5:14; Heb. 13:4; Rev. 19:7-8.

8. Personal Choice

224. We believe that humanity's creation in the image of God included ability to choose between right and wrong. Thus individuals were made morally responsible for their choices. But since the fall of Adam, people are unable in their own strength to do the right. This is due to original sin, which is not simply the following of Adam's example, but rather the corruption of the nature of each mortal, and is reproduced naturally in Adam's descendants. Because of it, humans are very far gone from original righteousness, and by nature are continually inclined to evil. They cannot of themselves even call upon God or exercise faith for salvation. But through Jesus Christ the prevenient grace of God makes possible what humans in self effort cannot do. It is bestowed freely upon all, enabling all who will to turn and be saved.

Gen. 6:5; 8:21; Deut. 30:19; Josh. 24:15; 1 Kings 20:40; Ps. 51:5; Isa. 64:6; Jer. 17:9; Mark 7:21-23; Luke 16:15; John 7:17; Rom. 3:10-12; 5:12-21; 1 Cor. 15:22; Eph. 2:1-3; 1 Tim. 2:5; Titus 3:5; Heb. 11:6; Rev. 22:17.

9. *The Atonement*

226. We believe that Christ's offering of himself, once and for all, through His sufferings and meritorious death on the cross, provides the perfect redemption and atonement for the sins of the whole world, both original and actual. There is no other ground of salvation from sin but that alone. This atonement is sufficient for every individual of Adam's race. It is unconditionally effective in the salvation of those mentally incompetent from birth, of those converted persons who have become mentally incompetent, and of children under the age of accountability. But it is effective for the salvation of those who reach the age of accountability only when they repent and exercise faith in Christ.

Isa. 52:13—53:12; Luke 24:46-47; John 3:16; Acts 3:18; 4:12; Rom. 3:20, 24-26; 5:8-11, 13, 18-20; 7:7; 8:34; 1 Cor. 6:11; 15:22; Gal. 2:16; 3:2-3; Eph. 1:7; 2:13, 16; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 7:23-27; 9:11-15, 24-28; 10:14; 1 John 2:2; 4:10.

10. *Repentance and Faith*

228. We believe that for men and women to appropriate what God's prevenient grace has made possible, they must voluntarily respond in repentance and faith. The ability comes from God, but the act is the individual's.

Repentance is prompted by the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit. It involves a willful change of mind that renounces sin and longs for righteousness, a godly sorrow for and a confession of past sins, proper restitution for wrongdoings, and a resolution to reform the life. Repentance is the precondition for saving faith, and without it saving faith is impossible. Faith, in turn, is the only condition of salvation. It begins in the agreement of the mind and the consent of the will to the truth of the gospel, but issues in a complete reliance by the whole person in the saving ability of Jesus Christ and a complete trusting of oneself to Him as Savior and Lord. Saving faith is expressed in a public acknowledgment of His Lordship and an identification with His Church.

Mark 1:15; Luke 5:32; 13:3; 24:47; John 3:16; 17:20; 20:31; Acts 5:31; 10:43; 11:18; 16:31; 20:21; 26:20; Rom. 1:16; 2:4; 10:8-10, 17; Gal. 3:26; Eph. 2:8; 4:4-6; Phil. 3:9; 2 Thess. 2:13; 2 Tim. 2:25; Heb. 11:6; 12:2; 1 Peter 1:9; 2 Peter 3:9.

11. *Justification, Regeneration and Adoption*

230. We believe that when one repents of personal sin and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ, that at the same moment that person is justified, regenerated, adopted into the family of God, and assured of personal salvation through the witness of the Holy Spirit.

We believe that justification is the judicial act of God whereby a person is accounted righteous, granted full pardon of all sin, delivered from guilt, completely released from the penalty of sins committed, by the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by faith alone, not on the basis of works.

We believe that regeneration, or the new birth, is that work of the Holy Spirit whereby, when one truly repents and believes, one's moral nature is given a distinctively spiritual life with the capacity for love and obedience. This new life is received by faith in Jesus Christ, it enables the pardoned sinner to serve God with the will and affections of the

heart, and by it the regenerate are delivered from the power of sin which reigns over all the unregenerate.

We believe that adoption is the act of God by which the justified and regenerated believer becomes a partaker of all the rights, privileges and responsibilities of a child of God.

Justification: Hab. 2:4; Acts 13:38-39; 15:11; 16:31; Rom. 1:17; 3:28; 4:2-5; 5:1-2; Gal. 3:6-14; Eph. 2:8-9; Phil 3:9; Heb. 10:38.

Regeneration: John 1:12-13; 3:3, 5-8; 2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 3:26; Eph. 2:5, 10, 19; 4:24; Col. 3:10; Titus 3:5; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:3-4; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 3:1.

Adoption: Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:5, 7; Eph. 1:5.

Witness of the Spirit: Rom. 8:16-17; Gal. 4:6; 1 John 2:3; 3:14, 18-19.

12. Good Works

232. We believe that although good works cannot save us from our sins or from God's judgment, they are the fruit of faith and follow after regeneration. Therefore they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and by them a living faith may be as evidently known as a tree is discerned by its fruit.

Matt. 5:16; 7:16-20; John 15:8; Rom 3:20; 4:2, 4, 6; Gal. 2:16; 5:6; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 1:11; Col. 1:10; 1 Thess. 1:3; Titus 2:14; 3:5; James 2:18, 22; 1 Peter 2:9, 12.

13. Sin After Regeneration

234. We believe that after we have experienced regeneration, it is possible to fall into sin, for in this life there is no such height or strength of holiness from which it is impossible to fall. But by the grace of God one who has fallen into sin may by true repentance and faith find forgiveness and restoration.

Mal. 3:7; Matt. 18:21-22; John 15:4-6; 1 Tim. 4:1, 16; Heb. 10:35-39; 1 John 1:9; 2:1, 24-25.

14. Sanctification: Initial, Progressive, Entire

236. We believe that sanctification is that work of the Holy Spirit by which the child of God is separated from sin unto God and is enabled to love God with all the heart and to walk in all His holy commandments blameless. Sanctification is initiated at the moment of justification and regeneration. From that moment there is a gradual or progressive sanctification as the believer walks with God and daily grows in grace and in a more perfect obedience to God. This prepares for the crisis of entire sanctification which is wrought instantaneously when believers present themselves as living sacrifices, holy and acceptable to God, through faith in Jesus Christ, being effected by the baptism with the Holy Spirit who cleanses the heart from all inbred sin. The crisis of entire sanctification perfects the believer in love and empowers that person for effective service. It is followed by lifelong growth in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The life of holiness continues through faith in the sanctifying blood of Christ and evidences itself by loving obedience to God's revealed will.

Gen. 17:1; Deut. 30:6; Ps. 130:8; Isa. 6:1-6; Ezek. 36:25-29; Matt. 5:8, 48; Luke 1:74-75; 3:16-17; 24:49; John 17:1-26; Acts 1:4-5, 8; 2:1-4; 15:8-9; 26:18; Rom. 8:3-4; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:11; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:13, 24; 5:25-27; 1 Thess. 3:10, 12-13; 4:3, 7-8; 5:23-24; 2 Thess. 2:13; Titus 2:11-14; Heb. 10:14; 12:14; 13:12; James 3:17-18; 4:8; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:4; 1 John 1:7, 9; 3:8-9; 4:17-18; Jude 24.

15. The Gifts of the Spirit

238. We believe that the Gift of the Spirit is the Holy Spirit himself, and He is to be desired more than the gifts of the Spirit which He in His wise counsel bestows upon individual members of the Church to enable them properly to fulfill their function as members of the body of Christ. The gifts of the Spirit, although not always identifiable with natural abilities, function through them for the edification of the whole Church. These gifts are to be exercised in love under the administration of the Lord of the Church, not through human volition. The relative value of the gifts of the Spirit is to be tested by their usefulness in the Church and not by the ecstasy produced in the ones receiving them.

Luke 11:13; 24:49; Acts 1:4; 2:38-39; 8:19-20; 10:45; 11:17; Rom. 12:4-8; 1 Cor. 12:1—14:40; Eph. 4:7-8, 11-16; Heb. 2:4; 13:20-21; 1 Peter 4:8-11.

16. The Church

240. We believe that the Christian Church is the entire body of believers in Jesus Christ, who is the founder and only Head of the Church. The Church includes both those believers who have gone to be with the Lord and those who remain on the earth, having renounced the world, the flesh and the devil, and having dedicated themselves to the work which Christ committed unto His church until He comes. The Church on earth is to preach the pure Word of God, properly administer the sacraments according to Christ's instructions, and live in obedience to all that Christ commands. A local church is a body of believers formally organized on gospel principles, meeting regularly for the purposes of evangelism, nurture, fellowship and worship. The Wesleyan Church is a denomination consisting of those members within district conferences and local churches who, as members of the body of Christ, hold the faith set forth in these Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church and acknowledge the ecclesiastical authority of its governing bodies.

Matt. 16:18; 18:17; Acts 2:41-47; 9:31; 11:22; 12:5; 14:23; 15:22; 20:28; 1 Cor. 1:2; 12:28; 16:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Gal. 1:2; Eph. 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:9-10, 21; 5:22-33; Col. 1:18, 24; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:1; 1 Tim. 3:15; Heb. 12:23; James 5:14.

17. The Sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper

242. We believe that water baptism and the Lord's Supper are the sacraments of the church commanded by Christ and ordained as a means of grace when received through faith. They are tokens of our profession of Christian faith and signs of God's gracious ministry toward us. By them, He works within us to quicken, strengthen and confirm our faith.

We believe that water baptism is a sacrament of the church, commanded by our Lord and administered to believers. It is a symbol of the new covenant of grace and signifies

acceptance of the benefits of the atonement of Jesus Christ. By means of this sacrament, believers declare their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

Matt. 3:13-17; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 3:5, 22, 26; 4:1-2; Acts 2:38-39, 41; 8:12-17, 36-38; 9:18; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16; Rom 2:28-29; 4:11; 6:3-4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27-29; Col. 2:11-12; Titus 3:5.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is a sacrament of our redemption by Christ's death and of our hope in His victorious return, as well as a sign of the love that Christians have for each other. To such as receive it humbly, with a proper spirit and by faith, the Lord's Supper is made a means through which God communicates grace to the heart.

Matt. 26:26-28; Mark 14:22-24; Luke 22:19-20; John 6:48-58; 1 Cor. 5:7-8; 10:3-4, 16-17; 11:23-29.

18. The Second Coming of Christ

244. We believe that the certainty of the personal and imminent return of Christ inspires holy living and zeal for the evangelization of the world. At His return He will fulfill all prophecies made concerning His final and complete triumph over evil.

Job 19:25-27; Isa. 11:1-12; Zech. 14:1-11; Matt. 24:1-51; 25; 26:64; Mark 13:1-37; Luke 17:22-37; 21:5-36; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:6-11; 1 Cor. 1:7-8; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2:19; 3:13; 4:13-18; 5:1-11, 23; 2 Thess. 1:6-10; 2:1-12; Titus 2:11-14; Heb. 9:27-28; James 5:7-8; 2 Peter 3:1-14; 1 John 3:2-3; Rev. 1:7; 19:11-16; 22:6-7, 12, 20.

19. The Resurrection of the Dead

246. We believe in the bodily resurrection from the dead of all people—of the just unto the resurrection of life, and of the unjust unto the resurrection of damnation. The resurrection of Christ is the guarantee of the resurrection which will occur at Christ's Second Coming. The raised body will be a spiritual body, but the person will be whole and identifiable.

Job 19:25-27; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 22:30-32; 28:1-20; Mark 16:1-8; Luke 14:14; 24:1-53; John 5:28-29; 11:21-27; 20:1—21:25; Acts 1:3; Rom. 8:11; 1 Cor. 6:14; 15:1-58; 2 Cor. 4:14; 5:1-11; 1 Thess. 4:13-17; Rev. 20:4-6, 11-13.

20. The Judgment of All Persons

248. We believe that the Scriptures reveal God as the Judge of all and the acts of His judgment are based on His omniscience and eternal justice. His administration of judgment will culminate in the final meeting of all persons before His throne of great majesty and power, where records will be examined and final rewards and punishments will be administered.

Ecl. 12:14; Matt. 10:15; 25:31-46; Luke 11:31-32; Acts 10:42; 17:31; Rom. 2:16; 14:10-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 2 Tim. 4:1; Heb. 9:27; 2 Peter 3:7; Rev. 20:11-13.

21. Destiny

250. We believe that the Scriptures clearly teach that there is a conscious personal existence after death. The final destiny of each person is determined by God's grace and that person's response, evidenced inevitably by a moral character which results from that individual's personal and volitional choices and not from any arbitrary decree of God. Heaven with its eternal glory and the blessedness of Christ's presence is the final abode of those who choose the salvation which God provides through Jesus Christ, but hell with its everlasting misery and separation from God is the final abode of those who neglect this great salvation.

Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:34-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 13:3; John 8:21-23; 14:2-3; 2 Cor. 5:6, 8, 10; Heb. 2:1-3; 9:27-28; 10:26-31; Rev. 20:14-15; 21:1—22:5, 14-15.

Article 3. Covenant Membership Commitments

260. To be identified with an organized church is the blessed privilege and sacred duty of all who are saved from their sins and are seeking completeness in Christ Jesus. From the Church's beginnings in the New Testament age, it has been understood that such identification involves putting off the old patterns of conduct and putting on the mind of Christ. In maintaining this Christian concept of a transformed life, The Wesleyan Church intends to relate timeless biblical principles to the conditions of contemporary society in such a way as to respect the integrity of the individual believer, yet maintain the purity of the Church and the effectiveness of its witness. This is done in the conviction that there is validity in the concept of the collective Christian conscience as illuminated and guided by the Holy Spirit. The following items (265) represent historic, ethical and practical standards of The Wesleyan Church. While it is hoped that our people will earnestly seek the aid of the Spirit in cultivating a sensitivity to evil which transcends the mere letter of the law, it is expected that those entering into Covenant Membership shall follow carefully and conscientiously these guides and helps to holy living. Disregard of the principles embraced in these Covenant Membership Commitments subjects a member to Church discipline (268).

265. Those admitted to Covenant Membership in our churches commit themselves to demonstrate their life in Christ in such ways as:

Toward God

(1) To reverence the name of God and to honor the Lord's Day by divine worship and spiritual edification, participating in those activities which contribute to the moral and spiritual purposes of this day.

Gen. 2:3; Ex. 20:3, 7-11; Deut. 5:11-15; Isa. 58:13-14; Mark 2:27; Acts 20:7; Heb. 4:9.

(2) To seek only the leading of the Holy Spirit and to abstain from all forms of spiritism, such as the occult, witchcraft, astrology and other similar practices.

Lev. 19:31; 20:6; Deut. 18:10-14; Acts 19:18-19; Gal. 5:19-20.

Toward Self

(3) To exercise faithful stewardship through the wise use of their time and material resources, practicing careful self-discipline in order to further the mission of Christ's church (remembering the principle of tithing which is basic to the New Testament standard of stewardship) and to demonstrate compassion to those in need.

Prov. 3:9; Mal. 3:10; Matt. 25:34-40; Acts 20:35; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 9:7; Eph. 5:16; Col. 3:17; James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17.

(4) To demonstrate a positive social witness by abstaining from all forms of gambling and by abstaining from using or trafficking (production, sale or purchase) in any substances destructive to their physical, mental and spiritual health, such as alcoholic beverages, tobacco and drugs (other than proper medical purposes of drugs); and by refraining from membership in secret societies and lodges which are oath bound, believing that the quasi-religious nature of such organizations divides the Christian's loyalty, their secret nature contravenes the Christian's open witness and the secret nature of their oaths is repugnant to the Christian conscience.

Ex. 20:17; Rom. 14:21; 1 Cor. 6:12. Gambling violates the principle of Christian stewardship and the tenth commandment, is harmful to the individual in that it is emotionally addictive, is a poor example to others, and pollutes the moral climate of society.

Prov. 20:1; Rom. 6:12; 14:21; 1 Cor. 6:12-20; 10:23; 2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 5:18; 1 Thess. 5:12. Christians are to regard their bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit. While no "thing" of itself is sinful, the Christian should avoid the use of anything which would not help build the fellowship of the church, would not help the believers to realize their full potential in Christ, or which would enslave them. In the light of the scientific knowledge of our day concerning the actual and potential harm of these substances, total abstinence is more in keeping with these biblical principles than is moderation.

Ex. 20:3; Matt. 5:34-36; John 18:20; Acts 4:12; James 5:12. These prohibitions do not restrict membership in labor, civic or other organizations which do not contradict loyalty to Christ and the Church. When in these relationships Christian principles are violated, members shall be dealt with because of such violations and not because of the membership itself.

Toward Family

(5) To follow the teachings of the Scriptures regarding marriage and divorce. We affirm that sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful. We further affirm that heterosexual monogamy is God's plan for marriage, and we regard sexual sin of the spouse, such as adultery, homosexual behavior, bestiality or incest, as the only biblical grounds for

considering divorce, and then only when appropriate counseling has failed to restore the relationship.

Ex. 20:14, 17; 22:19; Lev. 20:10-16; Matt. 5:32; 19:19; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18.

(6) To preserve the sanctity of the home by honoring Christ in every phase of family life and by demonstrating Christlike love (always avoiding spousal or child abuse), and by living peacefully with one another, thereby encouraging the nurture and education of the children to the Christian faith so as to bring them early to the saving knowledge of Christ.

Prov. 22:6; Mark 10:9; Eph. 5:28; 6:4.

Toward the Church

(7) To work together for the advancement of God's kingdom and for the mutual edification of fellow believers in holiness, knowledge and love; to walk together in Christian fellowship by giving and receiving counsel with gentleness and affection; by praying for each other; by helping each other in sickness and distress; and by demonstrating love, purity and courtesy to all

Rom. 15:1-2; Eph. 4; 1 Thess. 5.

(8) To grow in the knowledge, love and grace of God by participating in public worship, the ministry of the Word of God, the Lord's Supper, family and personal devotions and fasting.

Mark 2:18-20; Acts 13:2-3; 14:23; Rom. 12:12; 1 Cor. 11:23-28; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; Heb. 10:25; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18.

(9) To preserve the fellowship and witness of the Church with reference to the use of languages. The Wesleyan Church believes in the miraculous use of languages and the interpretation of languages in the biblical and historical setting. But it is contrary to the Word of God to teach that speaking in an unknown tongue or the gift of tongues is the evidence of the baptism of the Holy Spirit or of that entire sanctification which the baptism accomplishes; therefore, only a language readily understood by the congregation is to be used in public worship. The Wesleyan Church believes that the use of an ecstatic prayer language has no clear scriptural sanction, or any pattern of established historical usage in the Church; therefore, the use of such a prayer language shall not be promoted among us.

Acts 8:14-17; 1 Cor. 12:1—14:40; Gal. 5:22-24.

Toward Others

(10) To do good as much as possible to all people as God gives opportunity; especially to those in the body of Christ; by giving food to the hungry, by clothing the destitute, by visiting or helping those who are sick or in prison; by instructing, correcting or encouraging them in love.

Matt. 25:31-46; Eph. 5:11; 1 Thess. 5:14; Heb. 3:13; 10:23-25.

(11) To respect the inherent individual rights of all persons, regardless of race, color or sex.

1 Cor. 8:13; 12:13; Gal. 3:28; 1 Tim. 5:21.

(12) To live honestly, be just in all dealings and faithful in all commitments.

Ecc. 5:4-5; Rom. 12:17; Phil. 4:8-9; 1 Peter 2:12.

268. These are the Covenant Membership Commitments of our Church. We believe all these to be consistent with the principles of Christ as taught in the Word of God, which is the only and sufficient rule both of our faith and practice. If any among us do not observe them, and/or habitually break any of them, we will admonish such persons in love with the hope of restoring them to lives of harmony with the above Covenant Membership Commitments. If such efforts of restoration continue to prove fruitless, official action should be taken toward termination of said person's church membership. However, the church members are encouraged to continue efforts toward the spiritual restoration of these persons.

Matt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 5:6-7, 9-13; 2 Cor. 2:5-7; 5:18-20; 6:14-18; Gal. 6:1-10; Eph. 4:25-32; Titus 3:10-11.

Article 4. Principle of Non-Discrimination

360. The Wesleyan Church forbids any discrimination against any lay member or minister on account of ancestry, color, or gender.

Chapter 2

WHAT WE BELIEVE ABOUT CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL ISSUES

410. The Wesleyan Church seeks to help the society which surrounds it to understand the authority of Almighty God, and the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, in civil, political, and physical as well as spiritual matters, and the transformation of that society into the image of Christ as much as possible in this present age. It believes that such a transformation of society shall primarily be accomplished by the divine transformation through faith in Christ of the individuals who compose society, but that Christians ought also to manifest social concern in every manner that is in keeping with the Christian testimony. In keeping with this The Wesleyan Church agrees to the following:

(1) **Equal Rights.** The Wesleyan Church upholds the right of all individuals to equal opportunity politically, economically, and religiously, and pledges itself to an active effort to bring about the possession of dignity and happiness by all people everywhere.

(2) **Peace.** The Wesleyan Church, knowing that war results in great suffering for the bodies, minds, and souls of men and women, great economic loss and debt for future generations, and the unleashing of the worst elements of life, urges that persons and nations seek by every legitimate means to avoid armed conflict among the peoples and nations of the world. The Wesleyan Church also urges that holy people everywhere pray earnestly for those in authority, so that peace may prevail (1 Tim. 2:2), and for the quick return of the Prince of Peace.

(3) **Military Service.** The Wesleyan Church teaches respect for properly constituted civil authority and the proper loyalty to one's country. It recognizes the responsibility of the individual to answer the call of government and to enter into military service. However, there are those within the fellowship of The Wesleyan Church who believe that military service is contrary to the teaching of the New Testament and that their consciences are violated by being forced to take part in the military. The Wesleyan Church will therefore lend moral support to any member who asks and claims exemption by legal processes from military service as a sincere matter of conscience and who asks to serve one's country as a noncombatant.

(4) **Buying and Selling on the Lord's Day.** The Wesleyan Church opposes buying and selling on the Lord's day.

(5) **Religion in Public Life.** The Wesleyan Church encourages the enactment of suitable laws which will strengthen religion in national life and allow reference to, or the asking of the aid of God, in any governmental or public document, meeting, activity, ceremony, or institution.

(6) **Abortion.** The Wesleyan Church is opposed to the use of induced abortion. However, it recognizes that there may be rare pregnancies where there are grave medical conditions threatening the life of the mother, which could raise a serious question about taking the life of the unborn child. In such a case, a decision should be made only after very prayerful consideration following medical and spiritual counseling.

(7) **Use of Leisure Time.** The Wesleyan Church believes that its members should exercise responsible stewardship of their leisure time. This will include careful regulation of the use in the home of media such as computer, literature, radio, and television, guarding the home against the attack of evil.

412. Statements on Marriage. The Wesleyan Church detests the trend to ignore God's laws of chastity and purity, and vigorously opposes public acceptance of sexual promiscuity and all factors and practices which promote it. The Wesleyan Church maintains a biblical view of human sexuality which makes the sexual experience, within the framework of marriage, a gift of God to be enjoyed as communion of a man and woman, as well as for the purpose of procreation. Sexual relationships outside of marriage and sexual relationships between persons of the same sex are immoral and sinful. The following are the guidelines for marriage as it relates to membership in The Wesleyan Church:

(1) The Wesleyan Church believes that Christian Marriage is God's plan for beginning the Christian home, and upholds the Scriptural teaching that the Christian should take only a fellow believer as a marriage partner (2 Cor. 6:14).

(2) The Church expects the Christian man and woman to be united under the civil laws of the land as well as the customary arrangements between the families of both parties which are not in conflict with the teachings of God's Word. Those who have already been married by civil, traditional or common law marriage prior to conversion are encouraged to have a Christian marriage ceremony.

(3) No Christian man and woman shall be permitted to live together as husband and wife until properly married. The Church shall consider sexual relations between a man and woman before marriage as the sin of fornication or adultery and an offense against God, His Word and the Church, and if not repented of, Church membership shall be terminated.

(4) The Wesleyan Church believes that monogamy (one man and one woman in marriage) is God's plan for Christian marriage as taught in the Scriptures (Gen. 2:18, 24; Matt. 19:4-5; 1 Tim. 3:2, 12; Titus 1:5, 6). A Christian who is a covenant member of the Church who enters into a polygamous marriage commits an offense against God, His Word and the rules of the Church. Persons who continue with a polygamous marriage and do not repent shall have their membership terminated.

(5) The Wesleyan Church believes the Scriptural teaching regarding divorce—that a man and wife are bound together in marriage for life, no matter which ceremony brought them together—civil, traditional or church. Only biblical grounds may be considered for divorce.

(6) **Divorce and Remarriage.** On the basis of a careful study of the Scriptures, and in keeping with its Covenant Membership Commitments (265:5), The Wesleyan Church teaches the following with reference to divorce and remarriage after divorce.

(a) To obtain a divorce on other than scriptural grounds is a sin against God and humanity. Such putting asunder of what God has joined is a direct and deliberate act of disobedience against both the Law and the Gospel. It separates one from God and subjects a member to Church discipline.

(b) However, recognizing the fallen state of humanity, divorce has been recognized in the Scriptures as a valid and permanent dissolution of marriage with all its rights and responsibilities. Divorce is not reversible. There is no way to "restore" a dissolved marriage. The divorced (unmarried) status can be changed only by a new marriage to the same person or another person. No divorced and remarried person has two spouses, only a former spouse and a present spouse, as in Deuteronomy 24:1-4 and 1 Corinthians 7.

(c) Divorce, however sinful the act and however serious the consequences, is not "unpardonable." A redeemed sinner or reclaimed backslider is "free" to marry "in the Lord" or to remain unmarried, a eunuch for the kingdom of God's sake. The one exception to this freedom of choice is mentioned by the Apostle Paul. It is a believer

who disobeys the commandment of God and puts away a believing spouse. That person must remain unmarried to leave room for reconciliation to the spouse (1 Cor. 7).

(d) The right to marry in no way excuses the sin of divorce. It only implies that the Church must forgive and restore those whom the Lord forgives and restores. Neither penance nor penalty remain to the truly penitent and restored sinner, or backslider, whatever the traumatic consequences of the sin may be.

414. Statements on Drunkenness and Harmful Drugs. The Wesleyan Church believes the Scriptures plainly teach that drunkenness and the use of other drugs that harm the body are sins against God (Prov. 20:1; 23:29-35; Isa. 5:11; Luke 21:34; Rom. 13:13; 1 Cor. 5:11; Gal. 5:19-20; Eph. 5:17-18). Persons who use any kind of strong drink which causes drunkenness or harmful drugs for recreational purposes, commit an offense against God, His Word and the rules of the Church, and such persons are not eligible for Church membership. Church members who are found guilty of using strong drink or harmful drugs shall be warned of the error of their ways; and if there is no repentance and evidence of a changed life, their Church membership shall be terminated.

416. Statements on Pagan Religious Practices.

(1) The Wesleyan Church believes the Scriptures plainly teach that Christians are to worship God only and to put their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation (Ex. 20:3-6; Deut. 18:9-12; Acts 4:12; 1 Cor. 3:11; 10:21). The Church strongly condemns all forms of pagan religious practices, believing that they come from Satan. Such pagan religious practices include the holding or use of fetishes and charms, making sacrifices to spirits of ancestors, using sorcery to “put a curse on” people or things, the use of “medicine” purchased from a sorcerer or spirit medium. The Wesleyan Church condemns communication with or the worship of, or giving of respect to idols, demons, ancestral spirits or other false gods.

(2) The Wesleyan Church affirms God’s protection and provision for Christians. This includes personal and family situations dealing with health, land, and welfare (Isa. 41:10; Luke 12:4; Phil. 4:6, 7, 19).

(3) No person is eligible for Covenant Membership in the Church who holds to pagan belief or practice. Church members who return to pagan religious beliefs or practices commit an offense against God, His Word and the rules of the Church, and they shall be warned of the error of their ways; and if there is no repentance and evidence of a changed life, their Church membership shall be terminated.

430. Healing. The truth that Jesus is both able and willing to heal the body as well as the human soul, whenever the healing is for His glory, is clearly set forth in God's Word and witnessed to by the experience of many of His people at the present day. Prayer for healing according to the pattern set forth in the Scriptures shall be encouraged.

Matt. 10:8; Luke 9:2; 10:9; Acts 4:10, 14; 1 Cor. 12:9, 28; James 5:14-16.

How The Church Should Be Financed

460. Meaning of Stewardship. The Bible teaches that God is the owner of all persons and all things, that people are His managers of both life and possessions. It teaches that every person shall be held personally accountable to God for the use of material possessions. God has established a system of giving which acknowledges His ownership and people's responsibility. His children should faithfully tithe and present offerings for the support of the gospel.

465. Storehouse Tithing. Storehouse tithing is the scriptural practice of faithfully and regularly placing the tithe into the church to which the member belongs. The financing of the church shall be based on the plan of “storehouse tithing.” The Wesleyan Church shall be regarded by all its people as the storehouse. All who are a part of The Wesleyan Church are urged to contribute faithfully one-tenth of all their increase as a minimum financial obligation to the Lord and freewill offerings in addition as God has prospered them.

**Gen. 14:20; 28:22; Lev. 27:30-32; Deut. 14:22; Prov. 3:9-10; 11:24-25;
Mal. 3:10-11; Matt. 23:23; Acts 4:34-35; 6:1-3; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:13-
14; Heb. 7:1-2, 6, 9.**

470. Methods of Fund Raising. In the light of the scriptural teaching concerning the giving of tithes and offerings for the support of the gospel, and for the erection of church buildings, no Wesleyan church should engage in any method of fund raising which would detract from these principles, hinder the gospel message, shame the name of the Church, discriminate against the poor, or misdirect the people's energies from promoting the gospel.

PART 2.

LOCAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Chapter 1

LOCAL CHURCH ORGANIZATION

A. Kinds of Churches

503. Pastoral Charge. A pastoral charge is a church or circuit supplied as a pastoral appointment by the District Conference.

1. Preaching Point

505. A new evangelistic outreach group which meets regularly but which cannot be organized as a developing or established church.

2. Developing Church

510. To organize a new work, a preaching point, or a group of believers which does not meet the requirements for an established church (518) as a developing church, application must be made to the District Superintendent. The following requirements must be met:

(1) A pastor or lay leader initially appointed by the District Board of Administration to act as leader of the church.

(2) A membership roll shall be kept, usually for one to twenty members. Candidates for membership shall be examined and recommended to the District Superintendent by the pastor until a local advisory council (see 3 below) is formed and assumes this duty.

(3) As soon as qualified members are available, the District Superintendent, with the pastor's help, shall appoint a secretary-treasurer and a Sunday School superintendent, who together with the pastor as chair shall form a local advisory council. All actions of the local advisory council shall be reviewed and approved by the District Board of Administration.

(4) When there are enough members and qualified persons to meet the requirements for an established church (518), the developing church may have a general meeting, subject to the approval of the District Superintendent, in which they may care for the general business of the local congregation.

(5) All property of a developing church shall be held by the district, with titles secured as given in 4610.

(6) A developing church shall have one lay representative in the District Conference, appointed by the District Superintendent (657).

3. Established Church

518. A developing church may be classified as an established church by the District Board of Administration when it meets the following conditions:

(1) Twenty or more persons who are covenant members. An established church shall be reclassified as a developing church if its covenant membership drops to 15 or fewer.

- (2) Able to pay a pastor the minimum salary the district sets for full-time pastors.
- (3) Able to meet all current expenses.
- (4) Able to take care of the church property.
- (5) Able to meet district and National/Regional obligations.
- (6) Holds all property in trust for The Wesleyan Church as required in 4610.

520. Procedure for Organization. When the establishment of a church has been authorized by the District Board of Administration, the District Superintendent shall talk with the pastor and the local advisory council and appoint a time for a congregational meeting. The meeting shall be conducted in the following way:

(1) Reading of the Articles of Religion and Membership Commitments by the presiding officer.

(2) An examination of each of the candidates for membership, conducted by the presiding officer, using the questions commonly addressed to such candidates (cf. 5560-5575), and the baptism of those who have not previously been baptized. When the organization involves a church previously organized as a developing church, those who have been accepted as members of the developing church do not need to be reexamined.

(3) A public acknowledgment of agreement of the members on the following things. The presiding officer shall ask each one:

Question 1. "Are you in Christian fellowship with all those who present themselves for membership in this church organization?"

Answer. "I am".

Question 2. "Will you receive each other as brothers and sisters in the faith and promise to walk with each other in Christian love?"

Answer. "I will."

(4) A declaration made by the presiding officer:

"On the basis of these pledges in the presence of God, I shake your hand in Christian fellowship, and declare by this act that you are a Christian church organized on the basis of *The Discipline* of The Wesleyan Church, and are given all the rights, powers, and duties assigned to an established Wesleyan Church."

(5) The first meeting of the local church conference follows in which officers elected (5915) shall serve for the remainder of the church year.

(6) The District Superintendent shall report the organization of this church to the next regular meeting of the District Board of Administration, and to the next regular meeting of the District Conference (1180:17; 1310:10).

(7) Steps to provide for the pastoral oversight and care of the new church shall be taken, if this has not already been done.

4. The Circuit

525. Relationship of Circuit and Church. A circuit is a pastoral charge in which a District Conference has grouped two or more local churches under one pastor, and specifically appointed them as a circuit. The circuit shall have all of the rights of a pastoral charge which are not reserved to the local church and take charge of all matters of circuit business. The rights reserved to the local church include the power to receive and expel or discontinue members subject to the provisions of *The Discipline*, the power to grant or revoke local licenses for various ministries as provided in *The Discipline*, the power to elect local church officers and trustees and to remove such for cause, and the right to recourse to a proper court of jurisdiction in any legal matter

526. Circuit Conference. The covenant members of all the churches in a circuit, when properly called together to do business shall be a circuit conference. It shall follow the same pattern as a local church conference (cf. 625-650).

530. Circuit Advisory Council. The circuit advisory council acts as a local board for the circuit. Its members are the pastor (chair), the circuit secretary, the treasurer of each local church, the chair of the circuit board of trustees (if there is one), and such other representatives as the circuit conference shall determine are needed to assure proper representation. It shall elect one of its members as vice-chair, and shall meet at least quarterly.

532. Circuit Trustees. The circuit board of trustees shall consist of three to five members elected by the circuit conference. They shall have authority only over that property owned by the circuit, such as the circuit parsonage.

542. Preaching points, circuits, and developing and established churches located outside any district shall be authorized, organized, and governed by the National/Regional Board of Administration.

Chapter 2

MEMBERSHIP

A. Categories of Membership

1. Covenant Membership

553. Those persons shall be admitted to covenant membership in The Wesleyan Church who meet the following conditions.

(1) Candidates for covenant membership shall be examined as provided for by the local church board (782:7), to determine whether they meet the requirements for membership including their experience of regeneration, Christian baptism, their acceptance of the Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church, the Covenant Membership Commitments and the authority of *The Discipline* in matters of church government, and their willingness to enter into covenant with the Church.

(2) Covenant members will further demonstrate their life in Christ and commitment to the local church upon becoming a covenant member, by affirming their personal experience in regeneration and commitment to an experience of heart holiness and a life of practical holiness; their acceptance of the Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church, the Covenant Membership Commitments, and the authority of *The Discipline* in matters of church government; their support of the church; their commitment to live in fellowship with the members thereof and to seek God's glory in all things.

(3) Candidates for covenant membership who have satisfactorily passed the examination by the local church board, shall be voted upon by the local church conference unless the local church conference has delegated this right to the local church board (782:8; 655:1). In either case, it shall require a majority vote of those present and voting to receive; and if objections are urged against the reception of a member, it shall require a two-thirds vote of those present and voting.

(4) Persons who have been accepted for covenant membership as explained in 553:3, should be formally received into covenant membership in a public service, in which they shall make their confession and vows public, according to the manner given in 5565.

555. The rights of covenant membership are:

(1) Christian fellowship of the other believers and the encouragement, admonition, and spiritual guidance from the pastor.

(2) The right to partake of the sacraments of the Church.

(3) The right to vote and to hold any office in the church.

(4) The right to trial and appeal if charged with failure to maintain the conditions of membership, with the specific provision that joining another religious body shall of itself cut off membership in the Church.

(5) A member in good standing in any Wesleyan Church may transfer membership to another Wesleyan Church, subject to the approving vote of the members of the receiving church who are present and voting, unless the church by vote shall delegate this right to the local church board. In both cases, it shall be by majority vote, provided that when objections are urged against the reception of a member, it shall require a vote of two-thirds of those present and voting.

(6) No covenant member shall be transferred to any other category of membership except at the specific written agreement by the person involved.

(7) Any covenant member charged with failure to uphold the Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church or to observe the Covenant Membership Commitments must be dealt with by judicial process as given in *The Discipline* (5105-5110).

2. Community Membership

558. A local church may choose to implement the community membership category. Those who are converted to Christ but who are not yet able to assume the responsibility of covenant membership, either because they are young in Christ, young in years or come from a religious background different from The Wesleyan Church in areas of doctrine or discipline, yet demonstrate willingness to be disciplined in the Wesleyan convictions, may be received as community members.

(1) The local church board, having provided for their examination concerning their Christian experience and their intention to prepare for covenant membership may, if satisfied, receive them by majority vote.

(2) Community members will further demonstrate their life in Christ and commitment to growth and development in the body by signing, upon becoming a community member, a Community Member Agreement affirming their personal experience in regeneration and commitment to seek after an experience of heart holiness and a life of practical holiness; their participation in a discipleship program including further instruction in the Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church, and the Covenant Membership Commitments; and by their support of the church and purpose to live in fellowship with the other members.

(3) Community members shall be formally received according to the manner given in 5575.

560. The rights of community membership are:

(1) The fellowship of the saints and the encouragement, admonition and spiritual guidance of the ministry.

(2) Access to the sacraments and ordinances of the Church. (This does not mean that The Wesleyan Church practices closed communion—cf. 5605; 5615.)

(3) Eligibility to fill any office or position in the local church other than those for which covenant membership is required by *The Discipline*, provided that the local church board considers the community member sufficiently mature in years and spiritual development, exemplary in conduct and gifted for such service.

(4) Community members have the right to vote on all issues presented to the local church conference except votes on the calling or renewal of the call of pastors, election of members to the local church board, reception of covenant members, and the election of nominating committee members and the delegates to district conference.

(5) The right of a hearing before the local church board in the event of dismissal from community membership, but if after such hearing the board reaffirms the vote of dismissal there shall be no further right of appeal; joining another religious body shall of itself sever membership in the church.

563. A community member may become a covenant member at any time the community member is qualified and received as given in 553. It shall be the duty of the pastor and the local church board to assist a community member in qualifying for covenant membership. If upon reception into community status, the member is sufficiently mature in years, every effort shall be put forth to prepare the community member for reception into covenant membership. As a part of its annual review of the

church membership list (cf. 782:10), the local church board shall review the status of each community member and assess progress toward covenant membership.

B. Reception of Members

565. Covenant members in The Wesleyan Church may be received by confession of faith or by letter. Community members shall be received by confession of faith.

568. Those who are received as covenant members after having been community members, shall be considered as having joined on confession of faith. The pastor and the local church board shall be responsible to provide membership training classes for all community members, training them in the biblical doctrines and standards of the Church, acquainting them with the history and organization of The Wesleyan Church, and explaining to them the meaning of the vows and covenant of covenant membership (cf. 5565).

570. Those who present letters of recommendation from other denominations shall be examined by the pastor and the local church board. If it is discovered that the persons involved have indeed been previously converted and are fully committed to the doctrines and standards of The Wesleyan Church, they may be received as by letter (cf. 5570). But if it is discovered that these persons have only now given their hearts to Christ and are seeking after a full knowledge of the truth, they shall be encouraged to prepare for covenant membership.

C. Transfer of Membership

575. When any covenant member shall request a letter of transfer to another Wesleyan church, the pastor and local church secretary shall grant it, providing the member is neither under discipline nor under charges. Both pastor and secretary shall sign the letter of notification, and shall forward it to the pastor and local church secretary of the church to which the member is transferring. The letter shall be presented to the local church board of the receiving church at its next session, but not later than thirty days from the date of issuance, and acted upon in the manner indicated in 578. When the member has been duly received, notice of this shall be sent by the receiving church to the church granting the transfer. The date the return letter is received shall mark the expiration of membership in the church granting the letter, and in the official membership record the local church secretary shall enter opposite the member's name, the date and *Withdrawn by letter of transfer*.

578. The receiving church shall handle transfers as follows:

(1) Covenant members shall be received, subject to the approving vote of the local church conference, unless the local church conference shall have delegated this right to the local church board (553:3; 782:8). The transfer of covenant membership may be questioned by the receiving church if it is evident that the person involved is not in a state of grace or is living in open violation of the Articles of Religion of The Wesleyan Church or the Covenant Membership Commitments.

(2) The membership of a pastor or assistant pastor and of such members of the pastor's family as so desire and have the proper credentials, shall be automatically transferred to the church to which appointed, or if the pastoral charge consists of more than one church, to the church of choice. The secretary of the church from which the pastor is moving shall forward proper notification for the pastor's membership and that of family members who so desire to the secretary of the receiving church who shall

record them without any further action by the local church conference or local church board.

580. A covenant member of The Wesleyan Church transferring from one local church to another shall not be required to be involved in a public service of reception.

581. Community membership is not transferable.

D. Termination of Membership

585. Covenant membership in The Wesleyan Church may be terminated only by one or more of the following:

- (1) Voluntary withdrawal.
- (2) Joining another religious body or joining a secret society.
- (3) Dismissal after proper trial and conviction (5115:5).
- (4) Persistent neglect of church relationship as defined in 600-605.
- (5) Death.

588. Community membership in a local church may be terminated by one or more of the following:

- (1) Voluntary withdrawal.
- (2) Joining another religious body.
- (3) Dismissal by the local church board.
- (4) Persistent neglect of church relationship.
- (5) Death.
- (6) The discontinuance of the community membership category in the local church.

595. When any covenant member joins another denomination, or other religious body exercising the functions of a church, or a secret society, no trial is necessary to dismiss such a member. The pastor, having investigated and ascertained the facts, shall report the same to the next meeting of the local church board, and upon the board's order the local church secretary shall enter opposite the member's name the date of the session and *Withdrawn through having joined another body*.

598. When any covenant member moves away from the church in which membership is held, and it is evident that distance will not permit full and regular participation in the life of the church, the pastor shall encourage the member to transfer membership to the Wesleyan church nearest the new residence.

600. When any covenant member moves away from the church in which membership is held, and does not leave a forwarding address, or fails to report spiritual standing or to send financial support, or to transfer membership to the nearest Wesleyan church, after one year the member may be dropped from the list provided that every effort has been made to contact the member and notify the member of such an intention. The member's name shall be dropped upon the recommendation of the local church board and the majority vote of the local church conference, unless the local church conference shall have delegated full responsibility in such matters to the local church board. The secretary shall enter opposite the member's name the date of the vote, and *Discontinued by vote*.

605. When any covenant member fails to attend the services of the church where membership is held for one year without a reason deemed justifiable by the local church board, or to support the church financially, as able, the pastor and local church board shall seek to restore the member to active fellowship, but if unable to do so, the member's name may be dropped upon the recommendation of the local church board and the majority vote of the local church conference, unless the local church conference shall have delegated full responsibility in such matters to the local church board. The

secretary shall enter opposite the member's name the date of the vote, and *Discontinued by vote for persistent neglect*.

E. Record of Membership

610. Each local church shall have a permanent record maintained by the local church secretary, in which shall be recorded all the names of the members, category of membership, the time when received and whether by profession of faith or by letter, the time and manner of termination of membership, whether by some manner of withdrawal, or by discontinuance for neglect, dismissal or death; and all dedications, baptisms, marriages, pastoral terms and other information essential to a permanent written record of the life and ministry of the local church.

Chapter 3

LOCAL CHURCH CONFERENCE

A. Who Is in It and What It Does

625. The local church conference is the highest governing authority in the local church. The members of an established local church who assemble together to do business when the meeting has been properly called, make up the local church conference. Only covenant members (553) have the right to vote on all matters brought before the local church conference. In churches which choose to implement the community membership category, community members will attend the local church conference and participate in keeping with the limits set forth in 560:3-4.

B. Meetings

630. Regular Meetings. A local church conference shall be held in each established church at least once each year, within six weeks of the annual District Conference, at a time approved by the District Superintendent in consultation with the pastor, with at least two weeks advance notice by public announcements in all the services and local church papers or bulletins.

631. Special Meetings. Local church conferences may be called at other times for general or special church business or to take in members, by the pastor or in times of emergency by the District Superintendent, with a one-week notice. Local church conferences may be called into special session for a pastoral vote by the vice-chair of the church board, when authorized to do so by the local church board and having notified the District Superintendent with at least two weeks advance notice, except that during negotiations for calling a new pastor, only a one-week advance notice will be required.

633. Authority in Pastoral Voting. In all matters relating to voting on a pastor, any questions which arise may be resolved by the District Board of Administration.

C. Organization and Procedure

1. Officers

635. Chair. The District Superintendent or a representative appointed by the District Superintendent shall be the chair of the local church conference whenever present. When they are not there the pastor shall chair the meeting, except meetings dealing with the finding or keeping of a pastor. The vice-chair of the local church board (773) shall chair meetings dealing with the finding or keeping of a pastor, if the District Superintendent or representative is not present, and may chair meetings or portions of meetings dealing with salary for the pastor. In emergencies, when the pastor is absent or physically unable, the vice-chair may chair other meetings with the permission of the District Superintendent.

638. Secretary. The local church secretary shall serve as secretary of the local church conference (830:1).

2. Procedure

640. Quorum (number of persons required for an official meeting). Those covenant members who come together for a meeting of the local church conference when it has been properly called shall be a quorum.

643. Voting. A majority vote of those present and voting in the local church conference will be enough to pass all items of business unless otherwise required by *The Discipline*.

650. Order of Business.

(1) Reading of minutes of last meeting,

(2) Receiving the reports of the pastor(s), Sunday School superintendent, auxiliary leader of Wesleyan Men, auxiliary leader of Wesleyan Women, leader of Wesleyan Kid's Club, auxiliary leader of Wesleyan Youth, and any others the local church conference shall order.

(3) Receiving the reports of the various treasurers (cf. 842:3; 863).

(4) Receiving and acting upon the reports of boards and committees.

(5) Receiving the reports of the local preachers .

(6) Granting or renewing of licenses for local preachers .

(7) Recommending suitable local preachers to the District Conference for study under the direction of the district board of ministerial development, and for district licenses.

(8) Electing of officers, trustees, and delegates.

(9) Miscellaneous business.

D. Duties and Powers

655. The local church conference has duties and powers as follows:

(1) To approve by vote the reception of covenant members and to expel or discontinue covenant members unless it delegates full authority concerning membership to the local church board (782:8). Such authority may be withdrawn from the local church board at any annual session of the local church conference.

(2) To call a pastor or renew the call (692; 705; 718), or to vote on the termination of a renewed call as set forth in 722:2.

(3) To authorize a nominating committee, which shall be chaired by the pastor, to which the local church board shall elect two covenant members from its membership, and to which the local church conference may, at its option, elect up to four additional covenant members who are not members of the local church board (820-823).

(4) To elect, from among the covenant members, the church officers, which shall consist of the lay leader (if any; cf. 833), the local church secretary (830), the local church treasurer (cf. 842), the Sunday school superintendent (cf. 889), the trustees (designating annually at least one trustee to serve as a member of the local church board, 850-859), members-at-large of the local church board (cf. 752), and lay delegates to the district conference (657).

(5) To receive reports from the pastor(s), church officers, local preachers and other persons, boards and committees as desired, and as listed in 650:2-5.

(6) To remove, when such is in the best interests of the church, by a majority vote of those present and voting, any church officer, trustee, or delegate mentioned in 655:4.

(7) To license local preachers, and to renew or revoke such license (cf. 782:18). This power may be delegated to the local church board.

(8) To recommend suitable members to the District Conference for district licenses as ministerial students, licensed ministers, or special workers (1470:1). This power may be delegated to the local church board.

(9) To adopt petitions or resolutions to the District Conference, including memorials proposed for recommendation to the National/Regional Conference (1150-1156).

(10) To adopt financial policies, which policies shall be administered by the local church board (cf. 782:26).

(11) To authorize the enlargement or decrease of the employed staff (cf. 782:15).

(12) To adopt an annual budget, and to authorize all expenditures not provided for in the annual budget; or to delegate to the local church board (782:26) full authority over the annual budget.

(13) To authorize the purchase or sale of property, the erection or major remodeling of buildings (1448:2), and all mortgages or other indebtedness which encumbers the property, subject to the prior approval of the District Board of Administration (1233:24).

(14) To petition the District Board of Administration for the incorporation of the local church when it is deemed necessary (cf. 4510-4620), and to authorize the local church board to incorporate the church when such incorporation has been approved by the District Board of Administration.

(15) To authorize, subject to the approval of the District Board of Administration, the establishment and operation of a preaching point (cf. 505; 782:5; 1233:21), a branch Sunday school, or a developing church, in order to share the benefits of the gospel with others.

(16) To delegate such responsibilities as it shall choose to the local church board.

(17) To have recourse to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters of controversy between itself and other local, or district, or National/Regional units or agencies of the denomination.

(18) To authorize the establishment of a day care and/or a day school of preschool, elementary and secondary levels only, when such is desired, subject to approval by the District Board of Administration; and to delegate governance of the day care and/or day school to the local church board (cf. 1233:26). A local church conference shall not formalize post-secondary education in terms of an institute or of junior college or college-level programs, without prior approval of the District Conference and the National/Regional Board.

(19) To authorize significant changes in mission, facilities, or finances of an established day care and/or day school, subject to approval by the District Board of Administration (cf. 1233:27).

E. Lay Delegates to District Conference

657. The local church conference of an established church, at its annual meeting (630), shall elect by ballot, from among its covenant members, two delegates for the first forty covenant members or major fraction thereof, plus two more delegates for each forty covenant members or major fraction thereof above that number (see chart at 663). Each developing church shall be represented by one lay delegate who is a covenant member and who shall be appointed by the District Superintendent. A sufficient number of alternate delegates shall be chosen and the delegates shall serve for the regular annual meeting and for any reconvened meeting.

663. Chart for calculating lay delegates:

Preaching Point: no lay delegates

Developing Church: one lay delegate

Established church:

Number of members	Number of lay delegates
21 to 60	2
61—100	4
101—140	6
141 or more	8

Chapter 4

PASTORS

A. Function

675. The pastor is an ordained minister or a licensed minister who is called of God and appointed by the District Conference to serve as the spiritual leader of the local church.

B. Manner of Pastoral Voting

1. The Law of Pastoral Voting

690. In an established church all matters related to voting on securing or retaining a pastor are the concern of the church in consultation with the District Superintendent. In a developing church responsibility for pastoral agreements rests with the District Board of Administration in consultation with the local church advisory council (697).

2. Rules for All Pastoral Voting

692. Procedure for Pastoral Voting. In all matters relating to voting on finding or keeping a pastor, the following rules shall be kept:

(1) All pastoral votes shall be taken at a properly announced meeting of the local church conference (630-633).

(2) The District Superintendent, or a representative appointed by the District Superintendent, shall chair the local church conference for the taking of the pastoral vote. If neither can be present, the vice-chair of the local church board shall chair the meeting.

(3) All pastoral votes shall be taken by secret ballot and only by covenant members.

(4) A favorable vote by a majority of the local church conference present and voting is a call, renewal of call, or vote of confidence, as the case may be (705; 718; 722).

(5) The minister shall be notified in writing by the local church secretary of the results of the vote, and, if the vote is favorable, of the support (including salary, expense allowances, housing, fringe benefits, moving expenses) and related matters which the church proposes to pay.

(6) If the vote is favorable, the minister shall notify the local church board and the District Superintendent in writing of a decision within two weeks.

697. District Approval of Pastoral Agreement. In the case of a developing church, pastoral appointment shall be made by the District Board of Administration in consultation with the local advisory committee (if any) and as approved by the District Conference. In an established church, a pastoral agreement, whether for the first call or renewal of call, must be reviewed and recommended by the District Board of Administration, and it becomes final when the District Conference approves it. Each year the District Board of Administration shall review pastoral agreements which are continuing before making its report to the District Conference (1180:18; 1233:7).

700. Time of Pastoral Changes. Except for emergencies like resignations, removals, or deaths, pastoral changes shall take place at the close of the meeting of the District Conference or at such time as the District Conference shall say.

3. Rules for the First Call of Pastor

705. Procedure for the First Call of Pastor. Whenever it is necessary for a church to find a new pastor, the following rules shall be observed:

(1) The vote shall be for a two-year call. The District Superintendent may adjust the actual time so that the term will end at the time set by the District Conference (700).

(2) In an established church, the local church board, under the leadership of its vice-chair, shall counsel with the District Superintendent concerning possible candidates. If the church desires to call a minister from another district, the local church board shall first secure from its own District Superintendent and National/Regional Superintendent assurance that the transfer of the minister would be approved. When a candidate has been approved by a majority vote of the local church board, the candidate's name shall be presented as a nomination to the local church conference, and the vote shall be taken in keeping with the rules for pastoral voting (692).

(3) In a developing church, pastoral appointments are made by the District Board of Administration in consultation with the local advisory committee and as approved by the District Conference (510:1; 690; 697).

708. Giving Up Local Church Rights. If a church has been unable to find a pastor thirty days before the annual meeting of the District Conference, the local church conference may (by majority vote), give full authority for finding a pastor to the District Board of Administration. If a church has been unable to find a pastor by the time the annual meeting of the District Conference starts, the District Board of Administration shall nominate a pastor, for appointment by the District Conference. A pastor appointed in this way shall be received and supported by the church the same as if the pastor had been employed in the usual manner.

710. First-Call Resignations. If a pastor resigns during first call period of service to a church, the pastor must notify the local church board and the District Superintendent sixty days in advance. If the District Superintendent and the local church board believe it is wise, the pastor may be released sooner.

712. First-Call Removal. If during the first call period of a pastor's service, a meeting of the local church board chaired by the District Superintendent shall request by a two-thirds majority vote, or if, upon the recommendation of the District Superintendent, the District Board of Administration thinks it is in the best interests of the work, the District Board of Administration may remove a pastor by a two-thirds majority vote.

715. Interim Procedures. If a church is left without a pastor between meetings of the District Conference due to death, resignation, or removal, the District Board of Administration shall fill the vacancy for the remainder of the conference year.

4. Rules for Renewal of Call

718. Renewal of a Pastor's Call. Whenever the term of service of the pastor of an established church is expiring, the matter of a renewal of call shall be governed by the following rules:

(1) Unless the pastor, whose term of service is ending, shall give notice to the vice-chair of the local church board (773) and the District Superintendent, in writing and at

least sixty days before the start of the District Conference, the pastor shall be considered as available for renewal of call, and a vote on renewal of call shall be taken in keeping with the rules for all pastoral voting (692).

(2) Before the vote on renewal of call, the local church board shall make a recommendation and the local church conference shall determine by majority vote whether the recall shall be for two years, or for four years.

722. Termination of Renewed Call. The service of a pastor ministering under renewal of call may be stopped before the end of the term in one of three ways:

(1) The pastor may resign (in writing) sixty days in advance of the time desired. Adjustment in the length of notice may be made by the agreement of the District Superintendent and the local church board.

(2) If one-third of the members of the local church board request a pastoral vote of confidence by the local church conference to the District Superintendent in writing, a special meeting of the local church board may be called. If the local church board by majority vote calls for the taking of a pastoral vote, and the District Board of Administration approves, it shall be taken in keeping with 692.

(3) The District Board of Administration may, by a majority vote, order the District Superintendent to conduct a pastoral vote of confidence in keeping with 692. Or the District Board of Administration may remove the pastor by a two-thirds majority vote. If at any time the District Board of Administration shall consider it to be in the interests of the district as a whole that the pastor be free to serve in another pastorate, it may by majority vote request the pastor to resign.

723. Annual Review of Pastoral Support. The pastor's financial support and related matters shall be reviewed annually by the local church board before the annual meeting of the local church conference. A report of the final action, whether by the local church board or by the local church conference, shall be sent by the local church secretary in writing to both the pastor and the District Superintendent.

C. Duties and Powers

725. The pastor shall take care of the spiritual and physical work of the church in keeping with *The Discipline* and other National/Regional and district rules, and shall be responsible:

General

- (1) To diligently study the Scriptures, pray and do the work assigned.
- (2) To seek the conversion of sinners, the sanctification of believers, and the strengthening of God's people in the faith.
- (3) To pray to God for and with the people.
- (4) To give spiritual food to the Christians by reading, teaching, and preaching the Word.
- (5) To lead the Sunday and midweek church services, helping the Christians to worship God.
- (6) To administer, if an ordained minister (3075:1) or a licensed minister assigned a pastoral charge (3044:1), the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper.
- (7) To conduct a Christian marriage service, if an ordained minister.
- (8) To bury the dead and comfort those in sorrow.
- (9) To visit from house to house in order to give pastoral help to the members of the church, and to others in need of a pastor's help.

(10) To read and explain the Covenant Membership Commitments (cf. 260-268) of The Wesleyan Church at least once a year, and to see that all covenant members keep all the rules of the church.

(11) To teach baptism and membership training classes, preparing new Christians for church membership.

(12) To accept new members into the church after proper approval. (553:4; 5550-5595).

(13) To report the names and addresses of members who have moved away to the National/Regional Secretary (598).

(14) To sign with the local church secretary, letters of transfer, recommendation, or withdrawal (575).

Administrative

(15) To be chair of the local church conference and the local church board except as otherwise provided (635; 770-773), and to oversee and direct all departments and local church organizations.

(16) To serve as a voting member of boards and committees established by the local church board, and to meet with all boards and committees, as time will permit.

(17) To meet with Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Youth as thought necessary, or to call a special meeting of an auxiliary or any of its committees; to serve as a member of the executive committees of the auxiliaries, and as chair of the nominating committees of the auxiliaries.

(18) To give leadership to the missionary, evangelistic, educational, and devotional programs of the local church in harmony with objectives and programs of the district and the national/regional Church.

(19) To announce to the church all the plans for the local church which have been made by the District Board of Administration, the District Conference, or the National/Regional Board of Administration.

(20) To promote tithing and good stewardship by faithful example and clear teaching, and to see that all financial agreements are paid.

(21) To see that trustees are elected and all church property is properly secured according to *The Discipline* and the local laws, with all legal papers submitted to the District Superintendent for approval.

(22) To help and promote the Sunday School.

(23) To enlist youth for the gospel ministry, and for missionary, and other special work, encouraging and helping them to prepare for their God-appointed task at educational institutions provided by The Wesleyan Church; to sign, in conjunction with the local church secretary (830:3), licenses for local preachers granted by the local church conference (655:7; 782:19); and to have oversight over all local preachers, using their services as much as possible.

(24) To nominate to the local church board an Assistant pastor (741) or a lay Assistant to the pastor (744); to nominate to the local church board all members of the employed office staff; and to supervise, in conjunction with the local church board, the services of all employed staff members, including the custodians.

(25) To see that up-to-date files are kept on people who attend the church, membership, Sunday School enrollment, membership of subsidiary organizations, and subscriptions to the various national/regional Church and district publications, and to be ready to give these lists to the succeeding pastor (cf. 610; 830:2; 898).

(26) To see that adequate historical records and financial records are kept (cf. 610; 842:2, 4; 898).

(27) To give reports to the local church conference and the local church board.

(28) To give a quarterly report to the District Superintendent.

(29) To submit an annual service report to the district board of ministerial development and an annual statistical report to the district statistical committee.

(30) To attend District Conference meetings, institutes, and conventions planned by the district or the National/Regional Conference.

D. Assistant Pastors

741. Assistant Pastor. A local church may employ ministers as assistant pastors. The employment of an assistant pastor shall be authorized by the local church conference, and the selection shall be made and the terms of work determined, upon the recommendation of the pastor and by the local church board. The agreement of the local church with the assistant pastor is subject to the review and recommendation of the District Board of Administration, and becomes final upon the approval of the District Conference. An assistant pastor shall not be employed for more than one year at a time, and may be reemployed upon the recommendation of the pastor, the majority vote of the local church board, and the approval of the District Conference.

743. Duties of an Assistant Pastor. An assistant pastor shall assist the pastor in carrying out such duties as the pastor and the local church board shall determine. The assistant pastor may be called simply assistant pastor, or bear a title descriptive of the major field of service, such as minister of Christian education, minister of music, or minister of visitation.

744. Lay Assistant. Lay persons may also serve as paid assistants. The employment of such a lay assistant to the pastor shall be authorized by the local church conference, and the selection shall be made and the terms of work determined, upon the recommendation of the pastor, by the local church board. Employment shall be for one year at a time. The lay assistant shall have a title like director of Christian education, director of music, or director of youth ministries.

Chapter 5

LOCAL CHURCH BOARD

A. Function

750. The local church board carries out the will of the local church conference. It is the chief governing and coordinating body of the local church between local church conference meetings.

B. Membership

752. The local church board is composed of: the pastor (chair), the church secretary, the church treasurer, the Sunday school superintendent, and at least one member of the board of trustees designated by the local church conference (850). In addition, local church conferences which have fewer than 50 covenant members may elect two members-at-large to the local church board. Larger church conferences may elect up to ten members-at-large and may designate their assistant pastor and lay leader as members of the local church board.

755. It is recommended that no two persons of the same household be elected to serve on the same local church board.

C. Time of Meeting

760. The local church board shall meet once each month, and it may be called for special meetings by the pastor, or the District Superintendent.

D. Organization Of Local Church Board

770. Chair. The pastor shall be the chair of the local church board, chairing all meetings except as noted in 773.

773. Vice-Chair. The local church board shall elect one of its members as vice-chair. The vice-chair may chair meetings of the local church board when the pastor's support or the calling or renewing of the call of a pastor is under discussion (for exceptions, cf. 712; 722:2). The vice-chair may also chair meetings or portions of meetings of the local church conference dealing with the pastor's support, call or renewal of call, when neither the District Superintendent nor the District Superintendent's representative is present (635; 692:2). The vice-chair may chair meetings of the local church board or of the local church conference in times of emergency when the pastor is absent or physically unable, with the written permission of the District Superintendent. The District Superintendent or the District Superintendent's representative shall chair all meetings of the local church board considering the termination of a pastoral agreement (712; 722:2), and in times of emergency.

775. Secretary. The local church secretary shall be the secretary of the local church board (830). If the secretary is absent, the local church board may elect a secretary for that meeting.

778. Quorum. A majority of the members of the local church board may hold an official meeting.

780. Voting. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be sufficient in all items of business except when voting on the reception of a covenant member against whom an objection has been made, which shall require a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting (782:8); and when petitioning the District Board of Administration to remove a pastor during the first call, which shall require a two-thirds majority vote of those present and voting (712; 782:12).

E. Duties and Powers

782. The local church board shall administer the affairs of the church in keeping with the directions of the local church conference, *The Discipline*, other district and national/regional rules, and shall be responsible:

General

- (1) To direct all activities of the church to the spiritual growth of its people.
- (2) To provide a place of worship and to see that the place is kept clean and in good repair.
- (3) To give advice and direction to the pastor and to others who work in the church.
- (4) To receive and hear the reports of the pastor (725:27), church treasurer (842:3) and other church officers and committees which they may request.
- (5) To help the pastor in the evangelistic outreach of the church.
- (6) To recommend to the local church conference an annual calendar of events.

Membership

(7) To provide for the instruction and examination of all candidates for church membership. (553:1; 568-570; 725:11).

(8) To make recommendations concerning the reception of covenant members to the local church conference, unless full authority concerning such reception has been delegated by the local church conference to the local church board (655:1). When authority has been given to it, it may authorize the reception of covenant members by a majority vote. When an objection is raised against the reception of a member it shall require a two-thirds majority vote (553:3,5; 780).

(9) To approve, when the local church conference has authorized the implementation of the community membership category (558), the reception of community members (558:1); or to drop community members from the roll (560:5; 563; 588).

(10). To examine the church membership list each year and to make necessary changes (553-610; cf. 655:1).

(11) To appoint a local judicial committee to hear and settle all cases between Christians in the church; to appoint such a committee to hold a trial for any covenant member charged with an offense (cf. 5105-5110); to take action appropriate to the outcome of such trials; and to refer to the District Superintendent any case which cannot be settled in the local church (1465; 5105-5110; 5212).

Pastors, Staff, and Licensed Workers

(12) To nominate a pastor to the local church conference (705:2); to assume full responsibility for securing a pastor when such duty has been given to it by the local church conference; and to recommend to the District Board of Administration by a two-thirds majority vote the termination of a pastoral agreement if it becomes necessary during the first call of a pastor's service (712).

(13) To recommend to the local church conference the length of a pastoral renewal of call (718:2); to meet, at the request of one-third of its members and under the chairing of the District Superintendent or the District Superintendent's representative, to consider the possibility of ordering a pastoral vote of confidence before the end of a renewal of call period, and to call for such a vote by a majority vote (722:2).

(14) To review the pastor's support and related matters each year (723).

(15) To approve the pastor's recommendation and send to the local church conference the number of employed church staff positions, and then after approval to hire and supervise the staff.

(16) To employ evangelists, evangelistic singers, and other workers as needed (cf. 1310:16).

(17) To provide, in cooperation with the pastor, for the supply of the pulpit during the pastor's absence; and to provide, in cooperation with the District Superintendent, for the supply of the pulpit during vacancies.

(18) To recommend to the local church conference the licensing, and the renewing or revoking of licenses of local preachers (cf. 655:7).

(19) To recommend local preachers to the local church conference for their approval and recommendation to the District Conference for study under the direction of the district board of ministerial development for district license (cf. 655:8).

Officers, Boards, Committees, and Auxiliaries

(20) To elect, when authorized by the local church conference (655:3), two members of a nominating committee to serve as explained in 820-823.

(21) To elect each year an auditing committee (863); all Sunday School officers except the superintendent, and all departmental supervisors and teachers (898-900; 906) and other church positions as are necessary.

(22) To review each local auxiliary's nominating committee's report of nominees for leaders of the auxiliaries by approving, substituting, or adding to the nominations before the presentation of the nominees to the annual business meetings of the auxiliaries.

(23) To organize and elect any boards and committees that are needed such as: building committee, finance committee, evangelism committee, and others.

(24) To fill all vacancies occurring in those offices elected by the local church conference (cf. 655:4), between annual meetings, and all vacancies occurring in offices elected by the local church board; and to provide for the filling of vacancies in the auxiliaries as it thinks best (898-900; 906).

Property and Finance

(25) To give direction to the local board of trustees concerning the maintenance of church property and legal matters connected with the church, in keeping with the requirements of local laws, and *The Discipline* (856).

(26) To make a financial plan for the church, and to direct the church treasurer how the church money should be spent (cf. 865-868).

F. Nominating Committee

820. Each established church may have a nominating committee. The members shall be the pastor (chair) and two members elected by the local church board from its membership. The local church conference may, at its option, elect three additional members (655:3; 782:20).

823. When a nominating committee has been established, it shall present to the local church conference, at its annual meeting, nominations for each of the following officers: local church secretary, local church treasurer, the Sunday School superintendent, and one or more trustees (850), members-at-large on the local church board and delegates to the District Conference. Two or more names shall be presented for each office, if possible (cf. 755). The nominating committee may be used for other nominations as ordered by the local church conference, or as ordered by the local church board for positions elected by the board.

Chapter 6

LOCAL CHURCH OFFICERS AND COMMITTEES

A. Officers

1. Church Secretary

830. The local church, at its annual local church conference, shall elect a church secretary from among its covenant members. The local church secretary shall be a member of the local church board (752; 775). The duties and powers of the local church secretary shall be:

(1) To write the minutes of the local church conference meeting and the meetings of the local church board.

(2) To help the pastor keep the church record book up to date (610), and to safely keep any records as directed by the pastor and local church board.

(3) To write and sign with the pastor any letters which need to be sent by the church, and to give and sign with the pastor local church licenses given by the local church conference (575; 655:7; 782:18).

(4) To immediately send to the district secretary a list of lay delegates to the District Conference elected by the local church conference (657).

(5) To report to the local church conference and to the local church board as required.

2. Lay Leader

833. The local church at its annual local church conference, may elect by ballot, from among its covenant members a lay leader who shall serve for one year or until a successor is elected, and whose function shall be to assist the pastor in such manner as the pastor shall recommend and the local church conference shall approve. The duties of the lay leader may include any or all of the following: member of the local church board (752), leader under the pastor's direction of church prayer meetings or of small groups, classes, or neighborhood prayer cells for the deepening of spiritual life and home evangelism.

3. Church Treasurer

842. The local church at its annual local church conference shall elect a church treasurer from among its covenant members. The treasurer shall be a member of the local church board (752). The duties and powers of the local church treasurer shall be:

(1) To receive, hold, and pay out all money of the local church, as ordered by the local church conference or the local church board.

(2) To help the pastor keep complete and accurate records of all money taken in and of the way in which they are paid out.

(3) To make monthly reports to the local church board and to make reports to all regular meetings of the local church conference about the finances of the church.

(4) To give all books for audit by the auditing committee at least once a year (863) as ordered by the local church board.

4. Board of Trustees

850. Election. The local church conference shall elect by ballot from among its covenant members a board of trustees, three to seven in number, one or more being elected at a given annual meeting for a term of three years, so that the terms of all shall not end at the same time, or they may be elected to serve until their successors are elected; provided that the manner and conditions of election may be altered to conform to the local laws. At least one of the trustees shall be designated annually by the local church conference as a member of the local church board (752).

853. Organization and Procedure. The board of trustees shall meet following the annual meeting of the local church conference to elect a chair, vice-chair, and secretary, and shall meet at other times as ordered by the local church board or as made necessary by their duties.

856. Duties and Powers. The local board of trustees shall carry out their duties as required by *The Discipline* (cf. 4610-4620) and shall be responsible:

(1) To carry out the instructions of the local church conference and the local church board in taking care of all church property (655:13; 782:25).

(2) To supervise repairs and improvements that have been approved by the local church conference or the local church board.

(3) To attend to all legal matters regarding the acquisition, purchase, sale, loans against properties, transfer or other use of property as authorized by the local church conference or local church board; to see that titles are correct, contain the proper trust clause (4610), are approved by the District Superintendent, are recorded; and to see that property and legal records are properly stored.

(4) To make recommendations to the local church board concerning sufficient property and liability insurance on the property and for any vehicles owned and operated by the local church.

(5) To make reports as requested by the local church conference or the local church board.

(6) To carry out the directions of the local church conference concerning the purchase, sale, mortgage, transfer, or other use of property, provided that such transactions have been approved by the district building committee and District Board of Administration.

859. Restrictions. The local board of trustees shall follow these restrictions:

(1) The local board of trustees must carry out the instructions of the local church board, the local church conference, and the District Board of Administration. If a local trustee refuses to carry out such instructions when the instructions meet all the requirements of local laws and of *The Discipline*, the trustee may be removed from office.

(2) The local board of trustees cannot deny the use of the parsonage, church building, or other local church buildings, to the pastor who has been appointed by the District Conference or District Board of Administration.

(3) The local board of trustees cannot divert church property from The Wesleyan Church (4612:4).

(4) When a church is reclassified as a developing church (cf. 518:1; 1233:21), the office and power of the local board of trustees shall cease, and all property shall pass directly under the control of the District Board of Administration.

(5) The local board of trustees cannot take out a loan on or otherwise put restrictions on local church property without the authorization of the local church conference and the approval of the District Board of Administration.

B. Committees and Auxiliaries

860. The local church board may create committees, which shall be under its authority, from the covenant members of the local church, including the following:

1. Auditing Committee

863. The local church board shall elect an auditing committee of one to three persons, who shall audit the books of the local church treasurer and of all departmental and auxiliary treasurers, certify the results to the local church board, sign approval on the records, make any necessary recommendations to the pastor and the local church board, and make a report to the local church conference at its annual meeting before the election of the local church treasurer.

2. Committee on Finance and Stewardship

865. The local church board may establish a committee on finance and stewardship, composed of the pastor, the local church treasurer, the chair of the board of trustees, and other members as the local church board shall elect. The local church board shall name a board member as chair of the committee, and the committee shall choose its own vice-chair and secretary.

868. The local church board shall assign duties to the committee on finance and stewardship as it views best.

3. Sunday School

a. Function

885. Each local church shall maintain a Sunday school as the basic agency for the study of the Bible on the local level.

b. Administration

887. General. The Sunday school shall be governed by the local church conference and the local church board under the general supervision of the pastor and the immediate administration of the superintendent and the Sunday school committee. They shall carry out their assignment in keeping with *The Discipline*, and as approved by the National/Regional Board of Administration.

889. Sunday School Superintendent. The local church conference, at its annual meeting, shall elect by ballot, from among its covenant members, a Sunday School superintendent (cf. 820-823). The superintendent shall be a member of the local church board (752) unless the local church conference has voted to eliminate the office of Sunday school superintendent from being a member of the local church board before the election. The duties and powers of the Sunday school superintendent shall be:

- (1) To have supervision of the Sunday school.
- (2) To consult with the pastor and the Sunday school committee on all major decisions.
- (3) To promote interest in and attendance in the Sunday school.
- (4) To have immediate supervision of each meeting of the Sunday school, seeing that each department and class has the necessary leaders and that order is maintained.
- (5) To counsel with the teachers about their work.

(6) To conduct the assembly periods, unless they are assigned to departmental supervisors, and to maintain variety and interest in the assembly periods.

(7) To make a full report of statistics and general information to the local church board quarterly and to the local church conference at each regular meeting.

898. Sunday School Secretary. The local church board shall elect (782:21), a Sunday school secretary. The Sunday school secretary shall keep complete and correct minutes of all meetings of the Sunday school committee, maintain complete records of enrollment, attendance, absentees, visitors, and such other items as shall be required, and assist the pastor and the Sunday school superintendent in the preparation of reports involving Sunday school statistics. The Sunday school committee shall appoint assistants as the Sunday school secretary shall require.

899. Sunday School Treasurer. The local church board may (782:21) elect a Sunday school treasurer. Sunday school funds received may be kept by the local church treasurer as part of a common treasury or may be kept separate in an account under the authority of the local church board. If there is a separate Sunday school treasurer elected, the Sunday school treasurer shall receive and pay out the Sunday school funds as ordered by the local church board. The Sunday school treasurer shall report, as required, concerning all receipts and expenditures to the Sunday school committee and the local church board.

900. Sunday School Departmental Supervisors. The local church board shall (782:21) elect a supervisor for each department. The departmental supervisor shall assist the Sunday school superintendent, being responsible for the general operation of the department including the assembly period of the department, and the immediate supervision of each meeting of the department (cf. 889:4, 6). The Sunday school committee shall appoint other departmental officers as may be needed.

903. Sunday School Committee. The immediate administration of the Sunday school will be the duty of the Sunday school committee, subject to the approval of and correlated with the plans of the local church board. It shall be composed of the Sunday school superintendent as chair, the pastor (or if the pastor prefers, the assistant pastor), secretary (who shall serve as secretary of the committee), treasurer, and the departmental supervisors.

906. Sunday School Teachers. The local church board shall, at the time of its annual election (782:21), elect any Sunday school teachers and assistants that are needed, to serve for one year or until their successors are elected.

910. Accountability. All regulations concerning the responsibility, removal, and filling of vacancies for Sunday school officers, departmental supervisors, and teachers are under the local church board. All others appointed by the Sunday school committee are responsible to the Sunday school committee and can be replaced as it sees fit.

4. Wesleyan Youth

922. Each local church may maintain a local chapter of Wesleyan Youth for youth 13 years of age and older.

5. Wesleyan Men

940. Each local church may maintain a chapter of Wesleyan Men.

6. Wesleyan Women

945. Each local church may maintain a local chapter of Wesleyan Women.

7. Wesleyan Kid's Club

950. Each local church may maintain a local Wesleyan Kid's Club for children 12 years of age and younger.

8. Judicial Committees

970. The local church board shall elect, when it views it necessary and in accord with the rules of the Judiciary, a committee of investigation (5012; 5105) or a local judicial committee (5110). Complete rules concerning the qualifications, procedures, and duties of such committees are given in 5012; 5105-5110.

PART 3

DISTRICT CHURCH GOVERNMENT

Chapter 1

DISTRICT ORGANIZATION

A. Definition

1000. A district is an area created by the authority of the National/Regional Conference in order to organize the churches.

B. Developing District

1003. Purpose. A work which does not meet the requirements for a provisional district (1025) shall be a developing district. A developing district shall be under the jurisdiction of the National/Regional Board of Administration.

1006. Accountability. A developing district shall be accountable to the National/Regional Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries.

1012. Organization. The superintendent, other officers, and assigned workers shall be appointed by the National/Regional Board of Administration.

1015. National/Regional Conference Representation. The developing district shall be represented in the National/Regional Conference by the General Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries and by the superintendent of the developing district as a nonvoting member (1503:2).

C. Provisional District

1025. Requirements. The minimum requirements for a provisional district are:

- (1) A minimum of five churches and 200 covenant members.
- (2) A sufficient number of ordained ministers for a District Board of Administration (1203).
- (3) The holding of all property in trust for The Wesleyan Church as required in 4610, or steps taken to accomplish the same (4590-4620).

1028. Accountability. A provisional district shall be accountable to the National/Regional Board of Administration, and shall be supervised by the National/Regional Superintendent.

1030. Organization. A provisional district shall be organized in the same manner as an established district as explained in *The Discipline* but with the following restrictions on its duties and powers:

- (1) **District Superintendent.** The District Superintendent of a provisional district shall be elected by the District Conference (cf. 1180:23; 1303:1; 1655:32), however, the National/Regional Board of Administration may present two or more nominations, from which the District Conference shall elect the District Superintendent. The provisional District Superintendent shall discuss with the National/Regional Superintendent important plans of the district, including the location of property, the erection of buildings, and financial matters.

(2) **District Officers, Boards, and Committees.** A provisional district shall first be concerned with the election of its district officials (1255) and District Board of Administration (1203). Other district departmental officers, boards, and committees shall be established as qualified personnel are available.

(3) **Appointments.** The appointment of pastors and evangelists for a provisional district shall be dependent on the approval of the National/Regional Board of Administration.

(4) **Accountability.** The minutes of a provisional District Conference and its District Board of Administration shall be reviewed by the National/Regional Superintendent and shall be dependent on the approval of the National/Regional Board of Administration.

1032. National/Regional Conference Representation. The district superintendent and a lay delegate, elected by ballot and by majority vote, shall be the representatives of a provisional district to the National/Regional Conference (1503:1a).

1034. Reclassification. Whenever a provisional district falls below the minimum requirements in 1025, it may be reclassified as a developing district by the National/Regional Conference (1590:9), or, in the interim of its meetings, by the National/Regional Board.

D. Established District

1. Authorization

1036. An established district is created by the National/Regional Conference (1590:7, 9), upon recommendation by the National/Regional Board of Administration, or, in the interim of National/Regional Conference meetings, may be created by the National/Regional Board of Administration, dependent on the approval of the next National/Regional Conference. The authorizing act shall define the boundaries of the district and assign to it an official name.

1038. The minimum requirements for an established district are:

- (1) Fifteen churches.
- (2) Five hundred covenant members
- (3) The holding of all property in trust for The Wesleyan Church (4610).
- (4) A reasonable degree of spiritual, organizational, and financial stability.
- (5) A recommendation by the National/Regional Board of Administration in concurrence with the National/Regional Superintendent (cf. 1655:31).

2. Organizing Conference

1040. When an established district has been authorized (1036), an organizing meeting of the District Conference shall be called by the National/Regional Superintendent.

3. Reclassification

1042. If a district no longer meets the requirements for an established district (1038), it may be reclassified as a provisional district.

4. Accountability

1050. An established district is accountable to the National/Regional Board of Administration. (5350-5375).

5. National/Regional Conference Representation

1052. Each established district shall be represented at the National/Regional Conference by the District Superintendent and an elected lay delegate; plus one ministerial and one lay delegate for the first five hundred covenant members, and an additional ministerial and lay delegate for every additional one hundred and fifty covenant members or major fraction thereof (1503:1abc).

Chapter 2

DISTRICT CONFERENCE

A. Function

1075. A District Conference is the chief governing body of a district.

B. Membership

1. Plan of Representation

1080. The District Conference shall have members as listed below.

a. Voting Members

1082. The voting members include the following:

- (1) All ordained ministers who are either appointed or retired.
- (2) All licensed ministers appointed to pastoral charges.
- (3) Lay delegates elected by established churches at the rate of two delegates for the first forty covenant members or major fraction thereof and two additional delegates for each additional forty covenant members or major fraction thereof (cf. chart at 663).
- (4) One lay delegate for each developing church, to be appointed by the District Superintendent.
- (5) All members of the District Board of Administration who are not voting members by some other right.
- (6) District Superintendents Emeriti.

b. Nonvoting Members

1090. The nonvoting members of the District Conference, with a voice but without a vote, are:

- (1) Ordained ministers without appointment (2700:6)
- (2) Ordained ministers in process of transfer (2700:7).
- (3) Licensed ministers who are not appointed to pastoral charges..
- (4) Supply pastors.
- (5) Ministerial students from the district (2700:3).
- (6) The district leaders of Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Youth.
- (7) The district director of Christian education and the district director of evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries.

2. Forfeiture of Representation

1095. A local church or circuit which is under discipline as provided for in the Judiciary shall forfeit all rights to representation by a lay delegate in the District Conference (5305-5320).

3. The Election of Lay Delegates

1103. Election. The lay delegates to the District Conference representing established churches shall be elected at the annual meeting of the local church conference, by ballot, and by a majority vote of those covenant members present and voting. The number shall be determined according to 657 and 663. A person who accepts election as a delegate is obligated to attend faithfully the entire District Conference meeting unless hindered by unforeseen and justifiable circumstances. The local church secretary shall promptly forward a certified list of the elected delegates to the district secretary. The lay delegate from each developing church will be appointed by the District Superintendent (510:6; 657).

1106. Alternate Delegates. A sufficient number of alternate lay delegates having the same qualifications (1109) shall be elected in the same manner and at the same meeting as the delegates (1103), and shall fill any vacancies in the order of their election. Whenever an alternate delegate is required to serve, the local church secretary shall also certify this appointment to the district secretary.

1109. Qualifications. A lay delegate must be a covenant member and in good standing of the local church represented, both at the time of election and at the time of the District Conference.

C. Meetings

1112. Annual Meeting. The District Conference shall meet annually at a place and time decided upon by the National/Regional Board of Administration in cooperation with the District Board of Administration and the National/Regional Superintendent (1233:5; 1655:33; 1920:14). The district secretary shall notify in writing all ministerial voting members and local churches of the time and the place not less than thirty days before the scheduled opening.

1115. Reconvened Meeting. The District Conference may be reconvened at any time during the year by a two-thirds majority vote of the District Board of Administration and the approval of the National/Regional Superintendent (1233:5; 1920:14). A reconvened meeting shall also be ordered by the District Board of Administration when requested to do so by the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:33) or the National/Regional Superintendent. The District Board of Administration shall designate the place and, in cooperation with the National/Regional Superintendent, fix the date, which shall be not less than thirty days after the call is issued. The district secretary shall notify in writing all ministerial voting members, local churches, and nonvoting members of the time, place, and purpose of the reconvened meeting. The District Conference shall have the same rights and powers in a reconvened meeting as in the annual meeting.

D. Organization and Procedure

1. Officers

1120. The Chair. The National/Regional Superintendent or the National/Regional Superintendent's representative shall chair the District Conference. When the National/Regional Superintendent or the appointed representative is unable to attend, the District Superintendent shall chair the meeting.

1123. The Secretary. The district secretary shall be the secretary of the District Conference, and perform any other duties as shall be required by the District Conference.

2. Procedure

1129. Quorum (number of members needed to make an official meeting). A majority of all the ministerial voting members and delegates of the District Conference (1082) shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

1150. Resolutions. Resolutions may be submitted to the District Conference by a local church conference, the District Board of Administration, the annual district convention of Wesleyan Men, the annual district convention of Wesleyan Women, or any three voting members of the District Conference with their signatures.

1153. Discipline Changes. All resolutions passed by the District Conference that would change *The Discipline* must go as recommendations to the National/Regional Conference for consideration.

1156. Procedure. All resolutions shall be submitted as directed by the District Conference and within a time limit as set by the District Conference. The appropriate District Conference committee (cf. 1443:1) shall be responsible to review each resolution as to its origin (1150), clarity, relationship to *The Discipline* and other existing legislation of the National/Regional Conference or District Conference, and shall report them to the District Conference with their recommendations. A properly submitted resolution cannot be withheld from the conference body by a committee unless withdrawn by its authors or declared out of order by the chair of the District Conference as contravening *The Discipline*. The committee chair shall present any resolutions in question to the District Conference chair for a ruling before presenting them on the conference floor.

E. Duties and Powers

1180. The duties and powers of the District Conference are:

Relating to The Discipline

(1) To propose an amendment to the Constitution, by a two-thirds vote, to be submitted to the National/Regional Conference (1560; 1590:1).

(2) To propose an amendment to the Statutory Law sections of The Discipline by a majority vote, to be submitted to the National/Regional Conference (1153).

Relating to the National/Regional Conference

(3) To elect delegates to the National/Regional Conference as assigned by the National/Regional Board of Administration (1503-1524).

(4) To review all standing rules of the district and bring them into harmony with *The Discipline* as currently revised and amended (1443:3).

Relating to the District Conference

(5) To receive a report from the National/Regional Superintendent.

(6) To authorize, if desired, a District Conference resolutions committee (1442).

(7) To authorize, if desired, a District Conference nominating committee (1444).

Relating to District Administration

(8) To take charge of all ministers, preaching points, developing churches, local churches, auxiliaries, and other district work within its bounds, except when the district is under discipline, and except for those members of the district who are elected as National/Regional officials (1800).

(9) To receive a report from the following: the District Superintendent (1310:19), the Assistant District Superintendent (1323:6), the district treasurer (1337:4); and any others as desired by the District Conference.

(10) To receive reports from other district boards, committees, auxiliary organizations, and institutions related to the church.

(11) To receive a statistical and financial report from the district statistical committee (1450:1) and the auditing committee (1446:2).

(12) To take actions and adopt rules necessary to promote the interests and growth of The Wesleyan Church.

(13) To adopt financial plans which will provide for the support of the district work, and for the payment of the district obligation to the national/regional treasury.

(14) To set the minimum salary to be paid a full-time pastor.

(15) To create, if so desired, a camp meeting board and define its duties, or to delegate this to the District Board of Administration.

(16) To authorize any legal steps necessary for holding of district and local church property in the name and under the authority of The Wesleyan Church.

Relating to Churches, Ministers

(17) To authorize the establishment of a preaching point (505), a developing church (510), an established church (518), the reclassification of an established church as a developing church (518:1; cf. 1233:21), to declare a church as discontinued or abandoned, and to hear a report from the District Superintendent of the organization of new churches (520:6; 1310:10).

(18) To approve the assignment of all ordained ministers, licensed ministers and supply pastors as recommended by the District Board of Administration.

(19) To set the date for pastoral changes within the district.

(20) To vote upon the ordination of a candidate the District Conference judges is qualified (3070:5), after receiving a report from the district board of ministerial development (1470:4); each candidate shall be considered separately and voted upon separately.

(21) To grant a license, commission, recognition, or restoration (5212:6), in keeping with the requirements of *The Discipline*, after receiving the report and recommendations from the district board of ministerial development (1470:5), as follows:

(a) The recognition to be an “ordained minister in process of transfer” for an ordained minister who is being received from another denomination, and the recognition as an “ordained minister of The Wesleyan Church” in full standing when all requirements have been met.

(b) A district ministerial license which shall become effective when the candidate shall receive appointment as explained 3030:4-7.

(c) A recognition as a ministerial student for those so qualified (3015).

(d) Recognition of a licensed minister in process of transfer from another denomination, and recognition of full standing when all requirements have been met.

(e) Any other license or commission authorized by *The Discipline*.

(f) The restoration for those who are qualified after receiving the report of the district board of ministerial development (1470:3; 5212:6).

(22) To receive and pass on a written annual service report, through the district board of ministerial development as explained in 1470:7-9, from each ordained minister, and licensed minister. It shall receive an explanation from each person whose report has been found unsatisfactory, and vote on the continuation of that person for appointment, which shall require a two-thirds vote of confidence for approval (1470:9).

Relating to the Election of Officials and Committees

(23) To elect, by ballot and majority vote, an ordained minister to the office of District Superintendent for a term of two years (cf. 1303:1, 2); reelection thereafter shall be for a term of four years (1303:2).

(24) To elect, by ballot and by majority vote, an ordained minister as Assistant District Superintendent (1320).

(25) To elect, by ballot and by majority vote, a district secretary (1330), a district treasurer (1335) or, if deemed advisable, a district secretary-treasurer and members-at-large of the district board of administration (1203-1206); the district conference may authorize the district board of administration to appoint a district treasurer (1335).

(26) To elect, for a term of three years, the members required to fill vacancies on the district board of ministerial development (1467-1468); the ordained ministers of this board are the council of ordination.

(27) To elect the following or to delegate election to the district board of administration: two or more members for the district auditing committee; one or more ordained ministers and an equal number of lay members to the building committee; members, in such number as desired, for the district statistical committee; members of the district board of trustees in such numbers as it desires.

(28) To elect a district director of evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries.

(29) To elect, if desired, a district director of Christian education, or to authorize the District Board of Administration to fill this position.

(30) To elect, if desired, a district Sunday school director (1483; 1494) or to authorize the District Board of Administration to fill this position.

(31) To elect a district board of review, which shall consist of four ordained ministers and three laypersons. Two ordained ministers and two laypersons shall also be elected at the same time to serve as alternates and to fill vacancies in the order of their election (1465; 5218-5221).

(32) To pass judgments according to the provisions of the judiciary.

Chapter 3

DISTRICT BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

A. Function

1200. The District Board of Administration carries out the will of the District Conference and serves as the chief governing body of the district in between District Conference meetings.

B. Membership

1203. Members. The District Board of Administration is made up of the District Superintendent, the Assistant District Superintendent, the district secretary, the district treasurer and members-at-large elected by the District Conference according to the size of the district as follows:

(1) For 30 or fewer established churches at least three members-at-large shall be elected making a total of not fewer than seven members.

(2) For 31 to 50 established churches at least five members-at-large shall be elected making a total board of not fewer than nine members.

(3) For 51 or more established churches at least seven members-at-large shall be elected making a total of not fewer than eleven members.

1206. Rules for a Member-at-Large. Each member-at-large of a District Board of Administration shall be a covenant member of a local Wesleyan church within the district of service, both at the time of election and throughout the time of membership. The term of office shall be for one year, and the member-at-large shall serve from the close of the District Conference at which elected until the close of the next regular meeting of the District Conference. Regulations governing the accountability and the declaring and filling of a vacancy in such office are the same as those for district officials as set forth in 1265 and 1272.

C. Meetings

1209. Organizing Meeting. The District Board of Administration shall meet immediately after the close of the District Conference for an organizing meeting:

(1) To care for any business delegated to it by the District Conference.

(2) To elect or appoint departmental officers and members of boards or committees, and to elect or confirm the election of officers of auxiliaries as designated by the district conference.

(3) To make plans for the year and to care for any other business as necessary.

1212. Regular Meetings. The District Board of Administration shall meet at least four times a year on dates announced within 30 days of the close of conference.

1215. Special Meetings. The District Board of Administration may be called for special meetings by the District Superintendent, or by the Assistant District Superintendent in times of emergency when the District Superintendent is unable to act. All members shall be notified at least one week in advance of a special meeting, unless all members are able to meet on shorter notice.

D. Organization and Procedures

1221. Chair. The District Superintendent is chair over the District Board of Administration. The Assistant District Superintendent shall chair in the absence of the District Superintendent, or when requested to do so by the District Superintendent. If neither is present, the board shall elect from among its members a temporary chair.

1224. Secretary. The district secretary is the secretary of the District Board of Administration.

1227. Quorum (number of members needed for an official meeting). A majority of all members of the board shall be a quorum.

1230. Voting. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be sufficient except for those matters for which a larger majority is required by *The Discipline* or for legal requirements.

E. Duties and Powers

1233. The duties and powers of the District Board of Administration are:

General Duties

(1) To serve as the chief governing body of the district between District Conference meetings.

(2) To promote the interests of The Wesleyan Church.

(3) To take a special interest in and responsibility for an active program of evangelism.

Related to the District Conference

(4) To carry out the plans and objectives of the District Conference.

(5) To cooperate with the National/Regional Superintendent in fixing the date for the annual meeting of the District Conference (1112; 1920:14) and to call for a reconvened meeting of the District Conference dependent on the approval of the National/Regional Board of Administration (1115; 1655:33).

(6) To submit resolutions to the District Conference that will provide for the advancement of the district work, and to submit proposed resolutions for the National/Regional Conference (cf. 1180:1-2; 1557).

(7) To serve the District Conference as a committee on pastoral relations, ministerial appointments, dependent on the approval of the District Conference; this shall be done after review and approval of recommendations from the district board of ministerial development and shall include ordination, licensing, and the restoration of ministers (cf. 510:1; 1180:18; 1470:10; 2700; 3020; 5212:6).

Duties Relating to District Officers, Committees, and Auxiliaries

(8) To have the general oversight of all district officials (1255), district departmental officers (1275), boards, committees, employees, auxiliary organizations of the district; to approve their plans and to coordinate their work; and to see that the work is administered according to *The Discipline* and the directives of the district conference. (Cf. 1265-1272; 1337:4-5; 1469).

(9) To divide the district into zones.

(10) To cooperate fully with both the District Conference and the National/Regional Conference in order to properly and legally hold and manage all property in the name of and under the authority of The Wesleyan Church.

(11) To provide for the security of all district records.

(12) To adopt an annual budget of income and expense for the district; to set the salaries, allowances and related matters for the district officials (1255) and district departmental officers (1275); to promote the raising of district funds in keeping with the plans of the District Conference (1180:13); to direct the district treasurer in the handling and disbursement of such funds (1337:2-3).

(13) To employ an auditor when authorized by the District Conference and to assign the duties (1446-1447); to direct an audit of the records and funds held by the district treasurer, the district treasurers of the auxiliaries, or any other treasurers of the district (1337:3).

(14) To elect district departmental officers and members of the district boards or committees as required by *The Discipline* or as given by the District Conference (cf. 1180:15, 25, 27, 30; 1245; 1446; 1448; 1449; 1490).

(15) To approve and coordinate all plans of the district board of evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries, and the district board of Christian education.

(16) To approve, alter, or add to the nominations submitted by the nominating committees of Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Youth, and to confirm the election of all officers and committees.

(17) To approve the time and place of the district conventions of Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Youth; to approve all plans of the respective auxiliaries; and to fill all vacancies.

(18) To request a ruling on a point of church law or an interpretation of *The Discipline* from the National/Regional Superintendent and to appeal the same to the Board of General Superintendents of the North American General Conference when necessary.

(19) To remove for cause or whenever the best interests of the Church and the district so require by a two-thirds majority vote of all its members, any of its own members with the exception of the district superintendent (cf. 1307), or any member of a board, committee, officer of an auxiliary organization, or an employee of the district by a majority vote of those present and voting (cf. 1272).

Related to Churches and Ministers

(20) To organize and supervise all pastoral charges of the district in accord with *The Discipline* and other district directives so that each one may be an effective unit of The Wesleyan Church.

(21) To authorize the establishment of a preaching point (505), a developing church (510), and an established church (518), and to receive a report from the District Superintendent about it (520:6); to reclassify an established church as a developing church when its number of covenant members drops to ten or fewer (518:1); and to recommend that the District Conference declare a church as discontinued (1180:17).

(22) To review the actions of the local advisory council of each developing church (510:3).

(23) To approve all pastoral assignments in between District Conference meetings.

(24) To approve in writing the proposal of a local church conference for the acquisition, purchase, sale, loan against property, transfer, or other disposal of property in

accord with the provisions in 4510-4620, after first receiving a written report and recommendation from the district building committee when such is required as explained in 1448.

(25) To supervise and coordinate the merger of two or more churches.

(26) To approve the plans of a local church board for the establishment of a day care and/or day school, and after its establishment to approve any significant change in mission, facilities, or finances.

(27) To grant temporary recognition (cf. 1470:2) to ordained ministers, licensed ministers, or persons with equivalent standing, from other denominations, as being in process of transfer, dependent on the action of the next District Conference (1180:21a, d, e; 1310:13).

(28) To remove a pastor by a two-thirds majority vote (722:3).

(29) To consider equivalency credits for ministerial candidates as submitted by the Board of Ministerial Development (1470:1d) for recommendation to the National/Regional Committee on Christian Education (cf.2300:6).

(30) To take charge of any complaints or accusations against a local church or circuit within the district and to carry out disciplinary proceedings according to the rules of the Judiciary (5305-5320; cf. 5209); to intervene and protect the property rights of The Wesleyan Church and the district; and to authorize the District Superintendent to call for an affirmation of loyalty and to reorganize a local church as explained in 5320.

(31) To take charge of judicial proceedings, the ordering of investigation (5012) or trial, for any ordained minister, licensed minister, or other worker under the jurisdiction of the district (5200), in accord with the provisions of the Judiciary (5206-5212).

F. Executive Committee

1245. A District Board of Administration with nine or more members may establish an executive committee which shall consist of the District Superintendent, the Assistant District Superintendent, the district secretary, and the district treasurer and others if it desires. The executive committee may act for the District Board of Administration as that board shall authorize.

Chapter 4

DISTRICT OFFICIALS AND OFFICERS

A. Rules Governing District Officials

1255. Identification. The district officials include the District Superintendent, the Assistant District Superintendent, the district secretary, and the district treasurer.

1258. Qualifications. A district official other than the District Superintendent (cf. 1303:1) must be, at the time of election and throughout the term of service, a covenant member of a local Wesleyan church within the district, and, if a minister, a ministerial member of the district in which service is given (cf. 1272).

1262. Term of Office. District officials other than the District Superintendent (cf. 1303:2), shall be elected for a term of one year. All district officials shall assume office at the close of the conference which elected them.

1265. Accountability. District officials other than the District Superintendent shall serve under the general supervision of the District Superintendent, shall be accountable to the District Board of Administration, and may be removed from office upon a two-thirds majority vote of all members of the District Board of Administration. The accountability of the District Superintendent is explained in 1307.

1268. Reports. A district official shall report to each meeting of the District Conference concerning all official duties (1180:9), and to the District Board of Administration as may be required.

1272. Vacancies. The office of a district official may become vacant by death, by no longer being a member in a local Wesleyan church within the district, by resignation, by removal (1265), or in the case of a minister, by ceasing to be a ministerial member of the district. In all cases other than that of the District Superintendent (1303:3; 1307), the filling of a vacancy in the office of a district official by the District Board of Administration until the next meeting of the conference shall be by a majority vote of all members of the District Board of Administration (1233:19).

B. Rules Governing District Departmental Officers and Committees

1275. Identification. These include departmental directors and auxiliary leaders, namely, district director of evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries, district director of Christian education, district director of Sunday school; auxiliary leader of Wesleyan Men, auxiliary leader of Wesleyan Women, auxiliary leader of Wesleyan Youth; and district standing committee and board members.

1278. Qualifications. A district departmental officer or member of a district board or committee (1275) must be a covenant member of a local Wesleyan church within the district at the time of election, and if a minister, a ministerial member of the district (1292).

1282. Term of Office. A district departmental officer or member of a district board or committee (1275) shall be elected for a term of one year, unless *The Discipline* states otherwise (1452; 1468). The district departmental officer or member of a district board or committee shall assume office at the close of the district conference meeting at which elected and shall serve until the end of the designated term.

1285. Accountability. All district departmental officers and members of district boards and committees shall serve under the general supervision of the District

Superintendent and shall be accountable to the District Board of Administration. They may be removed from office by the District Board of Administration by a majority vote.

1288. Reports. A district departmental officer shall report to the District Conference as required by *The Discipline* or by the District Conference (1180:10), and shall make other reports to the board or committee under which service is performed, the District Board of Administration or the District Superintendent as may be required.

1292. Vacancies. The office of a district departmental officer or membership on a district board or committee (1275) may become vacant by death, by cessation of membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district, by resignation, by removal (1285), or in the case of a minister, by ceasing to be a ministerial member of the district. A vacancy may be declared and filled for the unexpired term by the District Board of Administration by a majority vote.

C. District Superintendent

1300. Function. The District Superintendent is to be the spiritual and administrative leader of the district. The rules for a District Superintendent are found in 1303-1310.

1303. Qualifications and Tenure. The regulations for a District Superintendent are as follows (cf. 1255-1272):

(1) **Election.** The District Superintendent shall be elected by the District Conference, by ballot and by majority vote, from among the ordained ministers of The Wesleyan Church (1180:23).

(2) **Term of Office.** The first election of a District Superintendent shall be for a term of two years. Reelection after that shall be for a term of four years. The salary of a District Superintendent shall continue for one month beyond the date for the termination of service.

(3) **Vacancy.** Whenever the office of superintendent is vacated the Assistant District Superintendent (cf. 1320) shall become the District Superintendent and serve until the next meeting of the District Conference or until a successor shall be elected.

1307. Accountability. The District Superintendent is accountable to the National/Regional Board of Administration for both official duties and moral character. The District Superintendent may be removed from office by the National/Regional Board of Administration, by a two-thirds majority vote of all its members (1655:36a).

1310. Duties. The District Superintendent shall administer this office in accord with *The Discipline* and any other official directives from the National/Regional Conference, the National/Regional Board of Administration, the District Conference, and the District Board of Administration. The duties of the District Superintendent are (cf. 1300):

General

(1) To have the supervision of the churches and pastors within the district (cf. 505; 510; 518), giving special attention to promoting programs for evangelism and church growth, as approved by the District Conference or the District Board of Administration (cf. 1233:3; 1451).

(2) To carry on a spiritual ministry, teaching the people concerning the doctrines, purposes, and programs of The Wesleyan Church.

District Administration

(3) The District Superintendent serves as a member of the National/Regional Conference (1503:1), and the National/Regional Board of Administration (1605:3), vice-chair of the District Conference (1120), chair of the District Board of Administration (1221), chair of the district board of ministerial development (1468); chair of the district building committee (1448), member and chair of the District Conference resolutions committee (1442), chair of the District Conference nominating committee (1444), and a member of the district conventions and the district executive committees of Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Youth.

(4) To submit recommendations to the District Board of Administration that will provide for a more efficient administration, correlation, and advancement of the district work.

(5) To have administrative supervision over all district officials, departmental officers, boards (cf. 1320-1440;1460-1494), committees (1441-1455), auxiliaries, preaching points, developing churches, established churches, ministers, and other workers of the district with the exception of those who are accountable only to the National/Regional Board of Administration for their official duties and moral character (1180:8), and to see that the plans and policies of the national/regional Church are carried out.

(6) To meet with any district board, committee, auxiliary, or other district agency as the District Superintendent shall desire, and make recommendations as thought advisable; and to counsel with the various officers, directors, employees, and others serving the district concerning their work.

(7) To examine all legal papers for property acquired by local churches or the district and to approve them as to their conformity with the requirements of *The Discipline*; to have the custody, under the direction of the District Board of Administration, of property and legal records for both the district and the local churches.

Local Churches

(8) To visit, or to appoint the Assistant District Superintendent or other representative to visit, each church in the district at least once a year, looking into the progress and administration of the church and seeking to advance its spiritual life.

(9) To investigate carefully concerning the support of pastors and to advise and encourage the local churches to provide for their adequate support.

(10) To recommend that the District Board of Administration authorize the establishment of a preaching point (505), a developing church (510), an established church (518), the reclassification of an established church (518:1); and to preside over the organization of a church or appoint a representative to do so, and to report the organization of new churches to the District Board of Administration and to the District Conference (520:6).

(11) To preside over a local church conference whenever present (635), to call and chair a local church board or a local church conference in times of emergency (631; 712; 722:2-3; 773).

(12) To help a local church board find a pastor (705:1-3), providing it with a list of names of those ministers available for a call, and to carry out the provisions of *The Discipline* concerning the renewal of a call, the review and termination of an extended call, the resignation and release of a pastor from the pastoral agreement, and other matters pertaining to pastoral relations for the churches under district care (631; 692:2; 705:1-3; 710; 712; 718-722; 773).

(13) To approve the transfer of any ordained minister or licensed minister from another district, and, when objecting to such a transfer, to state any reasons if requested to do so (cf. 1920:28; 3044:5; 3075:7).

(14) To recommend the removal of a pastor to the District Board of Administration (712; 722:3; 1233:28).

(15) To perform all the functions of a pastor for a local church within the district when it is without a pastor, or to recommend to the District Board of Administration the appointment of a supply pastor until the local church obtains a pastor (1233:23).

(16) To approve the employment of an evangelist or workers of another denomination for revivals or other meetings by a local church or any district organization, and, when objecting to such employment, to state any reasons if requested to do so (cf. 782:16).

(17) To conduct the ritual of ordination except when the National/Regional Superintendent or appointed representative is present; to sign with the district secretary ordination certificates, and ministerial licenses, or other official forms required by virtue of this office.

(18) To receive statistical reports from each church prepared by the pastor.

Reports

(19) To report annually to the District Conference concerning official duties and personal ministry (1180:9), and to submit other reports to the National/Regional Board of Administration or its Executive Committee and the District Board of Administration as required.

Judicial

(20) To receive any complaint or accusation against any pastor, church worker, church member, or local church under the jurisdiction of the district (5200:1-4; 5305-5320), and to give it prompt and careful attention as required in the Judiciary (5305-5320), and to refer any matter requiring official investigation or judicial proceedings to the District Board of Administration (1233:30-31; cf. 5212:2; 5320).

D. Assistant District Superintendent

1320. The Assistant District Superintendent shall be elected, by ballot and by majority vote, by the District Conference from among the ordained ministers of the district (1180:24). The qualifications, term of office, accountability, and other rules are those of a district official as explained in 1255-1272.

1323. The duties of the Assistant District Superintendent are:

(1) To serve as member and vice-chair of the District Board of Administration, and chair the board whenever the District Superintendent is not present or when appointed to do so by the District Superintendent (1221).

(2) To call and chair the District Board of Administration in times of emergency when the District Superintendent is not able to act (1215; 1221).

(3) To serve as a member of the district board of ministerial development (1468), and a member of the district board of Christian education (1483).

(4) To assist the District Superintendent and to serve as a representative of the District Superintendent to local churches or district organizations as the superintendent may request.

(5) To perform other duties as required by the District Conference or the District Board of Administration.

(6) To report annually to the District Conference concerning all official duties (1180:9), and to the District Board of Administration as required.

(7) To become District Superintendent in the event of a vacancy in that office.

E. District Secretary

1330. The district secretary shall be elected by the District Conference by ballot and by majority vote (1180:25). The qualifications, term of office, accountability, and other rules are those of a district official as defined in 1255-1272.

1332. The duties of the district secretary are:

(1) To be the secretary of the District Conference, recording accurately and completely the proceedings of each meeting and preserving them (1123).

(2) To serve as a member and as the secretary of the District Board of Administration (1203; 1224), recording accurately and completely the proceedings of each meeting and forwarding a copy of the minutes of each meeting to each member of the board and to the National/Regional Superintendent.

(3) To issue official notices and communications from the District Conference and from the District Board of Administration; and to keep permanent copies of all correspondence, reports, and other records.

(4) To write and sign all certificates, licenses, and other official forms.

(5) To put in order and send to the National/Regional Superintendent statistical and financial reports of the District Conference and a copy of each resolution adopted.

(6) To take care of the official district records.

(7) To keep a complete and up to date district directory, listing the district officials, each district board or committee with the names of its members and officers, the district departmental officers, the names and addresses of each ordained minister, licensed minister, ministerial student, the address of each preaching point, developing church, established church, and parsonage within the district (cf. 1255; 1275; 2700).

(8) To notify all churches and ministerial members of the district of the time and place of the next regular meeting of the District Conference at least thirty days in advance (1112), and to notify them of any meetings as directed by the District Board of Administration (1115).

(9) To perform other duties as may be required by the District Conference or the District Board of Administration.

F. District Treasurer

1335. The district treasurer shall be elected by the District Conference, by ballot and by majority vote unless the District Conference has authorized the District Board of Administration to appoint the treasurer (cf. 1180:25). The election of the treasurer shall not take place until after the adoption of the audited report of the district treasurer for the previous year. The qualifications, term of office, responsibility, and other rules are those of a district official as defined in 1255-1272.

1337. The duties of a district treasurer are:

(1) To serve as a member of the District Board of Administration (1203), and as a member of the District Conference resolutions committee (1442).

(2) To take care of all district funds; to receive, record, hold, and pay out funds in keeping with the financial plans of the National/Regional Conference and the District Conference and as directed by the District Board of Administration.

(3) To submit all records and funds for an annual audit, after the close of the financial year, as provided for in 1446-1447, and at any other time as may be requested by the District Board of Administration.

(4) To submit a complete financial report of all funds administered or attended to by the district treasurer to each regular meeting of the District Conference (1180:9), to submit reports to the District Board of Administration (1233:8), the District Superintendent, and the National/Regional Treasurer as they require.

(5) To perform other duties as required by the District Conference or the District Board of Administration.

G. District Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries

1426. A district director of evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries shall be elected by the District Conference (1180:28), and serves as chair of the district committee on evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries (1452). The term of office, accountability, and other requirements are explained in 1275-1292. The duties of this officer are:

(1) To make a general plan of activities for the year and give it for approval to the committee on evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries and then to the District Board of Administration for final approval.

(2) To assist the District Superintendent in arranging for reports and opportunities to raise money within the district by representatives of the National/Regional Conference for church planting, evangelism, and cross-cultural ministries.

(3) To assist the District Superintendent in special services for national/regional or district evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries at the district meetings and conferences.

(4) To assist pastors in promoting evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries in the local churches.

(5) To submit an annual report of activities to the District Conference (1180:9, 10).

(6) To perform other duties as required by the District Conference, the District Board of Administration, or the district committee on evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries.

H. District Leader of Wesleyan Men

1437. The district leader of Wesleyan Men is a nonvoting member of the District Conference unless he is a voting member by some other right (1090). He is a member of the district board of Christian education. He shall submit all plans for Wesleyan Men through the District Superintendent to the District Board of Administration for approval (1233:16, 17). He shall endeavor to guide the district activities of Wesleyan Men toward soul-winning, service, stewardship, and fellowship.

I. District Leader of Wesleyan Women

1439. The district leader of Wesleyan Women is a nonvoting member of the District Conference (1090) unless she is a voting member by some other right. She is a member of the district board of Christian education. She shall submit all plans for Wesleyan Women through the District Superintendent to the District Board of Administration for approval (1233:16, 17). She shall endeavor to guide the district activities of Wesleyan Women into soul-winning, evangelism, pioneer work, and concern for cross-cultural ministries.

J. District Leader of Wesleyan Youth

1440. There may be a district leader of Wesleyan Youth who shall be a nonvoting member of the District Conference unless the person holding this office is a voting member by some other right (1090). The district leader of Wesleyan Youth is a member of the district board of Christian education; shall coordinate all plans for WY with the district board of Christian education and submit them through the District Superintendent to the District Board of Administration for approval. The district leader of Wesleyan Youth shall endeavor to guide the district activities of WY in accord with the purpose and mission of WY.

Chapter 5

DISTRICT BOARDS AND COMMITTEES

A. District Committees

1441. The District Conference shall have such committees as are required by *The Discipline*, and may create and define the duties of such other committees as are necessary.

1. District Conference Resolutions Committee

1442. A District Conference may establish a District Conference resolutions committee (1180:6), or the District Board of Administration may carry out the functions of this committee. It shall consist of the District Superintendent, the district treasurer, and from three to nine other members elected by the conference with consideration for lay representation (cf. 1275-1292). The District Superintendent shall be the chair, and the committee shall elect a secretary and other officers as necessary. The chair shall call the committee at least fifteen days before the scheduled opening of the District Conference and as necessary.

1443. The duties of the District Conference resolutions committee are:

(1) To receive all resolutions for the District Conference, to review them, and to report them to the District Conference with the committee's recommendations and in the order the committee shall determine.

(2) To conduct and report on any investigation regarding the importance of proposed district legislation as requested by the District Conference or District Board of Administration.

(3) To review the standing rules of the district in order to make recommendations to the District Conference concerning the alignment of rules with National/Regional Conference legislation, and concerning any other necessary amendments (1180:4).

(4) To provide, if possible, all delegates to the District Conference with copies of resolutions, properly classified, at least ten days before the opening of the District Conference.

2. District Conference Nominating Committee

1444. Each district may have a District Conference nominating committee consisting of the District Superintendent as chair, and four additional members elected by the annual District Conference (1180:7; cf. 1275-1292). The elected members of the nominating committee shall not succeed themselves (shall not serve two years in a row). The committee shall organize itself and elect a vice-chair and a secretary. It shall meet as called by the chair. The duties of this committee are:

(1) To present nominations for the assistant district superintendent, district secretary, district treasurer, members-at-large of the District Board of Administration and elected delegate/s to the National/Regional Conference.

(2) To present nominations for each of the following in accord with the requirements and rules for each as explained in *The Discipline*: the District Conference resolutions committee (1442), the nominating committee (1444), the district auditing committee (1446), the district building committee (1448), the district statistical committee (1449), the district board of ministerial development (1468), the district director of evangelism, church

growth, and cross-cultural ministries (1426), the district director of Christian education (1490), the district director of Sunday School (1494), and the district board of review (1465).

(3) To present any other nominations as shall be requested by the District Conference.

3. The District Conference Journal Committee

1445. The District Conference journal shall contain the complete and accurate record of the proceedings of the District Conference, prepared by the district secretary, who may ask two other persons to help. The committee shall have the duty:

(1) To have the journal certified by the District Board of Administration.

(2) To arrange the journal according to the table of contents and general format approved by the National/Regional Board of Administration.

(3) To see that it contains a complete directory for the district as explained in 1332:7.

(4) To have two copies of the journal translated into English and forwarded to the North American area General Superintendent, one of which will be directed by the General Superintendent to the General Director of World Missions. One copy of the journal written in the local language should also be sent to the National/Regional Superintendent.

4. District Auditing Committee

1446. The District Conference shall provide for the auditing of all financial records and funds by the election of a district auditing committee, or by directing the District Board of Administration to employ an accountant for that purpose. The district auditing committee shall be a standing committee and shall consist of two or more persons elected for a term of one year by the District Conference. General rules for the membership of this committee are given in 1275-1292. The duties of the auditing committee are:

(1) To audit annually, before the financial reports are presented to a District Conference or convention, the records and funds of the district treasurer (1337:3), and any other treasurer of a district board, committee, or auxiliary holding district funds; and to perform audits at other times as may be requested by the District Board of Administration.

(2) To give a written report to the District Conference and to each of the district conventions of the auxiliaries concerning the results of the audit. A financial report may not be accepted as approved by any official body until certified as correct by the auditing committee or an employed auditor.

(3) To perform other duties as required by the District Conference or the District Board of Administration.

1447. The District Conference may direct the District Board of Administration to employ an accountant to perform any part or all of the duties assigned to the district auditing committee, in which case the auditor's report shall be given to the District Conference by the district secretary.

5. District Building Committee

1448. There shall be a district building committee elected by the District Conference (1180:27), unless the District Conference shall delegate the election to the District Board of Administration. The committee shall consist of the District Superintendent as chair, and one or more ordained ministers as desired with an equal number of laypersons. The elected members should be persons who are capable and experienced in property transactions and

the construction of buildings. General rules governing the membership of this committee are given in 1275-1292. The duties of the district building committee are:

(1) To investigate the proposed sites for local church buildings, parsonages, or other units and to report its findings and recommendations in writing both to the District Board of Administration and the local church (cf. 4510-4620).

(2) To consider the proposal of a local church (655:13) for the construction of a local church building, parsonage, educational unit, or the remodeling of buildings when it amounts to ten percent or more of the value of the building and to report its findings and recommendations in writing to the local church and the District Board of Administration (1233:24; cf. 4510-4620).

6. District Statistical Committee

1449. Each District Conference shall elect a district statistical committee of the desired number (1180:27), or the District Conference may delegate this responsibility to the District Board of Administration. General rules for the membership of this committee are given in 1275-1292.

1450. The duties of the district statistical committee are:

(1) To receive complete annual statistical and financial reports from persons, units, and agencies as the District Board of Administration or the National/Regional Board of Administration shall designate, and to compile and submit to the District Conference a comprehensive statistical and financial report for the district.

(2) To report to the District Board of Administration the name of each person who fails to submit the statistical and financial report.

7. District Committee for Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries

1451. Function. The District Board of Administration shall serve as, or the District Conference shall establish a district committee for evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries, to aid the District Superintendent and the District Board of Administration in developing, supervising, and promoting a program of district evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministry (1233:15; 1310:1).

1452. Membership. If a separate district committee of evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministry is established, it shall have as its chair the director of evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries. In addition to the chair, the committee shall consist of two or more ordained ministers and an equal number of laypersons elected by the District Board of Administration who are especially concerned and qualified for this phase of the church's mission. The term of office for the elected members shall be for two years, with the election arranged so that approximately one-half shall be elected each year. Other than the chair, the committee shall elect its own officers. General rules governing the members of this board are explained in 1275-1292.

1453. Meetings. The district committee for evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries shall meet soon after the close of the District Conference to make plans for the year.

1454. Duties. The duties of the district committee for evangelism, church growth, and cross-cultural ministries shall be:

(1) To study potential fields for district extension work and report to the District Board of Administration concerning the same.

(2) To stimulate interest in district evangelism and church growth throughout the district to help raise the funds needed for the district church growth program and national/regional cross-cultural ministries.

(3) To make recommendations to the District Board of Administration concerning the establishment of a preaching point, developing church, or church.

(4) To assume direct supervision of the district church growth program or a specific church growth project as directed by the District Board of Administration.

(5) To assist the District Superintendent in planning and conducting special services in the interests of cross-cultural ministries at the District Conference, camp meeting, or zone meetings.

(6) To perform other duties as required by the District Board of Administration.

8. Council of Ordination

1455. Each district shall provide for a Council of Ordination to assist the National/Regional Superintendent (1920:27; 5752), or, in the absence of the National/Regional Superintendent, the District Superintendent (1310:17), in carrying out the will of the District Conference for the ordination of ministers (1180:20). The Council of Ordination shall consist of the ordained ministers of the district board of ministerial development (1470:6). The Council of Ordination will be responsible to plan the ordination service.

B. District Standing Boards

1. District Board of Trustees

1460. The District Conference of each district shall take steps to register The Wesleyan Church in compliance with any local laws or customs, so that property and corporate structures have legal protection and are under the authority of The Wesleyan Church as represented by the National/Regional Conference (cf. 4510-4620). In places where local laws require property to be held by trustees, the District Conference shall elect from among the members of the District Board of Administration the members of the district board of trustees in number as desired (1180:27). The district trustees shall hold office until their term expires as members of the District Board of Administration or until their successors are elected and qualified. The district board of trustees shall be responsible to the District Board of Administration (cf. 1200). A district trustee may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of all the members of the District Board of Administration whenever it is thought necessary or whenever a trustee shall refuse to carry out the directions of the District Board of Administration, except when such directions are contrary to local laws or to *The Discipline* (1206; 1265). The office of a district trustee may also become vacant by death, cessation of membership in The Wesleyan Church, or cessation of membership on the District Board of Administration. A vacancy on the district board of trustees shall be filled for the unexpired term by a majority vote of all the members of the District Board of Administration (1206; 1272).

1462. The duties of the district board of trustees are:

(1) To hold all district property, and local property which may be held by the district in trust for The Wesleyan Church.

(2) To attend to all legal matters concerning the district transactions for the purchase, sale, rental, loans on property, transfer, or other disposal of property, as ordered by the District Board of Administration.

(3) To fulfill other duties as relate to their office as trustees and as may be assigned to them by the District Board of Administration.

2. District Board of Review

1465. Each established district shall have a district board of review, which shall consist of four ordained ministers and three laypersons elected annually by the District Conference (1180:31). Two ordained ministers and two laypersons shall also be elected at the same time to serve as alternates and to fill vacancies in the order of their election. No member of the district board of review shall be at the same time a member of the District Board of Administration. The district board of review serves as an appeals court for lay members and local churches. The duties and powers of the district board of review are explained in the Judiciary (5218-5221). General rules governing the members of the district board of review are explained in 1275-1292.

3. District Board of Ministerial Development

1467. Function. There shall be a district board of ministerial development which shall be responsible for the examination and recommendation to the District Conference of all candidates for ordination, license, commission, ministerial study, restoration, or transfer from another denomination.

1468. Membership. The board shall consist of the District Superintendent as chair, the Assistant District Superintendent, and six additional members; three shall be ordained ministers, three shall be laypersons; nominations shall be presented by the nominating committee (cf. 1275-1292). The term of office for the elected members shall be for three years, with the election so arranged that two (one layperson and one minister) will be elected each year.

1469. Meetings. The board shall be called together by the chair. The district board of ministerial development, as early as possible after the date of the District Conference has been fixed, shall appoint the time for all candidates to meet with the board (1233:7).

1470. Duties. The duties of the district board of ministerial development shall be:

Related to Ordination, Commissions, Licenses, and Ministerial Students

(1) To examine carefully (cf. 3210:5) each candidate for ordination, the granting of a district ministerial license, a license as a ministerial student, and any other license as may be authorized by *The Discipline*; the examination shall include an interview with each candidate, making such investigation as is thought necessary to determine the individual's:

- a. Personal experience of salvation and entire sanctification;
- b. Full commitment to the Articles of Religion, Membership Commitments, Elementary Principles, and policies of The Wesleyan Church and acceptance of its authority;
- c. Evidence of having the qualifications for the ministry to which the candidate feels called.

d. Academic completion of required courses of study (cf. 3210:2, 3, 7) as approved by the National/Regional Committee on Christian Education (2300:6) or the district board of ministerial standing may recommend to the District Board of Administration candidates for equivalency credits (1233:29) for evaluation by the National/Regional Committee on Christian Education (cf. 2300:06).

(2) To examine any person who desires to be received into the district from another denomination, and to be recognized as an ordained minister or licensed minister (cf. 1233:27).

(3) To consider and examine any person applying for restoration of ordained minister's status, or license as a minister.

(4) To present to the District Conference, as a separate report, a recommendation for the election of a candidate to ordination as an ordained minister (1180:20; cf. 3070:5).

(5) To present to the District Conference a combined report of all other recommendations concerning the commissioning, licensing, recognition, or restoration of ministers, and the licensing of ministerial students (1180:21; 3015).

(6) To serve, with the exception of the lay members, as a council of ordination (1455); and to perform other duties as may be assigned by the District Conference.

Related to the Annual Service Reports

(7) To receive a written annual service report (725:29) from each ordained minister, licensed minister, ministerial student, and local preacher in district service (2705) and to review these reports and pass on each one as follows (cf. 1180:22):

(a) A report which shows that the work has been done according to *The Discipline* and that the annual statistical report (1450:1) has been properly submitted shall be marked as approved and returned to the person submitting it (cf. 1470:9).

(b) A report in which there are unsatisfactory answers, or which shows that the work has not been done according to *The Discipline*, or that the annual statistical report (1450:1) has not been properly submitted, shall be reviewed with the person submitting the report. If reasons for such irregularities are not satisfactory to the district board of ministerial development, the report shall be marked as unsatisfactory and returned to the person submitting it (cf. 1470:9).

(8) To investigate the reason for the failure to submit an annual service report on the part of those persons required to do so (725:29; 1470:7a), and to take appropriate action.

(9) To present a report to the District Conference concerning the results of the examination of the annual service reports, listing all members of the district responsible to submit such reports as to whether their reports were approved, unsatisfactory, or not received. A person whose annual service report has been found unsatisfactory (1470:7b) shall report to the District Conference reasons for the failure, and it shall require a two-thirds vote of confidence by the District Conference to approve such a person for continued appointment.

Related to Appointments and District Conference Relations

(10) To submit a report to the District Board of Administration concerning the availability for appointment, any desired changes in appointment or District Conference relations, as recorded on the annual service reports (1233:7).

Related to Ministerial Development

(11) To cooperate with the district superintendent (1310:6) and the district board of administration in providing opportunities for the personal and professional growth of ministers within the district; the activities of the district board of ministerial development may include individual or group interviews, assessments, growth contracts, seminars or other means of assisting ministers to achieve their full potential for ministry.

4. District Board of Christian Education Membership and Duties

1480. Purpose. The district board of Christian education shall be responsible to develop, supervise, correlate, and promote a program of Christian education throughout the district.

1482. Departments. The following are departments of responsibility for the board of Christian education.

- (1) Local church lay training program.
- (2) Sunday school.
- (3) Periodicals and literature.
- (4) Auxiliaries (as they relate to Christian education).

1483. Membership. The board of Christian education shall consist of six members. The members of the board shall be as follow:

- (1) Chair—Director of Christian Education.
- (2) Assistant District Superintendent.
- (3) District Director of Sunday School.
- (4-6) Leaders of District Auxiliaries.

1484. Election of the Members. The director of Christian education and the district director of Sunday School, are to be elected by the District Conference. The auxiliary leaders will be elected by their respective groups, and shall serve, with the Assistant District Superintendent, by virtue of their office.

1485. Meetings. The district board of Christian education shall meet soon after the close of the District Conference to make plans for the year and shall meet for regular meetings at least three times each year.

1486. Accountability The district board of Christian education shall be an advisory and coordinating body, and shall be responsible to the District Board of Administration.

1488. Duties. The duties and powers of the district board of Christian education are:

(1) To develop, supervise, and coordinate the work of Christian education within the district through its departments and auxiliary organizations.

(2) To receive reports from the various department directors for which the board is responsible and to coordinate, formulate, and implement their plans and programs.

(3) To advise and assist the department directors and auxiliary leaders in implementing the plans and programs of the national/regional departments which they represent within the district.

(4) To be responsible for the planning and supervision of the camps for children and youth; to submit detailed plans for such camps to the District Board of Administration for their approval.

(5) To promote the interests of the educational institutions of The Wesleyan Church.

(6) To present recommendations to the District Board of Administration and to the District Conference for the growth of the work through the various ministries of Christian education, and for the financial plans of the work under their care.

(7) To perform other duties related to Christian education as are assigned by the District Conference or the District Board of Administration.

5 Department Directors

1490 District Director of Christian Education. The duties of the district director of Christian education (1180:29; cf. 1275-1292) shall be:

(1) To serve as chair of the district board of Christian education, helping to coordinate the total program of Christian education within the district.

(2) To coordinate and promote local church Christian education in the following areas: Sunday School, literature, discipleship, Sunday School teacher training, lay leadership training, and other programs which may be assigned by the District Board of Administration or the National/Regional Board of Administration.

(3) To give an annual report to the District Conference.

1494. District Director of Sunday School. The duties of the district director of Sunday school (1180:30; cf. 1275-1292) shall be:

(1) To provide leadership to the Sunday School work of the district; to present plans and recommendations to the district board of Christian education for review and coordination (1488:2), and to the District Board of Administration for approval (cf. 1486).

(2) To assist the pastors and local Sunday school superintendents in the organization and advancement of their Sunday schools.

(3) To report to the district board of Christian education concerning official activities including a complete statistical report for the local Sunday schools.

(4) To give leadership to the district program of family ministries and the coordination of local church family ministries.

(5) To perform other duties in harmony with the other responsibilities of the office as may be assigned by the District Conference, the District Board of Administration, or the district board of Christian education.

PART 4.**NATIONAL/REGIONAL CHURCH GOVERNMENT****Chapter 1****NATIONAL/REGIONAL CONFERENCE****A. Extent of the Region**

1500. The Wesleyan Church is a national/regional Church ---

This section will have to be filled in by the national/regional Church.

B. Membership**1. Plan of Representation**

1503. The National/Regional Conference shall be composed of voting and nonvoting members as follows:

Voting Members

(1) The voting members of the National/Regional Conference shall be:

(a) The District Superintendent of each established and provisional district, and a lay delegate elected at the same time and in the same manner as the other delegates (1180:3; 1512-1524).

(b) One additional ministerial and one additional lay delegate for each established district.

(c) For established districts, one ministerial and one lay delegate for each 150 additional covenant members or major fraction thereof beyond the 500 minimum (cf. 1038:2) as in the chart following:

<u>District</u> <u>Members</u>	<u>Lay</u> <u>Delegates</u>	<u>Ministerial</u> <u>Delegates</u>	<u>Total (including "a" and "b")</u>
576-725.....	3.....	3.....	6.....
726-875.....	4.....	4.....	8.....
876-1025.....	5.....	5.....	10.....
1026 & up	6	6	12

(d) The national/regional officials: the National/Regional Superintendent; the National/Regional Secretary; the National/Regional Treasurer; the National/Regional Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries; the National/Regional Director of Christian Education and members of the National/Regional Board of Administration who are not voting members by some other right.

(e) The National/Regional Leader of Wesleyan Men, the National/Regional Leader of Wesleyan Women, and the National/Regional Leader of Youth.

(f) National/Regional Superintendents Emeriti.

Nonvoting Members

(2) The following when they are not voting members by some other right shall be seated as nonvoting members: developing district superintendents (1015), ordained ministers, missionaries under appointment to the National/Regional Conference, and other delegates as provided for by the National/Regional Board of Administration.

2. Forfeiture of Representation

1506. A district which has been placed under discipline as provided for in the Judiciary (5350-5375), shall forfeit all rights to any representation in the National/Regional Conference.

3. Election of Delegates

a. Delegates

1512. The delegates to the National/Regional Conference shall be elected by the District Conference, by ballot and by majority vote. The statistical report for the annual meeting of the District Conference at which the delegates are elected shall be used for determining the number of National/Regional Conference delegates (1503:1). A certified list of all delegates to the National/Regional Conference shall be promptly forwarded by the district secretary to the National/Regional Secretary.

1514. A person accepting election as a delegate is obligated to attend faithfully the entire National/Regional Conference meeting. (Cf. 1541.)

b. Alternate Delegates

1516. Each District Conference shall also at the same meeting (1512) elect by ballot and by majority vote a sufficient number of alternate ministerial and lay delegates, not to exceed the number of delegates. Such alternates shall meet the same qualifications as the delegates (1520-1524) and shall fill vacancies in the order of their election.

1518. Whenever the District Superintendent, who is a member of the National/Regional Conference by virtue of office (1503:1a), is unable to attend, the place of the District Superintendent shall be filled by the Assistant District Superintendent. If the Assistant District Superintendent is an elected delegate to the National/Regional Conference, the place of the Assistant District Superintendent shall then be filled by an alternate ministerial delegate.

4. Qualifications of Delegates

a. Ministerial Delegates

1520. A ministerial delegate must be an ordained minister serving in an active capacity who is a member of the district represented, both at the time of election and at the time of the National/Regional Conference.

b. Lay Delegates

1524. A lay delegate must be a layperson who is a covenant member of a local church in the district represented, both at the time of election and at the time of the National/Regional Conference.

C. Meetings

1. Regular Meetings

1528. The National/Regional Conference shall meet every four years at a date and place to be determined by the National/Regional Board of Administration.

2. Special Meetings

1532. Any properly called special meeting of the National/Regional Conference shall have full authority to transact any item of business which may be transacted at a regular meeting. The holding of a special meeting must be authorized by a two-thirds vote of the National/Regional Board.

D. Organization and Procedure

1. Officers

1536. Chair. The North American General Superintendent over the region shall chair the National/Regional Conference, unless the National/Regional Conference is an established National/Regional Conference in which case the General Superintendent may be asked to join the National/Regional Superintendent at the head table. In the absence of the General Superintendent the General Director of World Missions or an appointed representative may take the General Superintendent's place. The National/Regional Superintendent shall always be seated at the head table whether serving as chair or not.

1539. Secretary. The National/Regional Secretary shall be the secretary of the National/Regional Conference (1948).

2. Procedure

1541. Delegates. After a delegate has been seated at the National/Regional Conference, an alternate delegate cannot be seated in place of the seated delegate (cf. 1514).

1543. Quorum. A majority of all the delegates shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

3. Resolutions

1557. Resolutions to the National/Regional Conference may be submitted by a District Conference, a District Board of Administration, the executive committee of a developing district, the National/Regional Board of Administration, a National/Regional Conference Committee, the National/Regional Executive Committee of an auxiliary organization, or any ten members of the National/Regional Conference.

1560. Resolutions proposing an amendment to the Constitution may be submitted to the National/Regional Conference only by a District Conference (1180:1) or the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:4).

4. Duties and Powers

1590. The duties, powers, and restrictions of the National/Regional Conference are as follows:

Related to the Constitution

- (1) To propose an amendment to the Constitution by a two-thirds vote.

National/Regional Legislation

(2) To enact statutory law and to adopt ritual for *The Discipline*, of The Wesleyan Church in the National/Regional Conference, and to adopt other rules and regulations for the Church which shall be the chief authority for The Wesleyan Church; in mission units this is subject to the approval of the North American General Board.

(3) To authorize a corporation to be formed and maintained for The Wesleyan Church in any country under its jurisdiction to facilitate the management of its legal and corporate affairs (4510) by a two-thirds vote.

(4) To receive reports concerning their official duties from the national/regional officials and officers (cf. 1800; 1802; 1920:9; 1948; 1970; 2110; 2261; 2310; 2396).

(5) To adopt plans for the Church.

(6) To define the duties of the national/regional officials.

(7) To organize the work into districts and to determine their boundaries.

(8) To determine the dates for the financial year for the districts.

(9) To authorize the creation of a developing district (1003) a provisional district (1025), or an established district (1036); to reclassify a provisional district (1034) or an established district (1042).

(10) To establish, merge, dissolve, define the purpose of, regulate or govern any educational or benevolent institution within the region.

(11) To designate a criterion of parliamentary procedure for itself and other representative or official bodies of The Wesleyan Church as desired.

Related to Elections

(12) To elect by ballot and by majority vote (1900-1903) a National/Regional Superintendent.

(13) To elect the National/Regional officials (1800:1) by ballot and by majority vote (cf. 1785:4).

(14) To elect by majority vote three lay members to serve as members-at-large on the National/Regional Board of Administration (cf. 1785:4).

(15) To elect, by ballot and by majority vote four ordained ministers and three laypersons as members of the Board of Review and three ordained ministers and two laypersons as alternate members (cf. 1785:4).

(16) To elect three members of the National/Regional Board of Trustees if such is established (cf. 1655:12; 1785:4; 2290).

(17) To elect other officials, committees, and boards as may be required (cf. 1785:4).

Related to the Judiciary

(18) To place an established district under discipline, as set forth in the Judiciary (5350; 5360-5375), and to authorize the National/Regional Board of Administration to appoint a national/regional official to take charge of the district.

(19) To hear and determine appeals from decisions of the Board of Review, or to appeal such decisions to the North American General Board by a two-thirds majority vote.

(20) To exercise authority in matters of judicial discipline as set forth in the Judiciary (5350).

Chapter 2

NATIONAL/REGIONAL BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

A. Function

1600. The National/Regional Board of Administration carries out the will of the National/Regional Conference and serves as the chief governing body in between National/Regional Conference meetings.

B. Membership

1605. The National/Regional Board of Administration is composed of the following:

(1) **National/Regional Officials.** The National/Regional Superintendent, the National/Regional Secretary, the National/Regional Treasurer, the National/Regional Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-cultural Ministries, and the National/Regional Director of Christian Education (1800:1) are members of the National/Regional Board of Administration because of their office.

(2) **Other Officers.** The National/Regional Director of Communications, the National/Regional Director of Wesleyan Women, the National/Regional Director of Wesleyan Men, the National/Regional Director of Wesleyan Youth, and the Principals of national/regional ministerial training institutions, are members of the National/Regional Board of Administration because of their office.

(3) **District Representatives.** Each established and provisional district shall be represented by the District Superintendent, or if the District Superintendent is already a member for some other reason, by the Assistant District Superintendent.

(3) **Members-at-Large.** Three lay members-at-large shall be elected by the National/Regional Conference to serve as members of the National/Regional Board of Administration (1590:14).

C. Meetings

1610. Organizing Meeting. The National/Regional Board of Administration shall meet immediately after the adjournment of the National/Regional Conference for an organizing meeting.

1615. Regular Meeting. The National/Regional Board of Administration shall meet annually. (Cf. 1920:6.)

D. Organization and Procedure

1630. Chair. The chair in an established National/Regional Conference shall be the National/Regional Superintendent. In mission units under the North American General Conference it shall be the National/Regional Superintendent unless a General Superintendent or General Director of World Missions or an appointed representative is present.

1635. Secretary. The National/Regional Secretary is secretary of the National/Regional Board of Administration (cf. 1948).

1640. Quorum. A majority of all the members of the National/Regional Board of Administration shall constitute a quorum.

1645. Voting. A majority vote of those present and voting shall be sufficient except for those matters for which a larger majority is required by *The Discipline* (1532; 1655:2, 6, 36a, 39).

E. Duties and Powers

1655. The National/Regional Board of Administration shall serve as the chief governing body of The Wesleyan Church in between National/Regional Conference meetings.

Related to the National/Regional Conference

(1) To set the place and time at which the National/Regional Conference shall meet (1528).

(2) To change by a two-thirds vote the time of the National/Regional Conference or to call a special meeting.

(3) To receive all resolutions for the National/Regional Conference, classify them, take action on each of them, and submit such resolutions with recommendations to the National/Regional Conference.

(4) To make recommendations and resolutions for the National/Regional Conference (cf. 1560).

(5) To care for any business sent through the North American General Department of World Missions.

Related to the National/Regional Board of Administration

(6) To fill by a two-thirds vote, for the unexpired term, vacancies among the national/regional officials (1605:1; 1800:1; 1903).

(7) To elect a member of the Executive Committee (cf. 1755).

(8) To refer matters to the Executive Committee (1785:1).

(9) To organize itself into committees as it sees fit.

(10) To prepare an annual budget.

Related to the Church in National/Regional Area

(11) To care for all matters related to interdenominational relationships and cooperation (cf. 1920:11).

Related to Legal Regulations

(12) To elect two members to the National/Regional Board of Trustees if such is established, which shall consist of five persons (three being elected by the National/Regional Conference, cf. 1590:16; 2290); or to serve as the trustees if no such board is established.

(13) To give instructions to any Board of Trustees in regard to national/regional church property, in keeping with the provisions given in 4510-4620, and to provide for the proper care and maintenance of property.

(14) To direct an annual audit of the accounts of all corporations, national/regional departments, offices, agencies, auxiliaries, and institutions of the Church, and to take action required by the findings of the audit.

Related to National/Regional Officials and Departments

(15) To direct the national/regional officials; to receive reports annually and as needed from the national/regional officials and others.

(16) To set the salaries and allowances of national/regional officials (1800:1) and to approve personnel policies and salary and wage scales for all those employed by the national/regional Church.

(17) To adopt an annual budget for each of the national/regional offices, departments, agencies, and auxiliaries, and to correlate all budgets and financial plans for the national/regional Church as recommended by the Executive Committee (1785:7).

(18) To adopt official policies for the national/regional departments, agencies, auxiliaries, and institutions of the Church

(19) To receive, hold, and appropriate all national/regional church funds.

(20) To appoint the National/Regional Director of Communications and to oversee the publishing operations of the Church, with authority to authorize publications, television or radio programs, and to establish the policies which govern them.

(21) To assign fields of responsibility for the National/Regional Committee of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries (2200).

(22) To take proper action upon the recommendation of the National/Regional Committee of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries in the creation of a developing district (1003), provisional district (1025), or established district (1036; 1920:15).

(23) To elect the superintendent, other officers, and assigned workers in developing districts, nominees to provisional district conferences for District Superintendent (1030:1), the pastors, evangelists, and other workers in a developing district, and to certify national/regional evangelists.

(24) To pass upon the appointment or termination of appointment for cross-cultural service.

(25) To authorize the establishment, merger, or dissolution of auxiliaries (4450-4455); to adopt financial policies governing auxiliaries, including the setting of membership dues and to authorize handbooks.

(26) To approve the time and place of the National/Regional Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Youth conventions (cf. 2396) and to approve all plans of the executive committees of the respective auxiliaries.

(27) To coordinate the total program of ministerial training.

(28) To appoint the principal and vice-principal of each theological training institution.

(29) To adopt policies governing the establishment of elementary and secondary schools.

(30) To approve official forms for reports.

Related to Districts

(31) To make recommendation to the National/Regional Conference for the establishment or alteration of district boundaries (1590:7).

(32) To begin a Provisional District (1025), and to make the initial appointment of the District Superintendent (1030:1).

(33) To determine the time and place of the District Conference meetings (1112) and to request the reconvening of a District Conference (1115) or a special meeting of a District Board of Administration (1215).

(34) To review annually the district budget allocations to the national/regional treasury and to adjust the allocations as necessary, advising the districts prior to the beginning of the national/regional financial year.

Related to the Judiciary

(35) To exercise administrative and judicial discipline as explained in the Judiciary (5270-5279; 5350-5375).

(36) To remove from office any person under its jurisdiction whenever the best interests and preservation of the Church require it, subject to the following conditions:

(a) To remove from office a national/regional official or any other officer elected by the National/Regional Conference, or a member of the National/Regional Board of Administration, or a district superintendent (1307; 1590:12-17; 1830; 5279) shall require a two-thirds majority vote of all the members of the National/Regional Board of Administration.

(b) To remove from office a person elected by the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:7, 12, 20, 23, 28) shall require a majority vote of all the members of the National/Regional Board of Administration (1830).

(37) To file charges against a district for an offense as explained in the Judiciary (5006), and to administer discipline if found guilty (5365-5375).

(38) To take whatever steps are necessary to preserve the interests of the Church within the bounds of a district under discipline.

(39) To end the state of discipline for a district, by a majority vote of all the members of the National/Regional Board of Administration; or to authorize the reorganization of a district (5365-5375).

(40) To adopt additional rules of judicial procedure for such matters as evidence, testimony, and other technicalities.

F. The Executive Committee

1. Function

1750. The Executive Committee carries out the will of the National/Regional Board of Administration, serving between National/Regional Board of Administration meetings.

2. Membership

1755. The Executive Committee shall be composed of the National/Regional Officials (1800:1) and one person elected by the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:7). (Cf. 1920:6.)

3. Duties, Powers, and Restrictions

1785. In the interim of National/Regional Board of Administration meetings, the Executive Committee has charge of all National/Regional church matters. It has power:

(1) To transact all business referred to it by the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:8).

(2) It shall serve as the National/Regional Conference Planning Committee.

(3) It shall serve as the Program Committee for the National/Regional Conference.

(4) To act as a nominating committee for the National/Regional Conference (cf. 1903).

(5) To study the national/regional financial plan of the Church and to make recommendations (cf. 1791).

(6) To process requests and recommendations concerning changes in the boundaries of districts.

(7) To coordinate the budgets for the various administrative offices (1655:17).

(8) To transact any and all other business the National/Regional Board of Administration may transact except that the Executive Committee shall not make recommendations directly to the National/Regional Conference, nor take final action on the adoption of the annual budgets (1655:17) nor official policies (1655:18), nor transact any business which requires more than a simple majority vote of the National/Regional Board of Administration (cf. 1532; 1655:2, 6, 36a, b, 39; 1830; 5365).

G. National/Regional Budgeting Procedure

1791. The income and expense of all the national/regional departments, offices, committees, institutions, auxiliaries and agencies of the Church shall be governed by the adoption by the National/Regional Board of Administration of annual budgets as recommended and coordinated by the Executive Committee (1655:17; 1785:7).

Chapter 3

NATIONAL/REGIONAL OFFICIALS AND OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH

A. Identification

1800. National/Regional Officials. The national/regional officials are those elected by the National/Regional Conference whom it designates as members of the National/Regional Conference (1503:1d), the National/Regional Board of Administration (1605:1), and the Executive Committee (1755). They are: the National/Regional Superintendent, the National/Regional Secretary, the National/Regional Treasurer, the National/Regional Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries, and the National/Regional Director of Christian Education.

1802. Other National/Regional Officers. Besides the national/regional officials, who are primarily identified by their seat on the Executive Committee there are other officers such as the National/Regional Director of Communications, principals of the ministerial training institutions, lay and ministerial members of the National/Regional Board of Administration, national/regional committee members, national/regional standing board members, and national/regional auxiliary leaders who are also national/regional officers of The Wesleyan Church. All of the national/regional officers have some office or membership on a national/regional board or committee, but not all are on the National/Regional Board of Administration and the Executive Committee.

B. Qualifications

1810. A national/regional official or officer must be a member of The Wesleyan Church at the time of election or appointment and throughout the term of service.

C. Term of Office

1820. The national/regional officials shall be elected by the National/Regional Conference (1590:12, 13) for a term of four years, and shall serve until the close of the next regular meeting of the National/Regional Conference or until their successors are elected and qualified. Other national/regional officers' terms may vary according to special regulations and requirements of office as explained in *The Discipline* for each office. A special meeting of the National/Regional Conference may, however, declare that the term is ended and order a new election or appointment.

D. Accountability

1830. The national/regional officials (1800) and others elected by the National/Regional Conference are accountable to the National/Regional Board of Administration for their official conduct and moral character. They are subject to direction from the National/Regional Conference, the National/Regional Board of Administration, and the Executive Committee. They may be removed from office when the best interests of the Church so require by a two-thirds majority vote of all the members of the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:36a). Any officers elected by the National/Regional Board of Administration may be removed from office when the best interests of the church so require by a majority vote of all members of the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:36b).

E. Vacancies

1850. The office of a national/regional official or officer may become vacant by death, by cessation of membership in The Wesleyan Church, by resignation, or by removal (1830). Vacancies in offices of those elected by the National/Regional Conference shall be filled by a two-thirds vote of the National/Regional Board of Administration. Vacancies in offices of those elected by the National/Regional Board of Administration shall be filled by a majority vote of the National/Regional Board of Administration.

Chapter 4

NATIONAL/REGIONAL ADMINISTRATION

A. National/Regional Superintendent

1. Function

1900. The National/Regional Superintendent is the spiritual and administrative leader of the Church.

2. General Regulations

1903. A National/Regional Superintendent is an ordained minister elected by the National/Regional Conference from nominations submitted by a nominating committee appointed by the National/Regional Board of Administration (1590:12) and is a member of the National/Regional Conference, the National/Regional Board of Administration, and the Executive Committee.

3. Duties of the National/Regional Superintendent

1920. The National/Regional Superintendent shall devote full time to supervising, coordinating, and promoting the work of The Wesleyan Church as follows:

- (1) To provide spiritual and administrative leadership for The Wesleyan Church.
- (2) To encourage soul winning and evangelism.
- (3) To carry on a spiritual and inspirational ministry.
- (4) To exercise administrative supervision over The Wesleyan Church.
- (5) In the case of an Established National/Regional Conference to chair the National/Regional Conference; if a mission unit to chair the National/Regional Conference in the absence of the North American General Superintendent or the General Director of World Missions or an appointed representative.
- (6) To issue the call for a special meeting of the National/Regional Conference (1532), or a special meeting of the National/Regional Board of Administration, or a special meeting of the Executive Committee.
- (7) To make recommendations to the National/Regional Board of Administration and its Executive Committee concerning any part of the Church.
- (8) To arrange for the visit of a North American General Superintendent over the region.
- (9) To report to each meeting of the National/Regional Conference concerning all official duties (1590:4); to report annually to the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:15).
- (10) To prepare an annual budget of expense for the office of National/Regional Superintendent for submission to the Executive Committee to be submitted to the National/Regional Board of Administration for final approval.
- (11) To appoint delegates and representatives for The Wesleyan Church to other denominations or religious organizations (cf. 1655:11).
- (12) To carry out assignments from the National/Regional Conference, the National/Regional Board of Administration, the Executive Committee, and the North American General Director of World Missions.

- (13) To direct the National/Regional Secretary.
- (14) To arrange the dates for the District Conferences (1112; 1233:5; 1655:33).
- (15) To recommend a provisional district for the status of an established district (1038:5; 1655:22, 31).
- (16) To counsel with district leaders.
- (17) To chair the National/Regional Board of Administration and the Executive Committee.
- (18) To travel throughout the region, giving spiritual leadership and inspirational ministry.
- (19) To counsel with the national/regional officials.
- (20) To visit annually and conduct an administrative survey of each educational institution, or any other agency or organization of The Wesleyan Church in the region.
- (21) To meet with any governing board, District Board of Administration, committee, or other official body at the discretion of the National/Regional Superintendent.
- (22) To attend as a voting member the meeting of each national/regional auxiliary convention (Wesleyan Youth, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Men).
- (23) To exercise general supervision within the region, over each developing district, provisional district, and established district and the work of its superintendent, and to counsel with the Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries.
- (24) To work closely with the district officials in promoting evangelism and making plans for outreach and church extension (1233:3; 1310:1).
- (25) To encourage and promote national/regional programs in each district.
- (26) To cooperate with each District Board of Administration in planning and conducting conventions, institutes, or seminars for pastors and other workers in the district.
- (27) To chair, in the absence of the North American General Superintendent and the General Director of World Missions and an appointed representative, over the ordination of ministers and to deliver the ordination address and to sign all credentials, certificates, and other forms incidental to the National/Regional Superintendent's office.
- (28) To approve the transfer of any ordained minister or licensed minister into a district, in agreement with the District Superintendent of that district (1310:13).
- (29) To consult with a District Board of Administration concerning property used for district purposes.
- (30) To carry out judicial responsibilities as set forth in 5209; 5276-5279; 5350-5375.
- (31) To give advice to individual cross-cultural workers.
- (32) To serve as the first assigned delegate to the International Conference of The Wesleyan Church and to the General Conference of The Wesleyan Church of North America.

B. The National/Regional Secretary

1948. Function. The National/Regional Secretary (1590:13; 1800) has custody of the official records and is responsible for legal documents, statistics, directory, and public relations for the national/regional Church.

C. The National/Regional Treasurer

1970. Function. The National/Regional Treasurer (1590:13; 1800) shall care for the national/regional church funds and accounting records and is responsible for assigned financial management.

D. National/Regional Director of Communications

2110. The National/Regional Director of Communications is appointed by the National/Regional Board of Administration (cf. 1655:20) and shall carry out the duties of this office according to directives received from the National/Regional Board of Administration, and shall be responsible:

(1) To serve as publisher of the national/regional newsletter and any other publication assigned by the National/Regional Board of Administration.

(2) To promote holiness literature, Christian books, tracts, and denominational magazines, papers, or literature.

(3) To promote The Wesleyan Church through mass media.

Chapter 5

The following committees/boards will need to be developed as needed. Guidelines can be added for each one, indicating how many members and how they are chosen, who is the chair and how is the chair chosen, and to whom is the committee/board accountable, and also providing a more detailed list of duties.

NATIONAL/REGIONAL COMMITTEES AND BOARDS

A. Committee on Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries

1. The Committee

2200. The duties of the Committee on Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries shall be:

(1) To review the total program of evangelism and cross-cultural ministries on the national/regional, district, and local levels (cf. 1655:21)

(2) To prepare a budget for all the departments that fall under its responsibility (cf. 1655:17)

(3) To make recommendations to the National/Regional Board of Administration for certification as national/regional evangelists, cross-cultural workers, or special workers.

(4) To approve the employment of national/regional evangelists and special workers for evangelistic work.

(5) To coordinate the evangelistic work of radio, films, chaplaincies, literature distribution and publication.

(6) To supervise work in developing districts; to recommend to the National/Regional Board of Administration when a developing district should become a provisional district (cf. 1655:22).

2. National/Regional Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries

2261. The National/Regional Director of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries (cf. 1590:13; 1800) shall administer the National/Regional Department of Evangelism, Church Growth, and Cross-Cultural Ministries in accord with *The Discipline*.

B. National/Regional Board of Trustees

2290. Function. There may be a National/Regional Board of Trustees, consisting of three members elected by the National/Regional Conference (1590:16) and two elected by the National/Regional Board of Administration (1655:12), which shall be responsible to legally safeguard, manage, and maintain all national/regional properties on behalf of and under the authorization of the National/Regional Conference and the direction of the National/Regional Board of Administration. The National/Regional Board of Administration may retain this function and act as the Board of Trustees for the nation/region (1655:12).

C. National/ Regional Committee on Christian Education

1. Committee

2300. The duties of the National/Regional Committee on Christian Education shall be:

(1) To develop and coordinate the work of Christian education within the national/regional Church through the work of the local churches and auxiliaries.

(2) To coordinate the following ministries:

a. Local church education—Sunday school, membership and discipleship training.

b. Auxiliaries.

(3) To give oversight to the acquisition, publication, and promotion of Christian education curriculum and materials.

(4) To make plans and programs which will advance the cause of Christian education through the various departments, agencies, and auxiliaries of The Wesleyan Church.

(5) To submit a budget to the Executive Committee for the advancement of the responsibilities under its direction (1785:7).

(6) To coordinate the implementation of The Wesleyan Church's objectives for the training of ministers including continuing education and career development.

(7) To perform other duties related to Christian education as are assigned by the National/Regional Conference or the National/Regional Board of Administration.

2. National/Regional Director of Christian Education

2310. The National/Regional Director of Christian Education (cf. 1590:13; 1800) shall administer the National/Regional Department of Christian Education in accord with *The Discipline*, and other directives from the National/Regional Board of Administration, the Executive Committee, and the National/Regional Committee on Christian Education.

3. National/Regional Leaders of Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Youth

2396. The National/Regional Leaders of Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women and Wesleyan Youth auxiliaries (4455) shall be elected by the National/Regional Conference until the time they are authorized by the National/Regional Conference to elect their own leaders in national/regional conventions. Their duties shall be to assist the district auxiliary organizations through training, coordinating, and planning; to work with the National/Regional Committee on Christian Education and the National/Regional Director of Christian Education to stimulate interest and growth in the district chapters of the auxiliaries.

PART 5

WORLD ORGANIZATION

A. Identification

2550. The National/Regional Conference of The Wesleyan Church in/of _____ is a member of the International Conference of The Wesleyan Church and is a mission unit under the General Department of World Missions of the North American General Conference.

B. The Essentials

2560. The Essentials is a statement of faith, practice and relationship which serves as a unifying bond for all units of The Wesleyan Church around the world. No unit of The Wesleyan Church may contravene any of the provisions of the Essentials in the development of its own book of discipline or in establishing church structures and practice.

C. Established National/Regional Conference

2570. The national/regional Wesleyan Church may be authorized by the North American General Conference to become an Established National/Regional Conference when it meets the minimum requirements as provided for in The Charter of the International Conference of The Wesleyan Church.

2615. An Established National/Regional Conference has “defined autonomy,” the right to manage its own internal governance which includes revising its discipline as long as it does not violate the Essentials. An Established National/Regional Conference remains in relationship with the North American General Conference and the area General Superintendent has a continuing role as mentor/coach and participation in the Established National/Regional Conference.

D. General Conferences

2620. An Established National/Regional Conference may be advanced to the status of a General Conference by the International Conference of The Wesleyan Church, upon authorization by the North American General Conference.

2625. A General Conference is a body which has full authority over the Church in its assigned territory, in keeping with the provisions of the International Conference of The Wesleyan Church. A General Conference has the right to manage its own internal governance, including revising its discipline, as long as it does not violate the Essentials.

PART 6**MINISTRY****Chapter 1****MINISTERIAL RELATIONS****A. The Listing of District Conference
Relations and Appointments**

2700. The ordained ministers, licensed ministers, ministerial students of the district and supply pastors without district license shall be listed in the following order as appointed by the District Conference (1180:18; cf.1233:7). This listing shall be included in the District Conference journal (1445) as an official district directory.

1. Appointed Ordained Minister (cf. 3070-3089).

- (1) National/regional official.
- (2) District official.
- (3) Pastor of a local church.
- (4) Staff member of a national/regional ministerial training institution or approved seminary.
- (5) District evangelist.
- (6) Cross-cultural worker employed and sent out by the national/regional Church.
- (7) Institutional full-time chaplains (military, hospital, or school).
- (8) Full-time student
- (9) Interchurch service.
- (10) Supply pastor.

2. Appointed Licensed Minister (cf. 3030-3055).

- (1) Pastor of a local church.
- (2) Cross-cultural worker employed and sent by the national/regional Church.
- (3) Full-time chaplain (hospital or school).
- (4) Staff member of a national/regional ministerial training institution or approved seminary.
- (5) Full-time student.
- (6) Interchurch service.
- (7) Supply Pastor.

3. Ministerial Student (cf. 3020).

Full-time student in ministerial training Institute.

4. Appointed Local Preacher (cf. 3016-3019).

Supply pastor of a local church.

5. Retired Ministers (cf. 1082:1).

Ordained ministers or licensed ministers retired because of age or sickness and no longer able to continue with ministry duties.

6. Ministers Without Appointment

Ordained ministers or licensed ministers not available for appointment. Licensed ministers can not remain on the list for longer than two years, after which they must accept appointment or be declared withdrawn.

7. Ministers In Process Of Transfer

Ordained ministers or licensed ministers from another denomination who have been granted recognition as ministers in process of transfer (cf. 1470:2).

B. Annual Service Reports

2705. The District Conference shall receive an annual service report from each ordained minister, licensed minister or ministerial student and local preacher under district appointment. All such reports shall be submitted to the district board of ministerial development (1470:7-9).

Chapter 2

MINISTERIAL ORDERS AND REGULATIONS

A. Marriage

3012. Any person having a marriage contrary to the Scriptures and the Covenant Membership Commitments (222; 265:5; 412; 3101) shall be ineligible for ministerial license or ordination in The Wesleyan Church.

B. Local Preachers

3016. Identification. A local preacher is a lay member of The Wesleyan Church whom the local church conference has licensed to minister, under the pastor's direction and as there is opportunity.

3017. Renewing a Local Preacher's License. A local preacher's license is effective for one year only, and may be renewed annually. The local preacher shall be actively engaged in completing the following courses.

- Introduction to the Old Testament
- Introduction to the New Testament
- Introduction to Wesleyan Doctrine
- A course in practical ministry (from list in 3210:7)

3018. Duties of a Local Preacher.

- (1) To enroll in the course of study for local preacher, and may continue ministry on a local level as long as the local church conference shall renew the license.
- (2) To assist the pastor as the pastor shall direct (725:23).
- (3) To report the progress of studies and the nature and extent of ministry (655:5).
- (4) To serve as a supply pastor (2700:4) if appointed by the District Superintendent.

3019. Regulations for a Local Preacher.

- (1) A local preacher has no authority to solemnize marriages or to administer the sacraments; neither does the local preacher have any vote in the local church board unless elected to it nor in the District Conference unless elected as a local church delegate.
- (2) A local preacher is responsible to the local church conference (650:5, 6; 782:18).
- (3) A local preacher who transfers local church membership may also ask for a letter of standing as a local preacher.

C. Ministerial Student

3020. A ministerial student is a covenant member pursuing ministerial studies under the direction of the district board of ministerial development (cf. 2700:3). The license for a ministerial student may be renewed annually by the District Conference.

D. Licensed Minister

3030. Granting a District Ministerial License. A covenant member of The Wesleyan Church who testifies to being called of God to be a minister, may be granted a district ministerial license by meeting the following requirements in order:

- (1) Membership in a local Wesleyan church.
- (2) Satisfactory service under a local preacher's license or as a ministerial student in The Wesleyan Church for at least one year or until the course of study for the local preacher has been completed (see 3210:2).
- (3) Completion of the course of study for the local preacher and licensed minister (3210:2-3).
- (4) Readiness to accept the District Conference's appointment as listed in 2700:2.
- (5) Examination by the district board of ministerial development and their recommendation as being qualified for license (1470:1; cf. 3030:1-4; 3215)
- (6) Recommendation for district appointment by the District Board of Administration (1233:7).
- (7) Adoption by the District Conference (3030:5-6).
- (8) Issuance of the license by the District Superintendent and the district secretary (cf. 1310:17; 1332:4).

3040. Renewing a District Ministerial License. A district ministerial license is effective for one year only and must be renewed annually by the District Conference.

3044. Rights of a Licensed Minister.

- (1) To preach the gospel and, when appointed as a pastor of a Wesleyan church, to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper, and to perform all parts of divine worship.
- (2) To contract the pastoral relationship with local Wesleyan churches subject to the approval of the District Conference and other regulations of *The Discipline*.
- (3) To enjoy, if appointed as a pastor, the use for religious meetings of the church building or buildings of the local church to which the licensed minister has been assigned by the District Conference.
- (4) To be a voting member of the District Conference if pastoring a Wesleyan Church, or a nonvoting member of the District Conference if appointed to some other category of service (1082:2; 1090:3).
- (5) To transfer in the manner prescribed by *The Discipline* from one district to another (cf. 1310:13; 1920:28).
- (6) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction (5200; 5206-5212).

3051. Duties of a Licensed Minister.

- (1) To enroll in the pre-ordination study course and continue the study course until completed (3160; 3210:2, 3, 7).
- (2) To serve the district faithfully.
- (3) To report to the District Conference (cf. 2705), and to the District Superintendent and the board of ministerial standing as required (cf. 725:28).

3055. Regulations for a Licensed Minister.

- (1) A licensed minister is accountable to the district which grants the license (1180:22; 5200:1).
- (2) A licensed minister's credentials shall be issued annually (3030:8; 3040).

E. Ordained Minister

3070. Qualifications for Ordination:

(1) Covenant membership in a local Wesleyan church within the district granting ordination.

(2) Satisfactory service for two years as a licensed minister under appointment to one of the categories of service listed in 2700:2. However, in the case of a ministerial student who has completed training at an approved seminary or Bible college there need be only one year of service.

(3) Completion of the pre-ordination course of study or its equivalent (cf. 3160-3210).

(4) Examination by the district board of ministerial development and a report by the district board of ministerial development to the District Conference (1470:1,5).

(5) Election by the District Conference to ordained minister's orders (1180:20).

(6) Public service of ordination (cf. 1310:17; 5750-5792).

(7) Issuance and signing of a certificate of ordination by the National/Regional Superintendent, the District Superintendent, and the district secretary.

3075. Rights of an Ordained Minister.

(1) To preach the gospel and to administer baptism and the Lord's Supper, to perform all parts of divine worship, and to solemnize the rite of matrimony, in keeping with the laws of the country.

(2) To be eligible for election to any office in The Wesleyan Church for which ordained ministers are eligible.

(3) To contract the pastoral relationship with local Wesleyan churches in keeping with *The Discipline*.

(4) To wear, if the ordained minister so desires, the Protestant minister's clerical apparel.

(5) To enjoy, if appointed as a pastor, the use for religious meetings of the church building or buildings of the pastoral charge to which assigned by the District Conference.

(6) To be a voting member of the District Conference if on the appointed or retired lists, or a nonvoting member of the District Conference if on the ministers without appointment list (2700:1, 5, 6).

(7) To transfer in the manner prescribed by *The Discipline* from one district to another (cf. 1310:13; 1920:28).

(8) To have recourse, even if under discipline, to a proper court of jurisdiction in any matters involving complaint against character or ministerial conduct and to appeal the decision of such court (5200; 5206-5212).

3085. Duties of an Ordained Minister.

(1) To be devoted to the Christian ministry, following the leadership of the Holy Spirit and the appointment of the District Conference in determining and occupying this field of service.

(2) To report annually to the District Conference on the appropriate service report form, and to the District Superintendent as required (cf. 725:28, 29; 2705).

(3) To voluntarily file all credentials with the District Superintendent if service in one of the categories of ministry listed in 2700 ceases for an extended period of time.

3089. Regulations for an Ordained Minister.

(1) An ordained minister is accountable to the district where membership is held (cf. 5200-5212).

(2) An ordained minister's credentials shall consist of the certificate of ordination (3070:7), and an annual certificate of standing, issued and signed by the District Superintendent and district secretary.

(3) An ordained minister who fails to file the annual service report (2705) for two successive years, shall be notified by the district board of ministerial development, and requested to report at the next session of the District Conference. If the ordained minister then fails to report, the district shall declare the ordained minister withdrawn and shall record the action upon the minutes of the District Conference.

(4) When an ordained minister surrenders the certificate of ordination because of guilt of an offense (5004), or is ordered to surrender it after due judicial process (5212:4), it shall be lawful to publish such fact in the columns of the national/regional church periodical.

F. General Regulations for Ordained and Licensed Ministers

1. Membership of Ministers

3097. Local Church Membership. Each Wesleyan minister must be a covenant member of a local Wesleyan church (cf. 3030:1; 3070:1).

3100. District Membership. Each Wesleyan minister shall be a member of the District Conference which appoints that minister to service.

2. Minister and Marriage

3101. Any minister who enters into a marriage relation contrary to the Scriptures (cf. 3012), shall be dismissed from ministerial standing (5212:3-4; cf. 265:5).

3102. In performing marriages, Wesleyan ministers shall not unite in marriage any person who is divorced and whose former companion is still living, unless such divorce and remarriage is in keeping with the Scriptures (222) and the Membership Commitments (265:5; cf. 412). In carrying out this duty, the minister shall be guided by the principles set forth in 412:6.

3. Relationship to Other Ministers and Churches

3104. If a Wesleyan minister shall engage to serve another denomination, or an interdenominational or independent work, as a pastor or in some other regular capacity, except by permission, the District Conference may order that the minister be declared withdrawn. An ordained minister serving outside The Wesleyan Church with the permission, shall be placed either on the appointed or without appointment lists as set forth in 2700:1 (9), 6.

Chapter 3

MINISTERIAL EDUCATION

A. Priority of Ministerial Education

3150. Primary Purpose. While other courses of continuing education may be offered from time to time, the primary objective in all developed programs in the ministerial training course shall be ordination.

B. Special Situations

3155. The National/Regional Committee on Christian Education may waive certain academic requirements on the basis of experience or on the basis of academic equivalency.

C. Types of Ministerial Education

1. Courses of Study

3160. The National/Regional Committee on Christian Education shall develop and the National/Regional Board of Administration shall approve courses of study.

2. Training Outside The Wesleyan Church

3170. Some candidates will have secured some or all of their college and/or seminary training outside the institutions of The Wesleyan Church. The National/Regional Committee on Christian Education shall carefully evaluate such work, giving particular attention to the candidate's qualifications in the areas of Wesleyan doctrine, history, and *The Discipline* (3030:3; 3051:1; 3070:3; cf. 1470:2)

D. Steps to Ordination

3210. National/regional steps to ordination.

- (1) Covenant membership in a local Wesleyan church.
- (2) Licensed as a local preacher, or ministerial student for at least one year of satisfactory work and completion of the following minimum academic requirements (the local preacher's' course):
 -) Introduction to the Old Testament
 -) Introduction to the New Testament
 -) Introduction to Wesleyan Doctrine
 -) One course in practical ministry (from list in # 7 below)
- (3) Completion of the following additional academic requirements for the district ministerial license:
 -) Wesleyan History
 -) Wesleyan Discipline
- (4) Recommendation by a local church conference for district license as a minister .
- (5) Examination by the district board of ministerial development.
- (6) Approval by the District Conference and appointment to ministerial service.

(7) Completion of all academic requirements which shall include:

-) Four additional courses in Bible, one of which must be in the New Testament and one of which must be in the Old Testament.
-) National/regional church history
-) Systematic theology (or biblical theology)
-) Introduction to missions
-) Christian education
-) Doctrine of holiness
-) Evangelism
-) Homiletics
-) Methods of Bible study
-) Pastoral work
-) Church management
-) Bookkeeping and record management
-) At least four general education courses

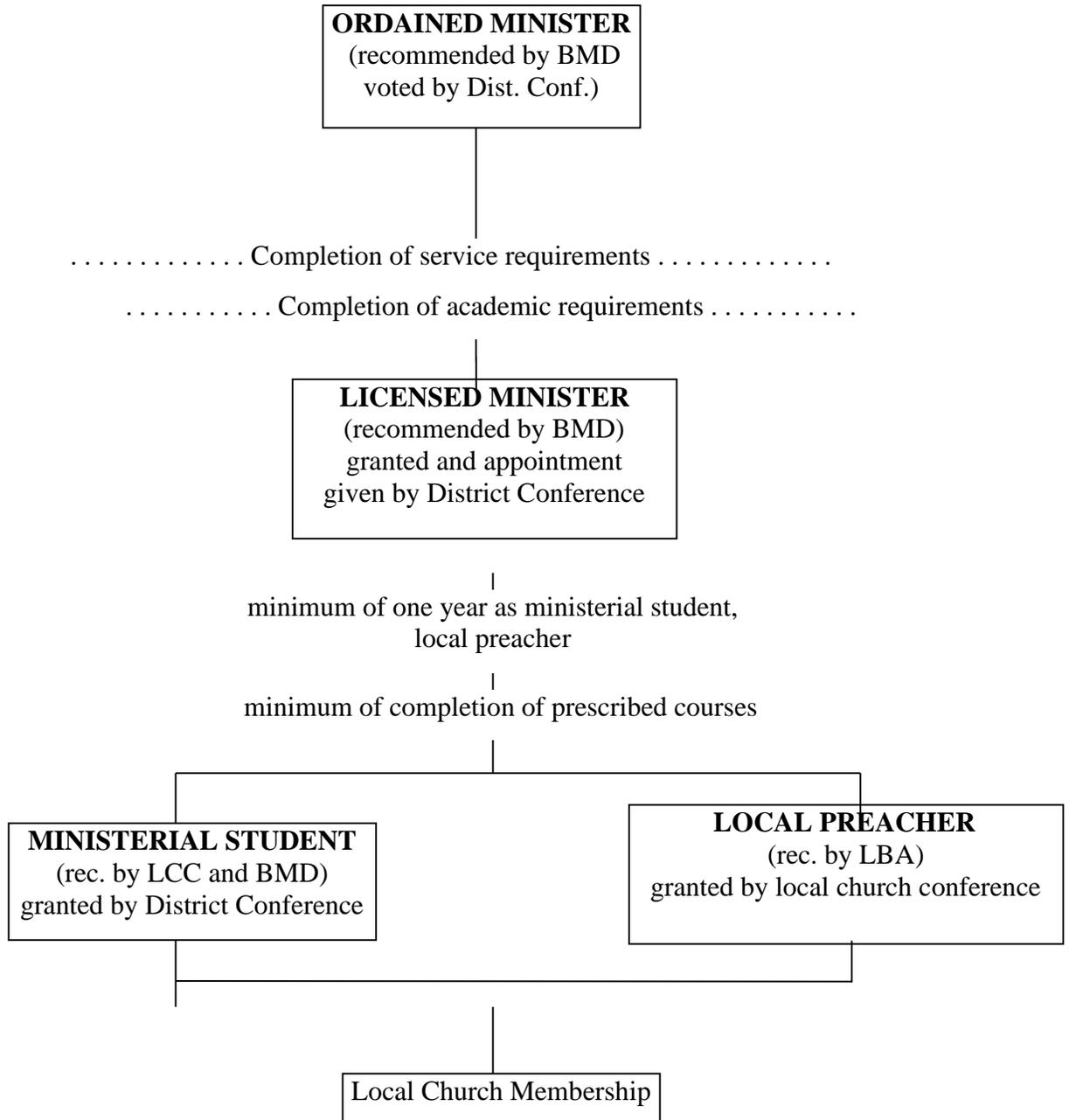
(8) Two additional years of satisfactory service.

(9) Examination by the district board of ministerial development (1470:1) with the National/Regional Superintendent present, if practicable.

(10) Approval by the District Conference followed by a public service of ordination and the issuance and signing of a certificate of ordination by the National/Regional Superintendent, District Superintendent, and district secretary. If either the North American General Superintendent or the General Director of World Missions is present, that person may also sign.

F. Chart of Steps to Ordination

3215.



PART 7**WESLEYAN MEN, WOMEN, AND YOUTH AUXILIARIES**

4450. Auxiliaries. The auxiliaries of The Wesleyan Church include Wesleyan Men, Wesleyan Women, and Wesleyan Youth. All national/regional activities of the auxiliaries shall be coordinated by the National/Regional Committee on Christian Education, of which the National/Regional Leaders of the Auxiliaries shall be members, and are under the authority of the National/Regional Board of Administration. District auxiliaries shall be responsible to the District Boards of Administration, and the local chapters shall be responsible to the local church boards and pastors.

4455. Auxiliary Leaders. The national/regional and district auxiliary leaders shall be elected by the National/Regional Conference or the District Conferences (as applicable) until such time as the National/Regional Conference shall authorize district or National/Regional auxiliary conferences, at which time the auxiliary shall elect the respective leaders, with the exception of the youth leaders who shall in any case be elected by the District Conference or the National/Regional Conference as applicable. A district auxiliary leader who accepts position as leader on the national/regional level shall vacate the district position upon taking the national/regional office. The vacancy shall be filled by District Board of Administration appointment until the next district or auxiliary conference, as applicable.

PART 8**CORPORATIONS AND PROPERTIES**

4510. The Wesleyan Church shall be legally registered according to the laws of each country, province, or state in which it carries on its activities and holds property. The authorization for each incorporation or legal registration shall be granted by the National/Regional Conference or the National/Regional Board of Administration.

4590. The purpose of the registration shall be to enable The Wesleyan Church National/Regional Conference to own, sell and use property as a religious institution.

4610. All titles, deeds and other written documents related to property of The Wesleyan Church shall contain the following trust clause:

"In trust for the use and benefit of the ministry and members of The Wesleyan Church, subject to *The Discipline*, regulations and appointments of said Church as from time to time legislated and declared."

4612. All provisions of *The Discipline* relating to property are conditioned upon their being in conformity with the local laws of the country.

(1) Any person who is a trustee or sits on a legal board which holds title or authority to Wesleyan Church property, must be a covenant member of The Wesleyan Church.

(2) All trustees shall administer their duties in accord with *The Discipline* as directed by the governing body to which they are responsible, and subject to local laws.

(3) A board of trustees shall hold in trust property for the use and benefit of the members and ministers of The Wesleyan Church.

(4) A trustee or board of trustees and/or its governing body may not divert property from the ownership and use of The Wesleyan Church except as provided for in *The Discipline* and/or authorized by the National/Regional Conference or the National/Regional Board of Administration.

4620. The governing board (whether a district board of administration, a board of trustees, or other legal entity) shall be the servant of The Wesleyan Church and shall administer the property in keeping with the authority of The Wesleyan Church as provided for in *The Discipline*. The general regulations (4510-4620) shall be binding on all trustees, boards, and governing corporate bodies of The Wesleyan Church.

PART 9

JUDICIARY

[PLEASE NOTE: *The rules for the judiciary are very exact. In most cases the following reduced version may be followed for a proper result. However, in complicated cases, cases which involve appeal, or cases which do not follow a normal pattern the North American Discipline should be consulted and followed. In any case the District Superintendent or National/Regional Superintendent should be consulted regarding proper procedure of a trial or disciplinary action.*]

Chapter 1

GENERAL PRINCIPLES

A. Meaning and Purpose of Church Discipline

5000. Church discipline is the proper exercise of the authority which Christ has vested in His church for the prevention and correction of offenses and the removal of scandal (cf. Matt. 18:15-18; 1 Cor. 5:1-5). The purpose of church discipline is the vindication of the truth, the preservation of the integrity of the body, the restoration and salvation of the guilty and the warning of the careless.

B. The Administration of Church Discipline

5002. Discipline for The Wesleyan Church shall be administered in accord with the following principles:

(1) A prayerful and Christlike spirit shall be maintained at all times by all parties (1 Cor. 13:4-7; Eph. 4:15; 2 Tim. 4:2).

(2) The restoration and salvation of the person(s) involved shall be primary. Every effort that love can suggest shall be made to bring back to the Lord any who, while under the Church's care, has wandered from Him (cf. 268). (See 1 Thess. 5:14; Jude 22-23.)

(3) A sincere and reasonable effort shall be made to clear up an accusation or to deal with an offending person without a formal church trial, in keeping with scriptural admonitions (Matt. 18:15-18; Gal. 6:1-2; James 5:16, 19-20).

(4) Each accusation and all judicial proceedings shall receive quick and careful attention by the proper authorities.

(5) The doctrines and standards of The Wesleyan Church shall be kept no matter who the person might be. Any offending person shall be dealt with kindly, yet faithfully, according to the seriousness of the offense and as provided for in this Judiciary and in *The Discipline*.

(6) Legal technicalities shall not be permitted to obstruct the sincere search for truth, while at the same time the fundamental principles and procedures of justice shall be upheld. There shall be no attempt to confuse or entangle anyone in the process of an investigation or a trial.

(7) The accused person shall be presumed innocent until proven guilty. However, the moral conviction of the truth of the charge is all that is necessary in church discipline (5030).

C. Offenses

1. Individual

5004. Any covenant member, minister, special worker, district or general official of The Wesleyan Church shall be liable to disciplinary proceedings and trial for any of the following offenses:

- (1) Holding or teaching any doctrine contrary to the doctrine of The Wesleyan Church as stated in *The Discipline*. (See 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 John 9-11.)
- (2) Disobedience to the provisions of *The Discipline* or tolerating such disobedience.
- (3) Refusal to recognize or obey Church authority. (See Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:10-11; 3 John 9-10.)
- (4) Conduct unbecoming a member or minister of The Wesleyan Church.
- (5) Immorality or crime. (See 1 Cor. 5:1-13; 6:9-11.)
- (6) Serious or persistent neglect of duty.

2. Local Church, District, or Official Body

5006. Any local church, district, official body or other agency of The Wesleyan Church shall be liable to disciplinary proceedings and trial for any of the following offenses:

- (1) Distributing or tolerating the teaching of any doctrine contrary to the doctrines of The Wesleyan Church as stated in *The Discipline*. (See 2 Thess. 3:6, 14-15; 1 Tim. 6:3-5; 2 John 9-11.)
- (2) Disobedience to the provisions of *The Discipline* or tolerating such disobedience.
- (3) Refusal to recognize or obey Church authority. (See Rom. 16:17-18; Titus 3:10-11; 3 John 9-10.)

D. Discipline Without a Trial

5008. Personal Offense Resolution. If the person making the accusation shall allege a personal offense, that person shall be first required to follow the Lord's directions in Matthew 18:15-17 before filing accusations or charges against the offending party.

5010. Clearing up the Matter. A sincere effort shall be made in each case to meet with the accused personally in order to clear up the accusation or to avoid the necessity of a trial.

5012. Committee of Investigation. A trial may not be ordered until a proper inquiry is made by a committee of investigation. Such a committee shall be appointed by the official body having jurisdiction, and shall consist of two or more members or ministers of The Wesleyan Church in good standing who can be relied on for impartial judgment, who are not involved in the case, and who are not closely related to the accuser or the accused. A member of the committee of investigation may not be a member of the judicial committee that will hear the case.

5018. Confession of Guilt. At any point in the proceedings outlined above, if the suspected person shall confess guilt, the official body having jurisdiction may pass on the offense and decide on the penalty to be imposed, without further trial unless such is requested by the accused. (Cf. 5058:5.)

E. Discipline Involving a Trial

1. Right to Trial and Appeal

5020. The right to a fair and impartial trial and the right to appeal shall not be denied to any covenant member, minister, local church, district, or official body of The Wesleyan Church. No one shall be arbitrarily set aside without due consideration for both spiritual welfare and rights as a covenant member of The Wesleyan Church and shall always have the right to request a trial or to appeal, even when placed under discipline.

2. Accusation

5022. Accusations must be in writing, dated, signed by the accuser and handed to the official having jurisdiction over the accused before official action shall be taken. Whenever, in the opinion of the accuser, proper action has not been taken, appeal may be made to the next higher Church authority.

3. Charges and Specifications

5024. A trial may not be ordered until a proper inquiry is made by an investigative committee (5012). When the committee has found evident need for discipline, it shall prepare appropriate charges and specifications.

(1) A *charge* sets forth an offense, a kind of act or conduct which makes a person liable to discipline.

(2) A *specification* states what the accused is alleged to have done, as an example of the offense indicated in the charge.

(3) It is not required that the charges be written in any particular legal form, but it is recommended that they be written in a standard form. Every charge must be in writing, dated, signed by the accuser or by those members or ministers of The Wesleyan Church bringing the charge, and must clearly define the alleged offense by its proper form as stated in 5004-5006, and shall be accompanied by the specifications of the facts relied on to make the charge.

(4) A charge shall not allege more than one offense. However, more than one charge against the same person, with the specifications for each charge, may be presented to the trial committee at the same time and heard at the same time, provided that the vote on each charge shall be taken separately.

4. Judicial Committee

5025. When the official body having jurisdiction orders a trial, it shall at the same time appoint the judicial committee in keeping with the appropriate provisions of *The Discipline* (cf. 5110; 5209; 5310; 5279; 5365).

5026. One member of the trial committee shall be designated as the chair. The chair is a voting member of the trial committee.

5. Evidence

5027. Rules of Evidence. An investigative committee, judicial committee, or other official body shall not be bound by any technical rules of evidence but shall adopt such rules as shall be best adapted to discover the truth and determine accurately the rights of the parties involved. The chair of the judicial committee shall decide on the admissibility of evidence.

5028. Testimony. No one may be barred as a witness on the grounds of not being a member of The Wesleyan Church. Whenever circumstances make it impossible for a witness to appear, a proper certificate of affidavit from such a person may be presented, provided that the party against whom it is sought to be introduced has had a proper opportunity to see the certificate or affidavit and personally or through counsel to question before witnesses the person signing the affidavit regarding the contents thereof.

5030. Proof of Charges. The accused shall be presumed innocent until the contrary is proved (5002:7). However, the moral conviction of the truth of the charge is all that is necessary to find the accused guilty of the charges. In all cases the accused may be questioned relative to the charges made.

6. Manager

5032. The official body ordering a trial shall, at the same time, appoint a covenant member or minister of The Wesleyan Church in good standing (not under charges) as *manager* of the trial. The manager's duty is not to act as a "prosecutor" in the sense of making every effort to bring conviction, but rather to prepare in final form the bill of charges and specifications, present them at the proper time and place to the judicial committee and represent the Church during the hearing. The manager's responsibility is to help the judicial committee get at the truth and to secure a just outcome.

7. Rights of the Judicial Committee

5036. Right of Investigation. The Church has a right to investigate the character of its covenant members and ministers in order to maintain the purity of its doctrines and practices, and can, therefore, through its own officers, official bodies and judicial committees, require covenant members or ministers under investigation to testify, under penalty of dismissal, if they refuse.

5038. Duty of Cooperation. It shall be the duty of every covenant member, minister, and church body to cooperate and to witness when properly requested to do so for an official investigation or trial (cf. 5050).

8. Rights of the Accused

5040. Any covenant member or minister who is accused shall have the following rights:

(1) **Counsel.** The accused shall have the right to choose a defense counsel, or to present a personal defense; but where this right is not exercised, a defense counsel may be appointed by the chair of the judicial committee. The defense counsel shall be a covenant member of The Wesleyan Church in good standing (not under charges).

(2) **Examination.** The accused, or the defense counsel, shall have the right to meet any accuser(s) face-to-face and to cross-examine any witnesses presented by the manager (cf. 5028).

(3) **Objection.** The accused shall have the right to challenge for cause the qualifications of any member of the judicial committee, the validity of which shall be determined by the chair of the judicial committee (cf. 5054).

(4) **Limitation.** A minister or covenant member shall not be required to answer charges for any act which occurred more than five years before the filing of such charges, except in cases involving immorality or crime.

9. Notices and Postponements

5042. Notices. All notices and citations to appear shall be given as directed by the chair of the judicial committee and shall be in writing, in the name of the church, and signed by the chair. An official notice of the date, time, and place of the trial together with an official copy of the bill of charges and specifications, and a summons to appear shall be delivered to the accused; this shall be done at least thirty days before the trial unless both the manager and the defense agree to a shorter period. No subsequent changes in such charges and specifications shall be permitted. Notices to appear shall be given to such witnesses as either party may name, and shall be served at least ten days before the trial. Covenant members or ministers of The Wesleyan Church shall be cited to appear, but others may only be requested to appear (cf. 5038). An official notice of the names of the persons appointed to the judicial committee shall be delivered to the accused at least ten days before the trial.

5044. Postponements. The manager or the defense shall have the right to petition the chair of the judicial committee for a postponement of the trial date, and the chair may grant such a petition if deemed essential for proper preparation or other necessary reasons, provided that the other party shall be notified before the postponement is granted. A postponement shall not be granted for more than thirty days.

10. Participants

5046. Only those who are covenant members or ministers of The Wesleyan Church shall be allowed to participate in a trial, except as witnesses, and only those participating in the trial shall be permitted to attend the hearing of the trial. Nonmembers who consent to testify may be brought in as witnesses at the trial, but any witness, even a covenant member, should not be allowed in the room except while testifying. Witnesses shall be examined first by the party producing them, then cross-examined by the opposite party, after which any member of the judicial committee or either party may put additional questions. All deliberations of a judicial committee shall be considered confidential during and after the trial, and members of the judicial committee shall not discuss the case with anyone outside the judicial committee during the hearing of the case.

11. Request for Withdrawal

5048. Whenever the accused person shall request a letter of withdrawal of membership from the Church, it shall be granted and the case shall end.

12. Failure or Refusal to Appear

5050. Whenever an accused member or minister refuses to obey a properly issued summons to appear for trial, except for unavoidable circumstances, that person shall be

considered guilty of contempt and shall be reprimanded by the chair of the judicial committee. If such an accused person refuses or fails to appear after a second summons, it shall be considered as sufficient reason for immediate dismissal from the Church.

13. Status of the Accused

5052. After the official notice of the date, time, and place of the trial, together with a copy of the bill of charges and specifications, is delivered to the accused and until after judgment is rendered by the judicial committee, the accused may be temporarily suspended from the exercise of any office by the official body having jurisdiction, at its discretion.

14. Grounds for Challenge

5054. A person is disqualified to serve as a member of any judicial committee who is personally interested in the case, closely related to either the accused or the accuser, has been active for or against either party in the matter referred to in the charges, is at personal variance with either party, or who has prejudged the case (cf. 5012; 5040:3). Any member of a judicial committee may, on such grounds, be challenged by either party, provided that such challenge shall be made not later than the opening of any trial hearing, and the allowance of such challenge shall be decided by the chair of the judicial committee.

15. Records

5056. The chair of the judicial committee shall appoint a secretary, who does not need to be a member of the judicial committee, and shall see that complete and accurate records are kept of all proceedings, testimonies, evidence, documents admitted, together with copies of the charges, specifications, notices, citations, and findings of the judicial committee.

16. The Order of a Church Trial

5058. The following order should be observed in conducting a church trial:

- (1) Devotional exercises.
- (2) Statement of purpose: the reading of the official action ordering the trial, and the announcement of the members of the judicial committee, by the chair of the judicial committee.
- (3) Challenges by either party of the members of the judicial committee (5054), if any.
- (4) Reading of the charges and specifications by the secretary.
- (5) Answer by the accused or the defense counsel with a plea of "guilty" or "not guilty." If guilt is confessed, the judicial committee may at this point consider the penalty to be imposed, if any, and terminate the hearing, or it may request to hear the evidence in order to make a more proper determination of the reason and the penalties to be imposed.
- (6) Statement of the case and line of evidence by the manager.
- (7) Evidence submitted by the manager and cross-examination by the defense.
- (8) Statement of the case and line of defense by the defense.
- (9) Evidence for the defense and cross-examination by the manager.
- (10) Rebuttal by the manager.
- (11) Rebuttal by the defense.
- (12) Summary of the case by the manager.

(13) Summary of the case by the defense.

(14) Should it be thought proper to allow the manager to reply, the defense shall also be permitted to reply.

(15) Instructions by the chair to the judicial committee concerning the duties assigned to it as set forth in this Judiciary and especially to give a verdict in not more than three days, and to vote separately on each charge and by secret ballot, with a two-thirds vote of all the members required to give a verdict of guilty. Members of the judicial committee who have been absent from more than one sitting shall not be permitted to vote on the verdict.

(16) The verdict.

(17) Announcement by the chair of the verdict, and the recommendations, if any, being made to the official body having jurisdiction over the accused.

17. Appeals

5062. Right of Appeal. The accused, if found guilty, shall have the right to appeal the verdict and/or the penalty unless such right has been forfeited for misconduct.

5064. Procedure of Appeal. The appellant or the appellant's counsel, within thirty days after being notified of the verdict and/or the penalty, may submit a request in writing and shall set forth the grounds of the appeal.

Chapter 2

DISCIPLINE OF A COVENANT MEMBER

A. Discipline Without a Trial

5100. Officials and official bodies dealing with a covenant member suspected of an offense as set forth in 5004 are bound to follow as much as is appropriate the provisions of 5008-5018 before taking the matter to trial.

B. Discipline Involving a Trial

5105. Jurisdiction. Original jurisdiction over a lay member ordinarily belongs to the local church of which the person is a covenant member (cf. 5125). Accusations against a lay member shall be given to the pastor (5022). They shall be presented to the local church board which shall have charge of ordering an investigation (5012) or trial if necessary, as set forth in this Judiciary (cf. 5008-5064). Any charge against a lay member must be sustained by two or more responsible members of The Wesleyan Church. Whenever a trial is ordered, the District Superintendent shall be notified.

5110. Local Judicial Committee. Charges against a lay member shall ordinarily be heard and determined by a local judicial committee (cf. 5125):

(1) A local judicial committee shall consist of not fewer than three members (5054), which shall be selected by the local church board from its own membership or the membership of the local church (782:11; 970; cf. 5105). The committee shall hear and determine the case. (See 5025-5026.)

(2) Whenever the accused is licensed by the district, a certified copy of the findings shall be forwarded to the District Superintendent (cf. 1310:20).

(3) An appeal may be taken by the accused concerning the verdict and/or penalty to the district board of review, within thirty days (5062-5064).

C. Penalties

5115. Definition of Penalties. There shall be five degrees of penalty for the administration of discipline, which are:

(1) **Warning.** Warning is the mildest penalty and consists of a general verbal reproof, a warning, and an exhortation to greater watchfulness by the offender.

(2) **Rebuke.** Rebuke is a stronger penalty for a more serious offense and consists in writing out the offense with an official rebuke and correction, and a warning to the offender.

(3) **Suspension.** Suspension is that penalty by which the accused is placed "under discipline" and is deprived of certain rights and privileges for a period of probation.

(a) Suspension may be applied to the rights and privileges of membership, the rights and privileges of the ministry, or the exercise of an office, and may be definite or indefinite as to duration. Definite suspension is administered when the name of Christ, the integrity of the Church, and the good of the offender demand it, even though the offender may have given evidence of repentance. Indefinite suspension is required when an offender is to be placed on probation until demonstrating a genuine repentance and reformation of life to the proper authorities.

(b) Whenever a covenant member has been found guilty, and has been placed under discipline by being suspended from the rights and privileges of covenant membership, the suspended person shall not vote, hold or exercise any office, and shall not be eligible for a local license or a district license for the duration of such suspension. If the suspension has been for an indefinite period, the local church board shall be responsible to declare an end to the suspension (782:11). If the person suspended shows the desired repentance and the offense has ceased, the suspension shall be terminated. If the offense has not ceased, in due time, the local church board shall recommend the dismissal of the accused from the Church or vote for such dismissal itself if such power has been delegated (cf. 655:1; 782:10).

(4) **Removal.** Removal is that penalty by which a person is removed from an official position or appointment, expelled from the ministry, or removed from the office of a ministerial student, as the case may be.

(5) **Dismissal.** Dismissal is the strongest penalty and is the expulsion of the offender from covenant membership in the Church (585:3), which automatically includes all lesser penalties. Dismissal should be imposed only for the most serious offenses, or for obstinate persistence in a serious offense. (See 2 Cor. 6:14-15; 1 Tim. 1:19-20.)

5120. Assignment of Penalties. The local church board shall be governed by the seriousness of the offense and by the following regulations in the assignment of penalties:

(1) Anyone declared guilty of holding or teaching any doctrine contrary to the doctrines of The Wesleyan Church as stated in *The Discipline* (5004:1) shall be punished with dismissal (5115:5), unless the local church board is of the opinion that the offense has ceased, in which case the penalty shall be either that of warning, rebuke, or suspension.

(2) Disobedience to *The Discipline*, or tolerating such disobedience (5004:2), shall be punished with such penalty as deemed advisable.

(3) Refusal to recognize or obey Church authority (5004:3) shall be punished by such penalty as deemed advisable.

(4) Conduct unbecoming a covenant member (5004:4), such as dishonesty, or sowing dissension by disparaging the officials or ministers of the Church, shall be punished with removal and/or dismissal (5115:4-5), unless the local church board believes the offender is truly penitent, in which case the offender shall be rebuked or indefinitely suspended (5115:2-3) until such time as the proper authorities are satisfied that the accused has reasonably demonstrated genuine Christian character in accord with the standards of The Wesleyan Church.

(5) Immorality, such as adultery, fornication, homosexual practices or other acts involving moral turpitude or crime, may be punished by immediate dismissal from the Church (5115:5).

(6) Serious or persistent neglect of duties (5004:6) shall be punished by suspension or removal, unless corrected, in which case a lesser penalty may be imposed.

D. Exceptions in Jurisdiction

5125. There are situations in which jurisdiction over a covenant member may be assumed by a district or by the national/regional Church.

(1) If a covenant member is also licensed or ordained by the district, or is elected as an official or officer of the district, full jurisdiction over all offenses passes to the district, with full authority to fix the penalty including removal from office or dismissal from covenant membership.

(2) If a covenant member is also a national/regional officer, a member of the National/Regional Board of Administration, or otherwise employed by the national/regional Church, or is a district superintendent, full jurisdiction over all offenses passes to the national/regional Church, with full authority to fix the penalty, including removal from office or dismissal from covenant membership.

(3) If a lay covenant member's conduct is such as to affect the health of the local church where covenant membership is held, and the district superintendent and the district board of administration become convinced that the local church is unable or unwilling to deal appropriately with such covenant member, or if a lay covenant member is alleged to have committed offences which affect The Wesleyan Church beyond the local church where covenant membership is held, the district superintendent may recommend and the district board of administration may authorize by a two-thirds vote the assumption by the district of jurisdiction in the case. Investigation and trial would be conducted in accord with district procedures. Any appeals would still be heard by the district board of review. The district would have full authority to fix the penalty, including removal from office or dismissal from covenant membership.

Chapter 3

DISCIPLINE OF MINISTERS, OFFICERS AND SPECIAL CASES

A. Those Subject to Districts

1. Identification

5200. Those ordinarily subject to district jurisdiction (cf. 5227) include the following persons

- (1) An ordained minister or a licensed minister.
- (2) A ministerial student.
- (3) A supply pastor.
- (4) A district official or officer.
- (5) A lay covenant member whose case has been assumed by the district (5125:3).

2. Discipline Without a Trial

5203. District officials and official bodies dealing with one of the above persons suspected of an offense as set forth in 5004 are bound to follow as much as is appropriate the provisions of 5008-5018 before taking the matter to trial.

3. Discipline Involving a Trial

5206. Jurisdiction. Original jurisdiction over the persons listed in 5200 ordinarily belongs to the district in which their ministerial membership, or for laypersons, their covenant membership is held. The exceptions would be those who serve as national/regional officials or officers or members of the National/Regional Board of Administration or who are otherwise employed by the national/regional Church, and district superintendents. These are subject to the jurisdiction of the national/regional Church (1180:8; 5227; 5270). Accusations against one of the persons listed in 5200 shall be given to the District Superintendent. They shall then be presented to the District Board of Administration which shall exercise jurisdiction on behalf of the district for any and all charges. The District Board of Administration may order an investigation (5012) or trial if necessary, as set forth in this Judiciary (cf. 5008-5064). Any charge must be sustained by two or more responsible covenant members or ministers of The Wesleyan Church. Whenever a trial is ordered, the National/Regional Superintendent shall be notified.

5209. District Judicial Committee. Charges against a person under district jurisdiction shall be heard and determined by a district judicial committee. A district judicial committee is not a standing committee elected annually by the District Conference or the District Board of Administration. Each district judicial committee is created for a particular case. District judicial committees are also appointed for cases involving a local church or other unit (see 5310).

(1) A district judicial committee shall consist of four ordained ministers and three lay covenant members, selected by the District Board of Administration (1233:31), as the occasion may arise, from among its own members or the members of the district. No one may serve as a member of a district judicial committee who is also a member of the district board of review.

(2) The penalty may take the form of warning, rebuke, suspension, removal, or dismissal, and the District Board of Administration may also require repentance, apology, or restitution as deemed necessary.

(3) An appeal may be taken by the accused concerning the verdict and/or penalty to the district board of review within thirty days (5062-5064).

4. Special Regulations

5212. The administration of discipline and penalties to ministers under the jurisdiction of the district (5200) shall be in accord with the following regulations:

(1) **Indiscreet Conduct.** Whenever a minister or ministerial student has been charged with an offense alleging immorality or crime and is not found guilty of such action but rather of "high imprudence or indiscreet conduct," the offender may be given a warning, rebuke, suspension, or removal, according to the seriousness of the offense.

(2) **Suspension** (5115:3). Whenever a minister shall be suspended from the ministry, or a ministerial student shall be suspended from that office, all credentials shall be surrendered to the custody of the District Superintendent (1310:20). Whenever such a person shall furnish the District Superintendent a written apology acknowledging guilt and pledging to correct the matter, and gives evidence that the offense has ceased and that the person is repentant, the District Board of Administration may end the suspension, reinstate the person, and authorize the return of all credentials.

(3) **Immorality and Crime.** Whenever a minister or ministerial student shall have been convicted of immoral acts such as fornication or adultery, or of crime, or has confessed such acts, or has been convicted of such by trial, that person shall be put out of the ministry. This shall not prohibit membership in a Wesleyan church when the guilty person repents and demonstrates a Christian life according to the standards of The Wesleyan Church.

(4) **Removal** (5115:4). A minister or ministerial student that has been removed from the ministry, shall immediately surrender all credentials to the District Superintendent, shall cease all functions of the ministry, shall not occupy any pulpit in The Wesleyan Church, shall cease to draw any salary, and, if a pastor, shall move from the parsonage within thirty days.

(5) **Dismissal** (5115:5). In cases where the actions or the attitude of the person removed from the ministry is especially grievous, the District Board of Administration has full power to dismiss the person from covenant membership in The Wesleyan Church, and the involved local church, when officially informed of this action, shall so indicate in its membership records.

(6) **Restoration.** Anyone who has been put out of the ministry for an offense described in 5212:3 or any other offense, may, in some circumstances, be considered for restoration according to a plan approved by the district board of ministerial standing and the District Board of Administration in consultation with the National/Regional Superintendent. Final restoration would be subject to approval by the District Board of Administration and the National/Regional Board of Administration.

5. District Board of Review

5218. Each established district shall have a district board of review consisting of four ordained ministers and three lay covenant members, elected annually by the District Conference. They shall be members within the district and shall not, at the same time, be members of the District Board of Administration. The District Conference shall also elect two ordained ministers and two lay covenant members as alternates to serve in the order of their election whenever a member is disqualified for a particular case (5054) and shall also fill any vacancies in the order of their election. The district board of review shall organize itself and elect its own officers, and shall see that complete records of all proceeding and cases are kept (cf. 5056).

5219. A member of the district board of review shall be disqualified for a particular case, when the member is personally interested or involved in the case, closely related to any parties involved, or has been active for or against either party to the matter to be heard and determined by the district board of review. Any member of the district board of review may be challenged for such reasons or for other reasons, and the allowance of such challenges shall be decided by the remaining members of the district board of review. Whenever a member is disqualified, the chair shall appoint an alternate for the hearing of that particular case (5218) in such manner as to maintain the minister/lay ratio.

5221. The duties and powers of the district board of review are:

(1) To hear and determine the appeal of a lay covenant member or of a local church board concerning the results of a local church trial or the appeal of a lay covenant member concerning the results of a district trial held in lieu of a local church trial. The district board of review may sustain, modify, or revoke, in whole or in part, the verdict and/or penalty by a majority vote, provided that if the accused has been previously found innocent, it shall require a two-thirds majority of all members of the district board of review to find the accused guilty.

(2) To hear and determine the appeal of a local church or other unit of the district or the District Board of Administration concerning the results of charges against and trial of the local church before a district judicial committee in the same manner as set forth in 5221:1.

(3) To hear and determine any other district matter referred to it by the District Board of Administration.

6. Exceptions in Jurisdiction

5227. There are situations in which jurisdiction over a minister or a district official or officer may be assumed by the national/regional Church.

(1) If such a person is also a national/regional officer, a member of the National/Regional Board or otherwise employed by the national/regional Church, or a District Superintendent, full jurisdiction over all offenses passes to the national/regional Church, with full authority to fix the penalty, if any, including removal from office, removal from the ministry, and dismissal from church membership.

(2) If a minister or a district official or officer is alleged to have committed an offense which affects The Wesleyan Church beyond the district where membership is held, and/or the district is unable or unwilling to deal appropriately with the matter, the National/Regional Superintendent may recommend and the Executive Committee of the National/Regional Board may authorize assumption of jurisdiction in the case by the national/regional Church. Investigation, trial, and appeal would be in accord with national/regional procedure (5270-5279).

B. Those Subject to the National/Regional Church**1. Identification**

5270. Those subject to national/regional jurisdiction include the following persons.

- (1) A national/regional official or officer.
- (2) Other members of the National/Regional Board
- (3) A District Superintendent.
- (4) A covenant member or minister appointed or employed by the National/Regional Board.
- (5) A district official or officer or a minister the assumption of whose case by the National/Regional Board has been authorized by the Executive Committee.

2. Discipline Without a Trial

5273. National/regional officials and official bodies dealing with any of the persons in 5270 suspected of an offense are bound to follow as much as is appropriate the provisions of 5008-5018 before taking the matter to trial.

3. Discipline Involving a Trial

5276. Jurisdiction over the persons listed in 5270 belongs to the National/Regional Board and its Executive Committee.

5279. For the persons listed in 5270, any accusation alleging an offense set forth in 5204 shall be submitted in writing (5022) to the National/Regional Superintendent. If a trial is decided upon, the National/Regional Board may appoint or authorize the Executive Committee to appoint a general judicial committee. A two-thirds majority vote of all members of the general judicial committee shall be required for a verdict of guilty. The National/Regional Board shall determine the penalty. Whenever it is deemed necessary, a national/regional official, National/Regional Board member, or a district superintendent may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority of all the members of the National/Regional Board; a national/regional officer elected by the National/Regional Board may be removed by a majority of all the members. Any person whose case has been assumed by the National/Regional Board may be removed from office by a two-thirds majority vote of all its members. A two-thirds majority vote of all its members will be required for the National/Regional Board to remove any of the persons in 5270 from the ministry and dismiss that person from covenant membership. An appeal from removal from the ministry or dismissal from covenant membership may be taken to the National/Regional Board of Review.

Chapter 4

DISCIPLINE OF A LOCAL CHURCH, DISTRICT, OR OTHER UNIT

A. Those Subject to Districts

1. Identification

5300. Districts ordinarily exercise jurisdiction in matters of church discipline over those pastoral charges which consist of established churches or circuits (for exceptions, see 5315. Districts have full authority in all matters over developing churches and preaching points.

2. Discipline Without a Trial

5305. Any complaint against a local church by a lay covenant member, minister, another local church, or the District Board of Administration shall be submitted in writing to the District Superintendent, who together with the District Board of Administration will endeavor to make an amicable settlement in keeping with 5208-5218.

3. Discipline With a Trial

5310. Whenever a settlement cannot be effected in keeping with 5305, a charge against the local church shall be submitted to a district judicial committee (5209), who shall hear and determine the case. Whenever a local church has been declared guilty of an offense as set forth in 5006, it shall be suspended. The suspension shall end when the local church shall make a written apology acknowledging its guilt and pledging loyalty to the district and the denomination, and when, in the opinion of the District Board of Administration, the offense has ceased. Whenever a local church does not offer such a written apology and assurance, and if it continues to offend, it shall be reorganized (5320). An appeal may be taken by the accused church concerning the verdict and/or penalty to the district board of review (5221:2).

4. Exceptions in Jurisdiction

5315. If a local church is alleged to have committed offenses which affect The Wesleyan Church beyond the district of which it is a part, and/or the district is unable or unwilling to deal appropriately with the matter, the National/Regional Superintendent may recommend and the Executive Board by a two-thirds vote may authorize assumption of jurisdiction in the case by the national/regional Church.

4. Reorganization

5320. Whenever a local church, through its pastor and/or local officials or local church board, shall refuse to answer the summons of the District Board of Administration to appear for a settlement (5305), or the summons of the district judicial committee to appear for the hearing of the case (5042), or whenever a local church that has been placed under discipline refuses to offer a written apology and assurance as set forth in 5310 and does not

exercise its right of appeal, the District Board of Administration shall authorize the District Superintendent and any two of its other board members to reorganize the local church. Members who affirm loyalty shall be the members of that local church, and those members who refuse to affirm loyalty shall be declared as having withdrawn from The Wesleyan Church and from that local church. The loyal members shall be entitled to hold and use the property as provided for by *The Discipline* and to carry on the functions of the local church.

B. Those Subject to the National/Regional Church

1. Identification

5350. The national/regional Church exercises jurisdiction in matters of church discipline over established districts. The national/regional Church has full authority in all matters over developing and provisional districts (1003-1034). The national/regional Church may also assume jurisdiction over a local church under some circumstances (5315).

2. Discipline Without a Trial

5355. Any charge or complaint against an established district (or against a local church over which the national/regional Church has assumed jurisdiction) alleging an offense as set forth in 5006 shall be submitted in writing to the National/Regional Superintendent, who together with the National/Regional Board or its Executive Committee, will endeavor to make an amicable settlement in keeping with 5208-5218.

3. Discipline Involving a Trial

5365. Whenever a settlement cannot be effected in keeping with 5355, a charge against the district (or local church, 5350) shall be submitted to a national/regional judicial committee appointed by the National/Regional Board or by its Executive Committee, if so authorized. The national/regional judicial committee shall hear and determine the case and shall report its findings to the National/Regional Board. A two-thirds majority vote of the national/regional judicial committee shall be required for a verdict of guilty. If the district is found guilty of an offense, the National/Regional Board, by a two-thirds majority vote of all of its members, may place it under discipline and suspend all its rights and privileges as a district and appoint a national/regional official in charge. If a local church is found guilty, the National/Regional Board, by a majority vote, may place the church under discipline and appoint a national/regional or district official to have charge. Suspension shall continue until the unit under discipline shall, through its officials, offer a written apology acknowledging its guilt and giving assurance of its loyalty to the denomination and shall also give evidence that the offense has ceased, whereupon the National/Regional Board shall end the suspension by a majority vote of all its members (cf. 1655:39) and reinstate the unit. An appeal may be taken by the accused district or local church concerning the verdict and/or the penalty to the National/Regional Board of Review.

4. Reorganization

5375. Whenever a district under discipline refuses to offer a written apology and assurance of loyalty or whenever the district officials refuse to answer a summons to appear, the National/Regional Board of Administration or its Executive Committee may authorize the National/Regional Superintendent to reorganize the district (cf. 1655:39).

CHART OF JUDICIAL PROCESS

5490. The procedure of the following **chart begins at the bottom of the page** and comes up to the higher level at the top. Appeals of judgments may be made to the next level up. The National/Regional Conference may appeal a ruling of the National/Regional Board of Review to the General Board of Review by a two-thirds majority vote. Both the National/Regional Board of Administration and the District Board of Administration act on behalf of their respective conferences.

LEVEL	COMMITTEE / BOARD	JURISDICTION
National/Regional	Nat/Reg Board of Review	Rules on constitutionality of N/R Conf. acts Hears appeals from N/R judicial trials
	Nat/Reg Board of Administration (Investigates all cases at this level and appoints national/regional judicial committees)	Nat/Reg Officials/Officers RBA Members District Superintendents Lay persons or ministers serving under the RBA
District	#3. District Board of Review	Hears appeals from local and district trials
	#2. District Judicial Committee	Ministers Local Churches
	# 1. District Board of Administration (Investigates all cases at this level. and determines need for trial).	
Local Church	#2. Local Judicial Committee tries all cases at this level #1. Local Church Board (Investigates all cases at this level and determines need for trial by the Local Judicial Committee)	Lay Members Membership

Chapter 5

NATIONAL/REGIONAL BOARD OF REVIEW

A. Membership

5400. Members. The National/Regional Board of Review shall consist of nine members, five of whom shall be ordained ministers and four of whom shall be lay covenant members of The Wesleyan Church, elected by the National/Regional Conference.

(1) A member of the National/Regional Board of Review may not at the same time be a member of the National/Regional Board.

(2) A member of the National/Regional Board of Review shall be disqualified for a particular case, when the member is personally interested or involved in the case, closely related to any parties involved, or has been active for or against either party in the matter to be heard and determined by the National/Regional Board of Review. Any member of the National Board of Review may be challenged for such reasons or other reasons, and the allowance of such challenge shall be decided by the remaining members of the National/Regional Board of Review. Whenever a member is disqualified, the chair shall appoint an alternate for the hearing of that particular case (5405), provided that such appointment shall maintain the membership at five ordained ministers and four lay covenant members.

5405. Alternates. The National/Regional Conference shall elect, in the same manner described in 1590:15 four ordained ministers and three lay covenant members to serve as alternate members of the National/Regional Board of Review, with the same qualifications (5400:1) and term of office as the members.

5410. Vacancies. Whenever a member of the National/Regional Board of Review is disqualified to serve in a particular case (5400:2), the chair shall name one of the elected alternates (5405) to fill this temporary vacancy in such manner as to maintain the ministry/lay ratio.

B. Organization and Procedure

5425. Organization and procedure for the National/Regional Board of Review shall be as follows:

(1) **Organization.** The National/Regional Board of Review shall organize itself and shall elect, from among its own members, a chair, vice-chair, secretary and such other officers as are deemed necessary.

(2) **Procedure.** The National/Regional Board of Review shall decide on its own methods and rules of procedure and shall adopt such bylaws as deemed necessary, provided such do not contravene any provision of *The Discipline*.

(3) **Quorum.** Seven members shall constitute a quorum. A decision of the National/Regional Board of Review against the constitutionality of an act of the National/Regional Conference shall require a two-thirds majority vote of all members of the Board, and on all other matters a majority vote of all members of the Board shall be sufficient.

5430. Records. The National/Regional Board of Review shall see that complete and accurate minutes are kept of all proceedings, testimonies, evidence, documents, and findings.

5435. Notification. After each session of the National/Regional Board of Review, an official summary of the Board's decisions on points of Church law or interpretations of *The Discipline*, as prepared by the secretary and attested by the chair, shall be published throughout the nation/region.

PART 10**THE RITUAL****Chapter 1****DEDICATION OF BABIES**

5500. *(When the parents or guardians or other sponsors have presented themselves with the child before the minister, the minister shall say:)*

My *friends*^{*}, you have brought this *child* whom God has given you to be dedicated to God and to His service. By this act you testify to your faith in the Christian religion, and also your desire that your *children* shall receive the benefits of consecration to God, and of the prayers of the church, and may learn early to know and follow the will of God; and in so doing may live and die a Christian, attaining in the end of this earthly life to everlasting life in the kingdom of God.

In order for this to happen, it will be your duty as *parents* to teach your *children* the fear of the Lord; to watch over *their* education, that *they* may not be led astray by false teachings or doctrines, to direct *their minds* to the Holy Scriptures as a source for knowing the will and authority of God for everyone, and to direct *them* to attend church, to keep *them* from evil friends and habits; and, as much as possible, to "bring *them* up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Will you try your best to do this, by the help of the Lord?

(Then the parents or guardians shall answer:)

We will.

(Then the minister shall read the following Scripture lesson:)

"People were bringing little children to Jesus to have him touch them, but the disciples rebuked them. When Jesus saw this, he was indignant. He said to them, 'Let the little children come to me, and do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I tell you the truth, anyone who will not receive the kingdom of God like a little child will never enter it.' And he took the children in his arms, put his hands on them and blessed them" (Mark 10:13-16, NIV).

(Then the minister shall ask the parents or guardians of each child to be dedicated the name of the child, take the child in arms, place the right hand upon the child's head, and say:)

In behalf of the parents and of this congregation, I dedicate
 _____ unto the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Then the minister may pray.)

* Throughout the ritual, whenever instructions are given to the officiating minister or a word may change form due to the gender or number of persons involved in the ritual on a given occasion, that word(s) is printed in italics to alert the minister who reads. "These children" may become "this child," "he" may become "she" or "they," etc.

Chapter 2

BAPTISM

A. Baptism of Babies

5510. *(When the parents, guardians or other sponsors have presented themselves with their children before the minister, the minister shall say:)*

Dear *friends*, you have brought *these children* whom God has given you to be baptized, thereby testifying to your own commitment of faith in Christ and the assurance you hold that the grace of God is even now at work in *their* lives. Forasmuch as *these children* are now presented by you, it will be your duty as *parents* to teach *them* as soon as *they* are able to learn, the nature and meaning of this sacrament. In order to testify to your faith and to your desire to nurture your *children* within this faith, please respond to these questions.

Do you present your *children* for baptism as a sign of the grace of God which is extended even now to your *children* through the atoning work of Christ and declares *them* to be a part of the family of God? And,

Do you promise with the help of God to bring your *children* up in the instruction and discipline of the Lord, to pray with *them* and for *them*, and to make every effort to so order your own life that you will not cause *these little ones* to stumble? And,

Do you intend to encourage your *children* as soon as they are able to comprehend its significance to acknowledge personally *their* own faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to serve God faithfully in the fellowship of His Church?

(Then the parents will respond:)

We do, God being our helper.

(Then the minister shall ask the parents or guardians the name of each child, take it in arms, and baptize each child saying:)

_____, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Then the minister may pray.)

B. Baptism of Believers

5515. *(When the candidates for baptism have presented themselves before the minister, the minister shall say:)*

Dear *friends*, in keeping with the example of Jesus, you have presented *yourselves* today so that you might receive the sacrament of baptism. Baptism is not itself the door to salvation, but rather is an outward sign of the new birth which God has done in your heart. It proclaims to all the world that you have taken Christ Jesus as the Lord of your life, and that it is your purpose always to obey Him. In order that we may hear your testimony of what God has done for you, and that we may know that you understand the importance of what you are about to do, we want to ask you some questions:

Do you believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? That Jesus Christ the Son suffered in your place on the cross, that He died but rose again, that He now sits at the Father's right hand until He returns to judge all people at the last day? And do you believe in the Holy Bible as the inspired Word of God? That by the grace of God every person has the ability and responsibility to choose between right and wrong? And

do you believe that those who repent of their sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are justified by faith?

Answer: I believe all of this.

Do you intend by this act to testify to all the world that you are a Christian and will be a loyal follower of Christ?

Answer: I do.

(Then the minister shall ask the name of each candidate, and baptize the candidate, saying:)

_____, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Then the minister shall pray.)

Chapter 3

RECEPTION OF MEMBERS

5550. When candidates for covenant membership and/or community membership have been approved for reception as given in 553-570, the pastor shall make a time during a regular worship service for their public reception, and shall preside over the service of reception. In those churches in which the local churches must vote on the reception of covenant members, the vote should be taken at a meeting before the service of reception. Paragraph 5565, "Reception of Covenant Members" must be followed as it is written.

5555. *The service of reception may begin with a hymn and scripture reading such as one of those listed below, and with the administration of the sacrament of baptism to any who have not previously received it.*

Scripture Lesson. *Romans 12:1-8; 1 Corinthians 12:4-27; Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16; 5:25b-27.*

5560. Introductory Remarks.

Minister. Dear friends, the privileges and blessings which we have in fellowship together in the church of Jesus Christ are very sacred and precious. Christ so loved the church that He gave Himself for it, sanctifying Himself that the church might be sanctified. He chose to speak of Himself as the Head of the church and of the church as His body; and again He spoke of Himself as the husband and of the church as His bride. As Christ gave Himself unselfishly, He asked the church to share its glorious relationship with all humankind, and sent it into the world to preach the Scriptures, to save the lost, to administer the sacraments, to maintain Christian fellowship and discipline, and to help the believer until He comes again. All of us, whatever our age or position, stand in need of Christ's church and of those means of grace which it alone makes available.

It is in keeping with Christ's commission to the church, that we meet together now. There *are some* among us who *testify* to having been received already into the spiritual fellowship of the universal church, and who come now to be received into the official and visible fellowship of this local unit of the body of Christ.

5565. Reception of Covenant Members.

(The minister shall call before the congregation those who are being received as covenant members.)

These are the ones who come to enter into a covenant as members in The Wesleyan Church, with all of the rights, privileges, and responsibilities of membership. They testify to having been born again. They have received the sacrament of baptism, have been instructed in and have accepted the doctrines and policies of The Wesleyan Church, and have been approved by vote as showing in spirit and practice God's work of grace within their hearts. We will now question them about their experience, faith, and purpose, so that you may know that they are proper persons to be admitted into this Church.

Minister: My *friends* in the Lord, you are seeking to join with the church of Jesus Christ. We rejoice that you have chosen to undertake the privileges and the duties of membership in The Wesleyan Church. Before you are fully admitted to it, you should publicly and individually make your vows, confess your faith, and declare your purpose, by answering the following questions:

Minister: Do you believe in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? That Jesus Christ the Son suffered in your place on the cross, that He died but rose again,

that He now sits at the Father's right hand until He returns to judge all men at the last day? And do you believe in the Holy Bible as the inspired and true Word of God? That by the grace of God every person has the ability and responsibility to choose between right and wrong, and that those who repent of their sin and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are justified by faith? And do you believe that God not only accepts believers as righteous, but that He makes them righteous, perfecting them in love at entire sanctification, and providing for their growth in grace at every stage of their spiritual life, enabling them through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit to live a victorious life?

Candidate: I believe this.

Minister: Do you have the witness of the Spirit that you are a child of God?

Candidate: I do.

Minister: Do you have the witness of the Spirit that you have been sanctified wholly? If not, will you diligently seek this grace?

Candidate: I do (*or*) I will.

Minister: Do you sincerely accept our Covenant Membership Commitments as biblical guidelines for your conduct, and do you accept the authority of *The Discipline* of The Wesleyan Church in matters of Church government?

Candidate: I sincerely accept these.

Minister: Do you recognize your obligation to God and the Church, and will you contribute your resources as the Lord has prospered you for the support of the gospel as the Church fulfills its mission in the world?

Candidate: Yes, I will.

Minister: You sincerely confess the Lord Jehovah, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, to be your God and the object of your highest love. You accept the Lord Jesus to be your Redeemer, and the Holy Spirit to be your Sanctifier, Comforter, and Guide. You joyfully dedicate yourself to God that within the everlasting covenant of His grace you might be used in His service to glorify and honor Him. And you promise to hold to Him as the highest good of your life; that you will give diligent attention to the commandments and principles of His Word; that you will seek the honor and advancement of His kingdom; and that forsaking all ungodliness and worldly desires, you will live earnestly, righteously, and godly in this present world.

You do also join yourself to this church, submitting yourself to its principles of government; and by walking in love and fellowship with all its members, seek its peace, purity, and growth in grace.

Do you thus freely and sincerely devote yourself to be the Lord's within the fellowship of this church?

Candidate: I do.

5570. Reception of Transfers from Other Denominations.

Minister: There *are* the *ones* who have found Christ in some other branch of His church, but who now *desire* to transfer *their* membership to The Wesleyan Church, and who have presented *themselves* for reception as covenant *members* by transfer. To *them* we give this question:

Minister: *Friends*, in transferring your covenant relation to this branch of Christ's church, you again renew your vows of church fellowship. Relying upon the grace of God, you promise to walk in all His commandments and ordinances, and to seek His service as your highest joy. You promise to submit to the rules and *The Discipline* of The Wesleyan Church; to strive earnestly for its peace, purity, and prosperity, and to walk with all its members in love and Christian faithfulness. Do you thus sincerely, freely, and solemnly devote yourself to be the Lord's and do you hereby renew your

covenant with the church of Jesus Christ by joining yourself to this fellowship of believers?

Transferee: I do.

5575. Reception of Community Members.

Minister: The church of Jesus Christ is not only for those who are spiritually strong and mature, but it is intended by its Head and Master for all who know Him as Savior and who love and serve Him as Lord. There are those who are not yet ready for covenant membership in The Wesleyan Church. For these, the Church has provided the category of community membership, that they may enjoy its pastoral care and spiritual nurture, and that they may grow in grace and knowledge until they take their place in full relation to the Church. *These* have come now that *they* may be questioned and received as *their* experience makes possible.

To you who have so recently been converted to Christ, and to *all* of you who desire to study and grow toward spiritual maturity, and who have here presented *yourselves* for reception as community *members*, we address these questions:

Minister: Has the Lord forgiven your sins?

Candidate: Yes, He has.

Minister: Is it your purpose to grow spiritually, to study daily in private devotions and regularly at the church, to become acquainted with the Bible and *The Discipline* of our Church, and to prepare to be received at the proper time in covenant membership?

Candidate: Yes, it is.

5580. Response of the Church.

Minister: May the members of the church now stand and join me in welcoming *these* new *ones* to our fellowship, assuring *them* of our love, of our prayers, of our care over *them* in days to come. Please repeat after me:

Congregation: We, the members of this church, do sincerely receive you as *brothers* and *sisters* to our fellowship, and promise to walk with you in love, and watch over you, to instruct, counsel, admonish, and cherish you, with all long-suffering, gentleness, and love.

5585. Prayer.

Minister: O God of the church, we thank You for the blessing of Christian fellowship, for joining together in one body all those who truly believe in Jesus Christ, Your Son. We thank You for *these* who today are becoming a part of this local church, this branch of Christ's body. Grant to *them* the grace and strength *they* shall need to fulfill *their* vows, and bind our hearts together in Your holy love, that we may aid each other and that together we may share Your gospel with the world for which Christ died. In His name we pray. Amen.

5590. Shake Hands in Fellowship.

Minister: And now, in behalf of The Wesleyan Church and of this local congregation, I extend to you the hand of fellowship, welcoming you as *members* with us of the body of Christ.

5595. *The service of reception may close with a hymn and a benediction.*

Benediction. Now unto Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Chapter 4

THE LORD'S SUPPER

A. General Directions

5600. The Lord's Supper shall be observed in each local Wesleyan church at least once each three months (725:6).

5605. It is expected that Wesleyan ministers shall carefully instruct the people that only those who are in right relations with God and with their neighbors should come to the Lord's table, and that others should come only if in so doing they are expressing repentance and seeking forgiveness.

5610. Only unfermented grape juice shall be used in observing the Lord's Supper. It is recommended that only unleavened bread be used.

B. Order of the Lord's Supper--Shorter Form

5615. *(The elements of the Lord's Supper shall be placed upon a table and covered with a white linen cloth. The minister shall read a Scripture lesson, such as one of the following: Isa. 53; Matt. 26:26-29; Luke 22:14-20; Rom. 5:1-2, 6-12, 18-21; I Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-29; Eph. 1:3-12; 2:1-10, 12-22; Heb. 9:11-17, 22-28; I Peter 1:18-23; 2:21-25.)*

(Then the congregation shall sing a hymn, such as one of the following: "Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed," "Man of Sorrows, What a Name," "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "Arise, My Soul, Arise," "My Faith Looks Up to You," "Rock of Ages," "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood.")

(Then the minister shall call the congregation to kneel at the altar, using this invitation:)

You who are walking in fellowship with God, and are in love and harmony with your neighbors; and you who do truly and earnestly repent of your sin and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from this time after in His holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and meekly make your humble confession to Almighty God.

(When the people have knelt at the altar, the minister shall remove the cloth, folding it neatly, and laying it to one side. Then the minister shall pray the prayer of consecration:)

O God of grace and mercy, we thank You that You did ever love us and provide for our redemption. We thank You for Your Son who died to save us, and for Your Spirit who invites us to draw near. Guide us now as we commemorate the suffering of our Lord. Help us to remember the cost of our salvation. Help us to commune with You and with each other. And so consecrate the bread and wine which are here prepared, that as we partake of them we may receive the spiritual benefits of Christ's broken body and shed blood. In His name we pray. Amen.

(Then the minister shall first partake of the bread, and then distribute it to the people, saying:)

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your soul and body unto everlasting life. Take and eat this in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on Him in your heart, by faith, with thanksgiving.

(Then the minister shall partake of the wine, and then distribute it to the people, saying:)

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your soul and body unto everlasting life. Drink this in remembrance that Christ's blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

(After all have partaken, let that which remains of the consecrated elements be returned to the table, and covered with the white linen cloth. Then let the minister pronounce the benediction:)

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; and the blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

C. Order of the Lord's Supper—Longer Form

5635. *(The elements of the Lord's Supper shall be placed upon a table and covered with a white linen cloth. The minister shall address the congregation saying:)*

Call to Worship

The Lord Jesus Himself instituted the holy sacrament we call the Lord's Supper, giving it to the disciples as a means of remembering Him until He comes again, and as a seal of the new covenant between God and His people. This service is therefore a time of special sacredness and we can only be properly prepared by giving our hearts and minds to reverent worship, and by being freed of all things contrary to the divine nature and purpose. Therefore let us bow in a period of silent prayer, asking the Holy Spirit to search our hearts and to bring us into conformity with the holy God we serve.

(The minister shall allow sufficient time for each person to prepare for the service, and then shall pray:)

Invocation

Almighty God, to whom all hearts are opened, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts, through the presence of the Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your holy name, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymns

(Then the congregation shall sing a hymn, such as one of the following: "Alas! and Did My Savior Bleed," "Man of Sorrows, What a Name," "When I Survey the Wondrous Cross," "Arise, My Soul, Arise," "My Faith Looks Up to You," "Rock of Ages," "There Is a Fountain Filled with Blood.")

Scripture Readings

(Then the minister shall read a Scripture lesson, such as one of the following: Isa. 53; Matt. 26:26-29; Luke 22:14-20; Rom. 5:1-2, 6-12, 18-21; I Cor. 10:16-17; 11:23-29; Eph. 1:3-12; 2:1-10, 12-22; Heb. 9:11-17, 22-28; I Peter 1:18-23; 2:21-25.)

Prayer

(Then the minister shall pray:)

Almighty God, father of our Lord Jesus Christ, maker of all things, judge of all persons, we acknowledge that in Your sight all our righteous acts are like filthy rags. Outside of Christ we are sinners, and it is only through His atonement that we are forgiven and cleansed. Whatever there is of purity and virtue in our hearts or in our lives is the product of Your grace. We come today to remember once again how Christ procured our salvation. And as we do, we ask that the Holy Spirit shall search our hearts. If we have committed any act which is displeasing to You, or neglected any duty which would have honored You, reveal it and forgive, we pray. Or if there is any tendency to disobedience, to the love of the world, or to the exaltation of self, reveal it and purge it from our hearts, we pray. You have told us that if any one sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. Our hope, our trust, our righteousness are in Him alone. Have mercy upon us for His sake, and grant that we may serve and please You in newness of life and purity of heart, world without end, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Sermon, Hymn, Instructions

(Then the minister may preach a sermon on some phase of the Lord's Supper. Afterwards the congregation may sing another hymn such as one of those listed above. Then the minister shall direct the people as to the plan for distribution of the elements of the Supper, either directing them to come and kneel at the altar or to be served while seated, in either instance using this invitation:)

Invitation

You who are walking in fellowship with God, and are in love and charity with your neighbors; and you who do truly and earnestly repent of your sin and intend to lead a new life, following the commandments of God, and walking from this time forward in His holy ways, draw near with faith, and take this holy sacrament to your comfort; and meekly (kneeling) make your humble confession to Almighty God.

(When all are in place, the minister shall remove the cloth, folding it neatly, and laying it to one side. Then the minister shall pray the prayer of consecration:)

Consecration of Bread and Wine

Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who in mercy did give Your only Son, Jesus Christ, to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption: accept our praise, we beseech You. We thank You for Your love, for the gift of Your Son, for the sacrifice He made in our behalf, for the forgiveness of our sins and the cleansing of our hearts, for the present witness of Your Holy Spirit to our hearts that we are Your children. Grant that, as we receive this bread and wine, in memory of Christ's death and suffering, in communion with You and with Your children, we may be made partakers of His body and blood; who, in the same night that He was betrayed, took bread;

(Here the minister may take the plate of bread in hand.)

and when He had given thanks, He broke it and gave it to His disciples, saying, Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you: do this in memory of me. In the same way after supper He took the cup;

(Here the minister may take in hand the vessel from which the wine is to be poured, or the tray of individual cups.)

and when He had given thanks, He gave it to them, saying, Drink from it, all of you; for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is poured out for you and for many, for the forgiveness of sins; do this whenever you drink it, in memory of me. Amen.

Distribution of Bread and Wine

(Then the minister shall direct the distribution of the elements, either first kneeling at the table and partaking, then serving others who may be assisting, and then serving the people; or directing first the distribution of the bread with all holding their portion until the time for partaking together, and then the distribution of the wine in the same manner.)

(In either instance, either before or during the distribution or before partaking of the bread together, the minister shall read the following:)

The body of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was given for you, preserve your soul and body unto everlasting life. Take and eat this remembering that Christ died for you, and feed on Him in your heart, by faith, with thanksgiving.

(And in like manner, either before or during the distribution or before partaking of the wine together, the minister shall read the following:)

The blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was shed for you, preserve your soul and body unto everlasting life. Drink this remembering that Christ's blood was shed for you, and be thankful.

(After all have partaken, let that which remains of the consecrated elements be returned to the table, and covered with the white linen cloth. Then let the minister and congregation join in saying:)

Lord's Prayer

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: for Yours is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.

Benediction

(Then the minister shall conclude the service with the benediction:)

May the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord; and the blessings of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

Chapter 5

MARRIAGE

A. Marriage Ceremony—Long Form

5650. *(At the day and time appointed for the solemnizing of matrimony, the persons to be married standing together, the man on the right hand of the woman, the minister shall say:)*

We are gathered together in the sight of God, and in the presence of these witnesses, to join together this man and this woman in holy marriage, which is an honorable union, instituted by God, and signifying to us the mystical union which exists between Christ and His church. This holy union Christ adorned and beautified with His presence in Cana of Galilee, and the Apostle Paul commended marriage as honorable. It is not therefore to be entered into without wisdom and caution, but should be entered reverently, discreetly, and in the fear of God.

(Speaking to the persons to be married, the minister shall say:)

I require and charge you both, as you stand in the presence of God, to remember that love and loyalty alone will stand as the foundation of a happy and enduring home. No other human ties are more tender, no other vows more sacred than those you now take. If these solemn vows are faithfully kept, and if you consistently try to do the will of your heavenly Father, your life will be full of joy, and the home you are establishing will dwell in peace.

(Then shall the minister address the man by name, and ask:)

Will you have this woman to be your wife in marriage, to live together after God's laws in the holy union of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor, and keep her, in sickness and in health; and will you forsake all others and keep yourself only to her, as long as you both shall live?

(The man shall answer:)

I will.

(Then shall the minister address the woman by name, and ask:)

Will you have this man to be your husband in marriage, to live together after God's laws in the holy union of marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor, and keep him, in sickness and in health; and will you forsake all others and keep yourself only to him, as long as you both shall live?

(The woman shall answer:)

I will.

(Then shall the minister ask:)

*Who gives this woman to be married to this man?

(The father of the woman, or whoever gives her in marriage, shall answer:)

I do (or Her mother and I).

*[*Alternate form: Who authorizes this marriage? A family member (Uncle or Father) from each family may each answer. "I do."]*

(Then the minister shall ask the man and woman to join right hands and shall ask the man, using his given name, to repeat the following words:)

I, _____, take you, _____, to be my wife, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy law; and to this I pledge you my faith.

(Then shall the minister ask the woman, using her given name to repeat the following words:)

I, _____, take you, _____, to be my husband, to have and to hold, from this day forward, for better, for worse, for richer, for poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death do us part, according to God's holy law; and to this I pledge you my faith.

(Then shall the minister say:)

By seeking the ministry of the church, you have expressed your conviction that marriage is more than a legal contract, but rather a bond of union sealed in heaven. From this time forward, you shall no longer be two but one. Your paths will be united; your responsibilities will increase, but your strength and your joys will be multiplied if you are sincere and earnest in your relations one to the other, and with God who has witnessed and sealed this covenant. Let us pray.

(Here may be offered the following prayer, or an extemporaneous prayer closing with the Lord's Prayer.)

O eternal God, creator and preserver of all humankind, giver of all spiritual grace, the author of life everlasting, let Your blessing descend and rest upon these Your children, whom we bless in Your name. Bless this marriage and make it to them the source of abundant and enduring good. Look graciously upon them that they may love, honor, and cherish each other. May their mutual affection never know change, doubt, nor decay. Direct and strengthen them in the discharge of all their duties. Bless the home which they establish. Teach them to order their household wisely and well, and to regard all their possessions as Your gifts to be employed in Your service. May they so live together in faithfulness and patience, in wisdom and true godliness, that their home may be a haven of blessing and a place of peace, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

(Then shall the minister ask the man and woman to join right hands and placing a hand on top of theirs shall say:)

We are witnesses that _____ and _____ have made vows together in holy marriage before God, and this congregation, and have pledged their faith to each other, and have declared the same by joining hands; I pronounce that they are husband and wife together, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together let no man divide. Amen.

(Then the minister shall give this blessing:)

God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, bless, preserve, and keep you; the Lord mercifully with His favor look upon you, and so fill you with all spiritual blessing and grace, that you may so live together in this life, that in the world to come you may have life everlasting. Amen.

B. Marriage Ceremony—Shorter Form

5680. *(At the day and time appointed for the marriage, the persons to be married shall stand together, the man on the right hand of the woman, and the minister shall say:)*

My friends, the ordinance of marriage was instituted by God himself in the garden of Eden, and is one of the most solemn and binding of obligations, because it involves the sacred relations of the home and the family. Your happiness for the future will largely depend upon the faithfulness with which the marriage vows are cherished and kept. There must be mutual affection the one for the other, and the marriage covenant must be kept in purity of spirit, as well as in actual word and deed, if you would reap the full satisfaction of happiness in your marriage.

If, with full and free acceptance, and thoughtful determination to keep the marriage covenant, you desire to enter the holy union of marriage, you will acknowledge this by taking the other by the right hand.

(With their hands joined, the minister shall address the man by name, and ask:)

Will you have this woman to be your wife in marriage, to live together after God's laws in the holy union of marriage? Will you love her, comfort her, honor, and keep her, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep yourself only to her, as long as you both shall live?

(The man shall answer:)

I will.

(Then the minister shall address the woman by name, and ask:)

Will you have this man to be your husband in marriage, to live together after God's laws in the holy union of marriage? Will you love him, comfort him, honor, and keep him, in sickness and in health; and forsaking all others, keep yourself only to him, as long as you both shall live?

(The woman shall answer:)

I will.

(Then the minister shall place a hand upon their joined hands and say:)

Since they have taken the marriage covenant before God, and in the presence of these witnesses, by the authority committed unto me as a minister of the church of Jesus Christ, I declare that _____ and _____ are now husband and wife, according to the laws of God and the law of the state, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Those whom God has joined together let no man divide. Amen.

(Then the minister shall offer an appropriate prayer.)

Chapter 6

BURIAL OF THE DEAD

5700. At the House, Church, or Funeral Chapel.

Opening Sentences

(The minister shall open the service with an opening sentence, such as one of the following:)

Job 19:25-27a; Ps. 46:1-3; John 5:25; 11:25-26a; 2 Cor. 1:3-4; 4:17-18; 2 Tim. 4:6-8.

Hymn

(Then a hymn shall be sung, or played. Then the minister shall read a scripture lesson, such as one of the following:)

Scripture Readings

Ps. 39:4-7; 90:1-2, 4, 9b-10, 12; 1 Cor. 15:20-26, 51-52, 54-58; Rev. 7:9-17.

Prayer

(Then the minister shall pray an extemporaneous prayer or use the following prayer:)

O God of life, as we have learned to do in all our experiences, we come to You in the hour of death. We know that You do love us, and that You can turn even the shadow of death into the light of morning. Help us now to wait before You with reverent and submissive hearts. Make this a time of opening our eyes and our understanding, and a time of admonition to our hearts and souls. Bless those who feel this sorrow most keenly, and cause the bonds of Christian love to bind us closer together, so that we may share with them that spiritual strength and that faith in God which is ours through the love of Christ, in whose name we pray. Amen.

Message and Prayer

(Then the minister shall preach a funeral message. The minister may close with an extemporaneous prayer, and the following benediction:)

Benediction

May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the communion of the Holy Spirit abide with us now and evermore. Amen.

5725. At the Graveside

Scripture Readings

(The minister shall read a brief scripture lesson, such as one of the following:)

Ps. 121; John 14:1-6

Committals

(Then the minister shall read one of the following committals:)

"Because it has pleased Almighty God, in His wise providence, to take out of the world the soul of the departed, we therefore commit the body to the ground; earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust; looking for the resurrection and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose second coming the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in Him shall be changed, and shall be made like unto His glorious body according to the mighty working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto himself."

"And now, as we stand beside this open grave, in this place of the dead, we commit this body to the ground; and we commit the spirit, O our Father, together with every interest of our hearts, into Your keeping; praying You that You will deal graciously and mercifully with each of us, until we too shall come to You in glory, through the riches of grace in Jesus our Lord."

Prayer and Benediction

Chapter 7

ORDINATION OF MINISTERS

A. Regulations

5750. That portion of the ritual of ordination entitled, "Examination of Candidates" must be followed exactly.

5752. The ordination service shall be planned by the Council of Ordination (1455; 3070:6) and shall be presided over by the National/Regional Superintendent or an appointee, or in the absence of the National/Regional Superintendent and the appointee, by the District Superintendent (1310:17). They shall be assisted by the Council of Ordination (1455; 3070:6).

B. The Order of the Ordination of Ministers

Call to Worship

5755. *(The presiding minister shall start the service with a Call to Worship, such as Isa. 52:7; I Cor. 1:21-24; 2 Cor. 4:5-6).*

Hymn

(Then the congregation shall join in singing a hymn, such as: "Lord, Speak to Me, That I May Speak," "A Charge to Keep I Have," "Lead on, O King Eternal," "Soldiers of Christ, Arise," "Conquering Now and Still to Conquer.")

Invocation

(Then the minister appointed shall give the invocation:)

Almighty God, giver of all good things, who by the Holy Spirit has appointed ordained ministers in the church, grant us Your assistance in this service of the ordination of ministers, and mercifully look upon *these* Your *servants*, now called to this office, and strengthen *them* with the truth of Your doctrine, and clothe *them* with innocence, that both by word and good example *they* may faithfully serve You in this office to the glory of Your name and the building up of Your church, through our Savior, Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Sermon

(Then the presiding minister shall preach the ordination sermon)

Presentation of Candidates

5758. *(Then the District Superintendent or an appointee shall ask those being ordained to stand, and present them to the presiding minister, saying:)*

I present *(read names aloud)* to be ordained as *ministers* in The Wesleyan Church and in the church universal.

Acceptance of Candidates

(Then the, presiding minister shall say unto the people:)

Friends, *these* are the *ones* whom we intend, God willing, to ordain as *ministers*. After examination, we find that *they* are called to this function and ministry.

(Then those being ordained shall be seated and the appointed ministers shall read the Epistle and the Gospel:)

The Epistle

5762. (Eph. 3:7-9; 4:11-13).

The Gospel

5765. (John 10:7, 9-16).

The Charge

5769. *(Then the presiding minister shall address the candidates, giving the charge:)*

Dear *Servant(s)* of God:

You have been instructed in your private examination by the district board of ministerial development as well as out of the gospel and the epistles concerning the dignity and importance of the office to which you are called. You are *undershepherd(s)* of the Good Shepherd, the Lord Jesus, called to teach, admonish, feed, and provide for the Lord's family, to bring the lost into the fold, to bring each person unto the fullness of the stature of Christ.

Remember always the greatness of this responsibility and give yourselves without reservation unto the ministry to which God has called you. We charge you to pray daily for divine guidance and strengthening so that by your study of the Scriptures and your own personal growth and development you may both model the ideal of Christ and lead your people to live in keeping with His example and instructions.

Examination of Candidates

5772. *(Then the presiding minister shall examine the candidates:)*

This assembled congregation represents the church of Jesus Christ everywhere as they witness your responses to the questions we shall ask you. In this way we shall understand your mind and will in these things, and you may also be moved to greater faithfulness in doing your duties.

Question: Is it your sincere conviction that you have been called of God to the office and work of a minister, and are you persuaded that you ought to fulfill that call by serving as an ordained minister in The Wesleyan Church and among God's people everywhere?

Answer: That is my sincere conviction.

Question: Do you believe the Holy Scriptures are the fully inspired and inerrant written word of God containing sufficiently all doctrine necessary for eternal salvation through faith in Christ Jesus? Are you determined to instruct people from the Bible in order that they may be born again in Christ, become committed to holy living, and be prepared to serve for the upbuilding of the Christian community in this present age?

Answer: All of this I believe and accept as my duty.

Question: Do you cordially accept our Articles of Religion and Membership Commitments, and agree to declare and defend them? And do you recognize your responsibility and cheerfully accept your obligation to promote and support The Wesleyan Church and all institutions and ministries approved by The Wesleyan Church?

Answer: Yes, I do.

Question: Will you with all your strength minister the doctrines, sacraments, and disciplines of Christ, always ready to challenge strange doctrine which is contrary to God's Word wherever it may arise?

Answer: I will as God enables me.

Question: Do you intend to make reading of the Word and effectual prayer your earnest pursuit, and will you seek to make your lifestyle and family government as examples so far as is possible for you?

Answer: Yes, the Lord being my helper.

Question: Believing that accountability and submission to authority is God's design for His church, will you cheerfully accept the direction of those whom the Church may place over you in the doing of your work?

Answer: Under God, I will cheerfully do so.

Covenant with Candidates' Spouses

5775. (Then, if it is so desired, the National/Regional Superintendent, or if absent the District Superintendent, may call the spouses of the candidates to come and stand beside them, and shall address them saying:)

It is the teaching of Scripture that a spouse shall be a loving companion in the ministry of a mate. You have witnessed the examination of your marriage partner in which commitment to the work and responsibilities of ministry has been stated. Your participation in God's purposes for ministry through your marriage partner is important also. You will be needed to share in prayer, to extend love and compassion to all, to carry forward the example of marriage harmony and family wholeness. As the companion of your loved one who is now entering the ranks of ordained ministers in the Church, will you dedicate yourself to complement and embrace that ministry as God enables you?

Answer: I will, by God's grace.

Act of Ordination

5782. (Then the candidates for ordination shall kneel, and, if so desired, their wives or husbands may kneel at their sides, and the National/Regional Superintendent, or if absent the District Superintendent, and the Council of Ordination shall lay their hands upon the head of each one, and the National/Regional Superintendent, or if absent the District Superintendent, shall say:)

(name), as we lay our hands upon you we ask the Lord to give the unusual outpouring of the Holy Spirit needed for your service as an ordained minister in the Church. May God's anointing enable you to be a faithful exponent of His Word, and an instrument for His holy sacraments, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen!

(name), take authority to preach the Word of God, to administer the holy sacraments, and to perform the duties of an ordained minister in the Church.

Prayer for Empowerment

5785. *(Then the National/Regional Superintendent, or if absent the District Superintendent, or other appointed minister shall pray the Prayer of Empowerment:)*

Our Father, we ask You to send upon *these* Your *servants* Your heavenly blessings: that *they* may be clothed with righteousness, that Your Word spoken in *their mouths* may have success and that it may never be spoken in vain. Grant also that we may have grace to hear and to receive what *they* shall deliver out of Your most holy Word, as the means of our salvation; and that in all our words and deeds we may seek Your glory, and the increase of Your kingdom, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Assist us, O Lord, in all our work and life, with Your most gracious favor, and further us with Your continual help, that in all our works begun, continued, and ended in You, we may glorify Your holy name, and finally by Your mercy obtain everlasting life through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Handshake of Fellowship

5788. *(The newly ordained ministers shall then arise, and the National/Regional Superintendent, or if absent the District Superintendent, and the members of the Council of Ordination shall extend to each the hand of fellowship, welcoming the newly ordained ministers to the work and labors of the ministry. Then the presiding minister may direct the congregation to file by and greet the new ministers, or the service may be closed with the following benediction:)*

Benediction

5792. May the God of peace, who through the everlasting covenant brought back from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great Shepherd of the sheep, equip you with everything good for doing his will, and may he work in us what is pleasing to him, through Jesus Christ, to who be glory for ever and ever. Amen! (Heb. 13:20-21, NIV).

Chapter 8

INSTALLATION CEREMONIES

A. General Regulations

5900. The installation ceremonies provided here shall normally be used as a part of some general service of worship, and in most instances the other parts of the service, such as hymns, scripture readings, and prayers, will need to be supplied, being chosen in such a manner as to give the entire service unity and dignity.

B. Installation of a Pastor

5905. Order of Installation of a Pastor.

(The District Superintendent or appointed representative shall preside over the installation of a pastor. The presiding minister or other appointed minister shall give the invocation:)

O Lord, You have made known Your will that we should pray for You to send forth laborers into Your harvest. We earnestly ask You to send forth into the world true teachers and ministers of Your Word, and to enlighten their minds with the knowledge of Your truth, that they may faithfully make known the whole counsel of God unto salvation, to the glory of Your name and the saving of souls; through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. Amen.

(The presiding minister or other appointed minister may read a scripture lesson such as John 15:1-8 and may deliver an appropriate message. At the proper time, the presiding minister shall address the congregation, saying:)

My friends, we are assembled in the sight of God to install the Reverend _____, who has accepted your call to become the pastor of this church, and whose installation has been authorized by the _____ District of The Wesleyan Church.

(The pastor shall come and stand before the presiding minister, who shall address the pastor, saying:)

Dear fellow minister, the duties of your holy office are clearly set forth in the Word of God. As an ambassador of our Lord Jesus Christ, you are first of all to preach both Law and Gospel, as they are comprehended in the Holy Scriptures and defined in *The Discipline* of The Wesleyan Church. This you are to do without the addition of private opinion, as the apostle admonishes, "If anyone speak, he should do so as one speaking the very words of God" (1 Peter 4:11, NIV).

Whatever is contrary to sound doctrine shall be refuted with all restraint as the Scripture warns, "The Lord's servant must not quarrel; instead he must be kind to everyone, able to teach, not resentful. Those who oppose him he must gently instruct" (2 Tim. 2:24-25a, NIV).

Those who are committed to your pastoral care are to be diligently admonished to walk in the commandments of the Lord blamelessly. The erring are to be warned with the fidelity which the Word of the Lord demands of faithful pastors, as the Prophet Ezekiel was instructed, "Son of man, I have made you a watchman for the house of Israel" (Ezek. 3:17, NIV).

You are also to be the steward of the holy sacraments which you are to administer to the comfort of troubled souls.

In view of the Savior's gracious words, "Let the little children come to me" (Mark 10:14, NIV), the children and youth of the church must in a special sense be the object of your pastoral instruction and care.

The measure of faithfulness with which you are to seek the erring is set forth in the Holy Scriptures in the words of the Apostle Paul who said, "I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears" (Acts 20:31, NIV).

The example of holy men and women of God will impel you to pray diligently for your people and to be a pattern unto them in faith and good works.

Do you therefore earnestly purpose to fulfill with all diligence these duties, and thus be able in this life to answer before The Wesleyan Church and the church universal, and in the life to come to give an account before the judgment seat of Christ?

Answer: Yes, I do so purpose, by the help of God.

"In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I give you this charge: Preach the Word, be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction . . . keep your head in all situations, endure hardship, do the work of an evangelist, discharge all the duties of your ministry" (2 Tim. 4:1-2, 5, NIV).

(The congregation shall rise, and the presiding minister shall address them, saying:)

And now, my friends, I admonish you to receive as your pastor, the Reverend _____, whom God has given you. Accept the Word of God as preached by His messenger to you, whether it be for your comfort, your admonition or your instruction, even as Christ has said, "Consider carefully how you listen" (Luke 8:18 NIV).

Use all diligence that your children receive instruction in the Christian faith and are present with you in the services at God's house, in accordance with the counsel of the Apostle Paul to Christian parents to bring children "up in the training and instruction of the Lord" (Eph. 6:4, NIV).

Pray for your pastor that the ministry offered in this place may tend to the salvation of many souls, and that through sacrificial labors, you, together with your pastor, may be saved.

Honor and esteem the one who is to minister to your souls. As the Apostle Paul exhorts, "Respect those who work hard among you, and are over you in the Lord and who admonish you. Hold them in the highest regard in love because of their work. Live at peace with each other" (I Thess. 5:12-13, NIV).

Do you now, as becomes a Christian church, accept these obligations?

Answer: Yes, by the help of God.

(Then the presiding minister shall address the pastor, saying:)

Upon these, your solemn mutual promises, I now install you, the Reverend _____, as pastor of the _____ Wesleyan Church, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

(Then the presiding minister shall lead in prayer, concluding by leading the congregation in the Lord's Prayer. Then the presiding minister shall address the congregation and the pastor, saying:)

The Lord bless you that you may bring forth much fruit and that your fruit may remain.

(Then the congregation shall join in singing a hymn such as, "A Charge to Keep I Have." Then the congregation may come forward to greet the pastor and family at the altar. The pastor shall pronounce the benediction.)

C. Installation of Local Church Officers

5915. Order of Installation of Local Church Officers.

(This installation may be held during a Sunday morning service or other appropriate service just prior to the time when the newly elected officers shall assume their duties. The congregation may join in singing a hymn, such as: "A Charge to Keep I Have," or "I'll Live for Him Who Died for Me." The pastor may read a scripture lesson such as Acts 2:41-44 and 6:1-8. Depending upon the number of officers involved, the pastor may wish to read something concerning their duties from The Discipline. At the proper time, the pastor shall call the newly elected officers before the congregation, and shall address them, saying:)

My friends, it is written in the Acts of the Apostles that when the early church was growing and the number of disciples was multiplying, and the duties of the church increased, and became diversified, that the church called its members together and chose those of good report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, to assist in administering the affairs of the church; and that the officers chosen by the church were set before the apostles, who laid hands on them and prayed, setting them apart in the presence of the church to the duties of their honorable office.

In like manner this church, having first sought the guidance of the divine Spirit, has chosen you to similar offices to be associated with those already in office and with the pastor before whom you have now come for public consecration.

Therefore, we, the pastor and the people of this church, call upon you to hear and join in this pledge of loyalty to Christ and His church.

The Officers' Pledge

5920. Trusting in Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, I humbly promise Him and His church that I will be faithful to the extent of my ability to all known duties and responsibilities required of me as an officer of this church. I will endeavor to be regular in my attendance, cheerful in my service, wholehearted in my giving, open-minded in my planning, patient in the face of trials, persistent in the face of difficulty, and Christlike in my faithfulness to His service. I will seek by example and precept the promotion of Christian fellowship among all our members and the spreading of the message of full salvation at home and abroad. I will be an example of Christian living for others. Do you cheerfully and sincerely accept the obligations of this pledge?

Answer: I do.

(Then the pastor shall address the congregation, asking them to stand, and saying:)

We, the pastor and officers of this church, call upon the members and friends of this church to hear and join in this pledge of loyalty to those called of God and elected by the church as its leaders.

The Church's Pledge

5925. Having chosen these officers to guide us in the administration of the church, we, its members and friends, do now pledge our loyalty to its work and promise our consideration of the plans and our friendly cooperation in the service suggested to us. We acknowledge our duty and declare our determination to pray for all our leaders and to share with them in the responsibility of spreading the good news, thus hastening the coming of Christ. Do you cheerfully and yet sincerely accept the obligations of this pledge?

Answer: We do.

(The officers shall then kneel at the altar while the pastor and people offer prayer in their behalf.)

D. Installation of District Superintendent

5930. Order of Installation of a District Superintendent.

(The National/Regional Superintendent or appointed representative shall be in charge of installing the District Superintendent before the adjournment of the District Conference at which election to the office has occurred. The newly elected District Superintendent, Assistant District Superintendent, secretary, and treasurer, and such other district officers as are desired, shall be called before the National/Regional Superintendent, who shall first address the District Superintendent, saying:)

District Superintendent _____, today you stand before us along with the other duly elected officers of the district. You have been prayerfully selected by this District Conference to serve as leader of the _____ District of The Wesleyan Church. It is in you that the ministers and members of the various churches within this district are putting their confidence and trust. Yours is indeed a position of honor and responsibility, and it is only as God is with you that you will be enabled to fill it.

In counseling, may He grant needed grace; in decisions, may He give of His wisdom; in labors, may your secret be His all-sufficient strength; in administration may He be your "very present help." The support and cooperation of this body are assured you in the days that are ahead. Together may you build a district that knows its best days spiritually, numerically, and materially as well.

And now, that we may hear publicly your intentions to accept this charge with proper regard for all that is involved, we ask you in the presence of God and of these witnesses, do you accept the office of superintendent of the _____ District, and do you hereby sincerely covenant to do your duties to God, to The Wesleyan Church, and to all the members of the _____ District, according to *The Discipline* and in the fear of God?

Answer: I do, God being my helper.

(The presiding minister shall address the other district officers, saying:)

Do you as officers representing the _____ District, promise to support the District Superintendent, and to do your duties to God, to The Wesleyan Church, and to all the members of this district, according to *The Discipline* and in the fear of God?

Answer: We do, God being our helper.

(Then the presiding minister shall address the District Superintendent, saying:)

District Superintendent _____, as a representative of The Wesleyan Church, I charge you with this responsibility and declare you to be formally installed as

superintendent of the _____ District, entitled to the rights and privileges of that office.

(Then the presiding minister shall lead in prayer.)

Chapter 9

DEDICATION SERVICES

A. Dedication of a Church Building

5950. Order of Dedication of a Church Building.

Call to Worship

(The pastor or other appointed minister shall give the call to worship:)

"Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Know that the Lord is God. It is he who made us, and we are his people, the sheep of his pasture. Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise; give thanks to him and praise his name" (Ps. 100:2-4, NIV).

Invocation

(Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall give the invocation:)

O God, eternal and ever blessed, who delights in the assembling of Your people in the sanctuary; receive us graciously as we come into Your house, and grant that peace and prosperity may be found within its walls, that the glory of God may be the light thereof, and that we may be satisfied with the goodness of Your house; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymns

(Then the congregation shall join in singing a hymn, such as one of the following: "All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name," "O Worship the King," "The Church's One Foundation," "I Love Your Kingdom, Lord.")

Scripture Readings

(Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall read a scripture lesson, such as one of the following: 2 Chron. 6:1-2, 18-21, 40-42; 7:1-4; Ps. 24; Ps. 84; Heb. 10:19-25.)

Sermon

(The District Superintendent or a representative of the national/regional Church or district or other Wesleyan minister may be asked to deliver a message on the nature and task of the church.)

Offering

(It is much to be desired that all money required for the erection and completion of a house in which to worship God shall be fully provided before the day of dedication; but where this is not done, appeals may be made either just before or following the sermon. No building shall be dedicated to God until approved as financially secure and properly deeded as specified in The Discipline.)

Presentation of Building for Dedication

(Then the District Superintendent or representative shall stand at the pulpit facing the board of the church. The pastor of the church shall address the District Superintendent, saying:)

On behalf of the local church board, the members, and this congregation, I present you this building to be dedicated to God as a place of worship and of service in His kingdom.

Acceptance of Building for Dedication

(Then the District Superintendent shall respond, saying:)

My friends, for countless centuries men have erected buildings for the public worship of God, and have separated them from all common uses in order to increase their reverence for God and for those places in which they commune with Him. We rejoice that God has put it into the hearts of His people to build this house in this place to the glory of His name. I now accept this building, to be known as the _____ Wesleyan Church, to dedicate it, and to set it apart for the worship of Almighty God and the service of all people. Let us therefore, as we are assembled, solemnly dedicate this place to its proper and sacred uses.

Litany of Dedication

(Then the District Superintendent shall ask the congregation to stand and to join in the responsive litany of dedication:)

Leader: To the glory of God the Father, who has called us by His grace; to the honor of His Son, who loved us and gave himself for us; to the praise of the Holy Spirit, who illumines and sanctifies us;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Leader: For the worship of God in prayer and praise; for the preaching of the everlasting gospel; for the celebration of the holy sacraments;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Leader: For the comfort of all who mourn; for strength to those who are tempted; for light to those who seek the way;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Leader: For the sanctity of family life; for teaching and guiding the young; for the perfecting of the saints;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Leader: For the conversion of sinners; for the sanctification of believers; for the promotion of righteousness; for the extension of the kingdom of God;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Leader: In the unity of the faith; in the bond of Christian brotherhood; in love and goodwill to all;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

Leader: In gratitude for the labors of all who love and serve this church; in loving remembrance of those who have finished their course; in the hope of a blessed immortality through Jesus Christ our Lord;

Congregation: We dedicate this house.

All in Unison: We now, the people of this church and congregation, surrounded with a great cloud of witnesses, grateful for our heritage, remembering the sacrifice of our fathers in the faith, confessing that apart from us their work cannot be made perfect, do dedicate ourselves anew to the worship and service of Almighty God; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Prayer of Dedication

(Then the District Superintendent shall give an extemporaneous prayer of dedication, or use the following:)

Almighty God, we are not worthy to offer to You anything belonging to us. We humbly acknowledge that "except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it." Yet we ask that in Your great goodness, You would accept the dedication of this place to Your service. Prosper this our project. Receive the prayers and intercessions of all Your servants who shall call upon You in this house. Give them grace to prepare their hearts to serve You with reverence and godly fear. Help them to have a comprehension of Your divine majesty, and a deep sense of their own unworthiness. May they always approach Your sanctuary with lowliness and devotion. May they always come before You with clean thoughts and pure hearts, with bodies undefiled, and minds sanctified. May they always perform a service acceptable to You, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Hymn

(Then the congregation shall join in singing a hymn, such as: "Lead On, O King Eternal.")

Benediction

(Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall pronounce the benediction:)

May You, O Lord our God, make this house Your abiding place from this day forth, and let Your ministers be clothed with salvation, let Your saints rejoice in goodness all their days, as the blessings of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit rest and abide upon them. Amen.

B. Dedication of Parsonage

5975. Order of Dedication of a Parsonage.

(At the time appointed for the dedication service, an appropriate hymn may be sung by the congregation or by a soloist or choir. Suitable numbers include: "Happy the Home When God Is There," and "Bless This House." Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall give an extemporaneous prayer. Then the pastor or other appointed minister shall give a scripture reading, such as I Cor. 9:7-10, 13-14. Then the District Superintendent or representative shall address the congregation, saying:)

The Scriptures clearly teach that as Aaron was divinely appointed to the priesthood, even so today persons are called to the ministry for the purpose of preaching the Word and otherwise giving aid and comfort to the spiritually needy. In the same divine program it is also "commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel" (I Cor. 9:14, NIV). Providing a house for the pastor is a recognition of the

minister's high office and great value to the church. It is a wise provision contributing to proper temporal support. This house about to be dedicated as a pastor's home has been made possible by the generous gifts of those who are interested in the ministry and the church such ministry represents.

(Then the board of the church shall come and stand before the District Superintendent, and the pastor shall address the District Superintendent, saying:)

On behalf of the church board, the members, and this congregation, I present this house to be dedicated to God as the home for the person whom He has appointed to pastor this people.

(Then the District Superintendent may give an appropriate discourse, gratefully commending the people for providing this house and charging the pastor to live here in the fear of God and as a faithful servant of the people. Then the District Superintendent shall offer a prayer of dedication, such as the following:)

O most gracious Lord, we acknowledge that we are not worthy to offer to You anything belonging to us. Yet we ask that You will accept the dedication of this home to Your service, and that You will prosper this project.

Grant that whoever shall dwell in this house shall be so yielded and dedicated to Your service as "vessels sanctified and meet for the Master's use, prepared unto every good work," that their ministry shall be a heavenly benediction to all they meet.

Grant, O Lord, that whoever shall enter this the home of Your ministering servants shall be made to sense Your presence, and as they depart shall be strengthened to walk in Your holy commandments, and that all who minister to the material comforts of Your servants in this home shall be richly rewarded by You.

Grant, O Lord, that all who come to this home for spiritual counsel and comfort, shall by Your blessings be made both to understand and know what things they ought to do, and may have power and strength to fulfill your will.

Grant, O Lord, that whoever shall be joined together in the holy union of marriage in this home may faithfully perform and keep the promise made between them, and may they remain in perfect love together all their lives.

Grant, O Lord, we ask You, that at the family altar of this home, when prayer with thanksgiving and supplication shall be offered, that they may receive from Your hand the things that are necessary. Also, that as Your servants study and search Your Word, that divine light for life and duty may be given as in Your infinite wisdom You see should be given.

All of this we ask in the name of Jesus Christ, our most blessed Lord and Savior. Amen.

(Then the District Superintendent shall address the congregation, saying:)

I now declare this house set apart as the residence of the pastor of the _____ Wesleyan Church.

(Then the District Superintendent or other appointed minister shall pronounce the benediction:)

The Lord bless you, and keep you: the Lord make His face to shine upon you, and be gracious unto you: the Lord lift up His countenance upon you, and gave you peace. Amen.