

**The Christian and Missionary Alliance  
Vietnamese District**



**DRAFT REVISED BYLAWS  
(2026)**

Vietnamese District Office

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## **PREAMBLE**

The Vietnamese District of the United States affirms that Jesus Christ is the Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18) and the supreme authority over every aspect of the life, ministry, and governance of the Church. As His body, the Church is called to obey His Word, be empowered by the Holy Spirit, and glorify God through worship, discipleship, and the mission of proclaiming the Gospel (Ephesians 1:22-23; Matthew 28:18-20).

The Vietnamese District of the United States, a religious organization, is a part of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA), the organization that brought the Gospel to Vietnam and established the Evangelical Church of Vietnam. It shares the Statement of Faith with the C&MA and affirms that the Bible is the inspired Word of God, completely inerrant, and holds absolute authority (2 Timothy 3:16-17). All decisions, leadership roles, and governance of the Vietnamese District of the United States must adhere to Scripture, guiding the life of the Church to reflect the nature and will of Christ.

The Bylaws of the Vietnamese District of the United States regulate activities suitable to the cultural and spiritual needs of Vietnamese believers. These regulations support the work of God while remaining consistent with the Constitution of the C&MA and the Bible.

Relying on the wise guidance of God, the Vietnamese District of the United States commits to managing the responsibilities entrusted to it according to biblical principles, ensuring that Christ is placed in the supreme position in all things and that His Kingdom is expanded to the glory of His Name.

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## **DIVISION I: STATEMENT OF FAITH**

*(Verbatim from C&MA Manual Section H1)*

1. There is one God (Deut. 6:4), Creator of all things (Rev. 4:11), who is infinitely perfect (Matt. 5:48), existing eternally in three persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19).
2. Jesus Christ is the true God and true man (Phil. 2:6–11). He was sent by the Father (John 20:21), conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of the virgin, Mary (Luke 1:34–38). He died on the cross, the Just for the unjust (1 Pet. 3:18), as a substitutionary sacrifice (Heb. 2:9), and all who believe in Him are justified on the ground of His shed blood (Rom. 5:9). He rose from the dead according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. 15:3–4). He is now at the right hand of the Majesty on high as our great High Priest (Heb. 8:1). He will come again to establish His Kingdom of righteousness and peace (Isa. 9:6–7).
3. The Holy Spirit is a divine person (John 14:16–18), sent to indwell, guide, teach, gift, empower, and bear His fruit in every believer (John 16:13; 1 Cor. 12:4, 11; Acts 1:8; Gal. 5:22–23). He convicts the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment (John 16:7–11).
4. The Old and New Testaments, inerrant as originally given, were verbally inspired by God and are a complete revelation of His will for our salvation. They constitute the divine and only rule of Christian faith and practice (2 Pet. 1:20–21; 2 Tim. 3:15–17).
5. Man and woman, created in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27), fell through disobedience, incurring both physical and spiritual death (Rom. 6:23). Therefore, everyone is born with a sinful nature (Rom. 5:12), is separated from the life of God (Eph. 4:18), and can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:25).

6. 1.6 Salvation has been provided through Jesus Christ for all people (1 John 2:2). Those who repent and believe in Him are justified by grace through faith (Rom. 3:21–24), born again of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:4–7), delivered from the dominion of darkness, transferred into the Kingdom of God’s Son (Col. 1:13), granted the gift of eternal life, and adopted as the children of God (Rom. 8:14–16; John 1:12).
  7. It is the will of God that each believer should be filled with the Holy Spirit and be sanctified wholly, being separated from sin and the world and fully dedicated to the will of God, thereby receiving power for holy living and effective service. This is both a crisis and a progressive experience wrought in the life of the believer subsequent to conversion. (1 Thessalonians 5:23, Acts 1:8, Romans 6:1–14).
  8. Provision is made in the redemptive work of the Lord Jesus Christ for the healing of the whole person (Isa. 53:4–5; Matt. 8:16–17). Prayer for the sick and anointing with oil are taught in the Scriptures (James 5:13–16) as privileges for the Church in this present age (Acts 4:30).
  9. The Church consists of all those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, are redeemed through His blood, and are born again by the Holy Spirit. Christ is the Head of His Body (Eph. 1:22–23; Col. 1:18), the Church, which has been commissioned by Him to go into all the world making disciples of all peoples (Matt. 24:14, 28:19–20). The local church is a body of believers in Christ (Eph. 5:30) who are called to love (1 Thess. 3:12) and joined together for the worship of God, edification through the Word of God, prayer, fellowship, proclamation of the gospel through word and deed (Luke 4:18–19), and observance of the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper (Acts 2:41–47).
  10. There will be a bodily resurrection of all people (Acts 24:15). Our Lord Jesus Christ will judge with perfect justice (Acts 17:31; John 5:28–30) as the unrepentant and unbelieving are raised to the conscious anguish of eternal separation from God (Rev. 20:15, 21:8; 2 Thess. 1:9), and repentant believers are raised (John 6:40) to the unending joy of eternal life with God (Ps. 16:11; Rev. 21:1–4).
  11. The Second Coming of the Lord Jesus Christ is imminent and will be personal, visible, and premillennial. This is the believer’s blessed hope and is a vital truth which is an incentive to holy living and faithful service. (Hebrews 10:37, Luke 21:27, Titus 2:11–14).
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## DIVISION II: CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF THE VIETNAMESE DISTRICT SUBDIVISION II.A: UNIFORM CONSTITUTION FOR DISTRICTS

*(Verbatim from C&MA Manual Section A4)*

**PREAMBLE** The district organization in The Christian and Missionary Alliance is designed to help churches fulfill Jesus’ command to make disciples of all peoples and to provide for the regional relationships which are indicated in the New Testament. While the local assembly is the primary visible form of the church, the relationships beyond the congregation are essential if the local church is to fulfill its function in fellowship, evangelism, church health and multiplication, and world missions.

Therefore, The Christian and Missionary Alliance churches of this district are united in governance, fellowship, and service in order to promote unity of faith in the fullness of Jesus Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King, and to facilitate the spread of the gospel at home and abroad under the guidance and enabling of the Holy Spirit.

## ARTICLE I: NAME

This district shall be known as the **Vietnamese District** of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. Its geographical or cultural boundaries are defined by the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance and may be changed from time to time by such Board of Directors.

## ARTICLE II: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT

The organization of this district shall be in harmony with this constitution and the Amended and Restated Constitution and Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (the "Bylaws") and shall include all accredited, developing, and affiliated churches, official workers, and ministries of The Christian and Missionary Alliance within the district, except those under the immediate supervision of the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

### *Section 1. District Conference.*

The District Conference shall constitute the legislative body of this district. Its legislation shall be limited to district affairs and in no case shall such legislation be in conflict with the actions of the General Council of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. The District Conference may recommend amendments to existing national policies and procedures for districts or new policies and procedures to the District Leadership Forum through the district superintendent; it may recommend changes or additions to the C&MA Manual through the district superintendent; and it may recommend new general policies for The Christian and Missionary Alliance through the district superintendent. This district shall adopt bylaws setting forth, among other things, the rules and procedures governing its District Conference. This district shall hold a District Conference each year and there shall be two types of delegates to the District Conference: "accredited delegates" and "corresponding delegates." Accredited delegates shall be entitled to vote. The conference shall be held at the time(s) stated in the district bylaws with the format and agenda to be determined by the District Executive Committee, or as stated in the district bylaws and in conformity with the requirements of state law. The agenda during business sessions shall include elections as necessary, an evaluation of the progress of the district ministry, financial reports, and other related matters as stated in the district bylaws or required by state law.

**A. Accredited Delegates.** Those eligible to be accredited delegates to the District Conference shall be limited to the following individuals: (1) All persons holding official worker licenses in this district and other officers of this district. (2) All evangelists residing in this district licensed by the Board of Directors. (3) Lay delegates as follows: (a) Each accredited church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance shall be entitled to send two lay delegates, in addition to its official workers. If the voting membership (as reported in the last annual report of the church) is 150 or more, another lay delegate may be sent for each additional 100 voting members or fraction thereof. The church shall appoint and certify lay delegates as specified in the local church bylaws. (b) Each developing church shall be entitled to send one lay delegate chosen from among the congregation's general members by the Church Advisory Board and appointed by the district superintendent, in addition to its official workers. The church shall appoint and certify lay delegates as specified in the local church bylaws. (c) Each affiliated church of The Christian and Missionary Alliance shall be entitled to appoint and certify one lay delegate as specified in the local church bylaws, in addition to its official workers. (4) Members or representatives of the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance who may be able to attend. (5) Lay members of the District Executive Committee. (6) The director of district Alliance Women. (7) Any military chaplain on active duty or other federal chaplain duly credentialed as an official worker of The

Christian and Missionary Alliance who is serving his/her assignment in this district at the time of the District Conference. (8) All retired or disabled international workers and U.S. official workers residing in this district whose names appear on the official worker list of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. (9) Laypersons who are either elected or appointed as specified in the district's bylaws to serve on the regional college Board of Trustees. (10) Other persons holding official worker licenses, lay minister licenses, or vocational certificates who have been accredited by the District Executive Committee.

**B. Corresponding Delegates.** The following persons shall be eligible to attend the District Conference as nonvoting, corresponding delegates: (1) Official representatives of each of the four areas of ministry of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. (2) International workers of The Christian and Missionary Alliance who may be able to attend. (3) Official representatives of educational work connected with The Christian and Missionary Alliance. (4) On recommendation of the District Conference Committee on Credentials, any member of The Christian and Missionary Alliance visiting the Conference may be admitted as a corresponding delegate by a two-thirds vote of the Conference. (5) One representative of a cooperating non-Alliance church.

**C. Quorum.** One-third of the number of accredited delegates shall constitute a quorum.

### *Section 2. District Executive Committee.A. General.*

The District Executive Committee shall be the Board of Directors of the corporation. This committee shall consist of the officers of the district and such other members as shall be elected by the District Conference. As much as possible, they shall represent the various sections of this district. This Committee shall consist of not less than nine members. The administrative work of this district shall be committed to the District Executive Committee of which the district superintendent shall be the chairperson. It may appoint a subcommittee to act with the district superintendent between meetings of the District Executive Committee and report to the District Executive Committee. The District Executive Committee may request an audited report at any regular meeting. It shall be the responsibility of the District Executive Committee to appoint annually an independent Certified Public Accountant who shall perform an examination of the district's financial statements. Furthermore, the District Executive Committee shall appoint annually an Audit Review Committee that shall meet with the auditor to review the audit and management letter and shall submit a report of its review to the District Executive Committee. These reports and the annual audit or review by the auditor shall be submitted to the Board of Directors through the National Office.

**B. Removal.** Any officer or supporting organization official, except the district superintendent, of the [district] of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, whether elected by District Conference or appointed by the District Executive Committee, or any individual member of the District Executive Committee, may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the District Executive Committee if, in the judgment of the District Executive Committee, the best interests of the [district] of The Christian and Missionary Alliance will be served thereby. This decision must be reviewed and approved by the National Office prior to becoming effective.

### *Section 3. Officers.*

The officers of this district shall consist of district superintendent, assistant district superintendent, secretary, and treasurer.

**A. District Superintendent.** The district superintendent shall be the recognized head of the district organization and member ex officio of all district committees and shall exercise oversight of the entire work

of this district. The district superintendent shall be the president of the corporation where such office is required by law.

**B. Assistant District Superintendent.** The need for an assistant district superintendent shall be determined by the Board of Directors. He is a member ex officio of the District Executive Committee.

**C. Secretary.** The district secretary shall keep the minutes of the District Conference and the minutes of all meetings of the District Executive Committee and shall perform all other duties pertaining to his/her office or as assigned by the District Executive Committee.

**D. Treasurer.** The district treasurer shall supervise the receipt and disbursement of all funds intended for expenditure for district purposes as directed by the District Executive Committee. He/she shall present to the District Conference an annual financial report and shall prepare for the District Executive Committee such reports as it may request.

#### *Section 4. Elections.*

**A. District Superintendent.** The district superintendent shall be elected by the District Conference and appointed by the National Office. His term of office shall be four years, beginning the August 1 or January 1 following his election. He is eligible for three consecutive terms. He is eligible again after the lapse of one term. The district shall establish a District Superintendent Search Committee at least ten months in advance of the District Conference at which an election is to take place, according to the district bylaws and the guidelines provided by the National Office. A list of the names of workers who have proper qualifications for district superintendent shall be developed in consultation with the National Office. The Committee on Nominations or any person making a nomination must consult with the National Office prior to presenting a nominee to District Conference. The Board of Directors may present a nomination if requested. Election shall be by ballot and shall be determined by two-thirds of the votes cast. In the event that a decision cannot be reached by the District Conference, the Board of Directors shall appoint a district superintendent for up to one term. In the event of death, resignation, or involuntary removal of the district superintendent where there is no assistant district superintendent in accordance with the policies set by the Board of Directors, the National Office shall appoint an individual to perform the duties of the district superintendent until the office has been filled either by the Board of Directors or by election of the District Conference. In the event of removal of a district superintendent, the District Executive Committee shall follow the procedures outlined in the Discipline Policy Handbook.

**B. Assistant District Superintendent.** When authorized by the Board of Directors, an assistant district superintendent may be elected by the District Conference and appointed by the National Office. His term of office shall be four years, beginning the August 1 or January 1 following his election. He is eligible for three consecutive terms. He shall be nominated by the district superintendent through the Committee on Nominations of the district after consulting with the National Office. Should the nomination be unacceptable to the Committee on Nominations, it shall be referred back to the district superintendent. The vote of the District Conference shall be by ballot and shall be affirmative or negative with respect to the name presented and shall be determined by two-thirds of the votes cast. In the event of the death, resignation, or removal of the assistant district superintendent, the district superintendent, in consultation with the National Office and the District Executive Committee may appoint an individual to perform the duties of the assistant district superintendent until the office is filled by the above-stated procedure.

**C. Other officers** of this district and members of the District Executive Committee shall be elected by the District Conference annually or as may be specified in the district bylaws.

**D. The Credentialing Council** shall be elected by the District Conference, or appointed by the District Executive Committee, as may be specified in the district bylaws.

**E. The director of the district Alliance Women** shall be selected as provided for within the national policy contained in the CM Handbook.

**F. Other district committees or personnel** shall be elected or appointed as specified in the district bylaws.

#### *Section 5. Credentialing Council (CC).*

There shall be a single Credentialing Council in each district. The Credentialing Council shall be elected by the District Conference or appointed by the District Executive Committee, as may be specified in the district bylaws. The Credentialing Council shall examine and recommend approval for the licensing of official workers and approve leaves of absence. All licenses and leaves of absence recommended and approved shall be issued by the district superintendent. The Credentialing Council shall examine and ordain or consecrate qualified candidates for the Christian ministry. District practices and procedures in matters of licensing, consecration and ordination, and discipline are subject to the uniform policies pertaining thereto as promulgated and amended from time to time by The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

#### *Section 6. Disciplemaking Ministries.*

This district shall encourage, coordinate, and give oversight to disciplemaking ministries in churches as well as provide resources and training for such ministries at all age levels. This district shall specify the means by which these ministries are pursued within its bylaws.

#### *Section 7. Church Health and Multiplication.*

This district shall encourage, coordinate, and give oversight to church planting and multiplication ministries throughout the district as well as provide ongoing assessment and consultation for the continued growth of healthy congregations. This district shall specify the means by which these ministries are pursued within the district in its bylaws.

#### *Section 8. Mission Mobilization.*

This district shall mobilize district churches for the accomplishment of the Great Commission by encouraging participation in the worldwide missionary and church planting efforts of The Christian and Missionary Alliance including but not limited to, active promotion of and support for the Great Commission Fund. This district shall specify the means by which mobilization efforts are pursued within the district in its bylaws.

#### *Section 9. Property.*

**A.** This district may acquire, own, dispose of, improve, encumber, and convey property, real and personal, for district purposes, in conformity with the laws of the state where the property is situated. Where trustees are required, they shall be elected by the District Conference according to law. Such property may be sold, conveyed, exchanged, or encumbered under the order of the District Conference and authority of the District Executive Committee by the trustees, or by the district superintendent and secretary, or other district officer, in conformity with the laws of the state where the property is situated. Where state law permits, the District Conference may empower the District Executive Committee to acquire, dispose of, improve, encumber, and convey property, real and personal, on behalf of the District Conference.

**B.** This district may adopt a bylaw empowering any three of its officers to release a reversionary or other contingent interest in the real property of an accredited church in the event of the sale of church real property, or to subordinate such interest to a mortgage, when it is in the best interest of both the church and this district.

**C.** This district is connected with and subordinate to its parent religious organization, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, a Colorado nonprofit corporation, headquartered in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. In consideration of the mutual benefits generated and derived from this relationship, and understanding that The Christian and Missionary Alliance is relying hereon in agreeing to initiate or continue such relationship, this district agrees as follows.

(1) **Property Reversion Events.** Any of the following shall constitute a “property reversion event:” (a) the decision or action of this district to disaffiliate or otherwise separate itself from The Christian and Missionary Alliance without the prior written approval of such decision or action by the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, (b) the failure for any reason of this district to be subject to or abide by any of the purposes, usages, doctrines, or teachings of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, or (c) the termination of this district’s existence for any reason.

(2) **Determination of a Property Reversion Event.** The determination of whether a property reversion event has occurred shall be considered and decided by the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance or its Executive Committee in accordance with procedures established from time to time by the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. The decision of the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance or its Executive Committee shall be final and binding on The Christian and Missionary Alliance and the district except an appeal from such decision may be taken, within 30 days of the declaration of a reversionary event, to a committee of three members of the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. Such appeal shall be limited to the issues of fraud, collusion, or arbitrariness on the part of the district in declaring a reversionary event. The decision of such committee shall be final as a matter of ecclesiastical law.

(3) **Consequences of a Property Reversion Event.** Upon the occurrence of a property reversion event as determined in accordance with paragraph (2) above, legal title to all real and personal property (tangible and intangible), appurtenances, fixtures, and effects of whatever type then owned, held, or used by this district, without regard to how or from whom acquired, shall, upon the demand of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, revert to and become the property of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. During the period of time between the occurrence of the property reversion event and the complete and final transfer of legal title to The Christian and Missionary Alliance, this district shall hold such property in trust for The Christian and Missionary Alliance to be used exclusively to further the purposes, usages, doctrines, and teachings of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

#### *Section 10. Accredited Churches.*

Accredited churches shall be those churches satisfying the requirements set forth in Section 3.1 of the Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. The spiritual ministry of the church shall be under the care of a pastor who shall be appointed by the district superintendent in conjunction with the governance authority.

#### *Section 11. Developing Churches.*

Developing churches shall be those churches recognized as such by the district and operating under the Policy for the Governance of a Developing Church with the objective of becoming a fully accredited church of

The Christian and Missionary Alliance. Each newly established church shall first be reported as a developing church.

#### *Section 12. Affiliated Churches.*

Churches not satisfying the requirements of Section 3.1 of the Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance but desiring to cooperate in various degrees of fellowship with The Christian and Missionary Alliance may be classified as affiliated churches. Each affiliated church shall adopt and comply with the requirements, terms, and provisions for affiliated churches as promulgated and amended from time to time by The Christian and Missionary Alliance. Each affiliated church shall have the privilege of sending one accredited lay delegate to the District Conference.

#### *Section 13. Cooperating Non-Alliance Churches.*

Churches outside The Christian and Missionary Alliance but desiring to cooperate in various degrees of fellowship with The Christian and Missionary Alliance may be classified as cooperating non-Alliance churches. Each cooperating non-Alliance church shall direct to The Christian and Missionary Alliance its Great Commission Fund offerings. Each cooperating non-Alliance church shall have the privilege of sending one corresponding delegate to the District Conference.

#### *Section 14. Supporting Organizations.*

Proposals for establishment and operation of all postsecondary educational institutions, retirement centers, and any other such similar ministries within this district which are directly controlled by the district, shall first be recommended by the District Executive Committee to the Board of Directors through the proper area for its action. They shall not be established unless and until authorized by the Board of Directors.

#### *Section 15. Evangelists.*

Upon recommendation of the District Executive Committee, or a committee appointed by the District Conference, the district superintendent may license evangelists who reside in this district and who hold membership in The Christian and Missionary Alliance, even though their fields of service extend outside the boundaries of this district. They shall report annually to the District Executive Committee concerning their activities.

#### *Section 16. Publication Work.*

Alliance Life is recognized as the official communications vehicle of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

#### *Section 17. Bylaws.*

This district may adopt bylaws not in conflict with the provisions of this Constitution or the Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

#### *Section 18. Amendments.*

This Constitution may be amended by the General Council of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in accordance with the provisions of Section 10.2 of the Amended and Restated Constitution and Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance as applied to the Uniform Constitution for Districts.

#### *Section 19. Conformance with Applicable Law.*

In cases where any provision of this Constitution may not conform to state laws, this district shall be authorized to make such adjustments as necessary in counsel with the National Office of The Christian and Missionary Alliance so as to conform to such laws.

## ARTICLE III: EMERGENCIES

In the event that a district superintendent is involved in a catastrophic disaster as contained in Section 12.1B(2) of the Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, the assistant district superintendent, district secretary, or district treasurer shall call a meeting of the District Executive Committee as soon as possible thereafter to make interim arrangements. The District Executive Committee shall function until a Disaster Committee has arranged a program in accordance with Section 12.1B(2) of the Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

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## SUBDIVISION II.B: VIETNAMESE DISTRICT BYLAWS

*(Note: This subdivision applies the Uniform Constitution to the Vietnamese District and must be adopted at the District Conference.)*

### ARTICLE 1: GENERAL PRINCIPLES

#### *Section 1: Biblical Alignment and Periodic Review*

**A. Ultimate Authority.** The ultimate authority regarding doctrine, organization, and ministry of the Church belongs to the Lordship of Jesus Christ and the authority of the Holy Scriptures (Colossians 1:18; II Timothy 3:16–17). Any directive from the General Council or District must be interpreted and applied in accordance with Scripture.

**B. Periodic Review.** The District Executive Committee (DEXCOM) will periodically review the Bylaws, policies, and activities of the District in relation to the General Council and the local church to ensure continued alignment with Scripture. Periodic review will be conducted every 2 years at the District Conference.

**C. Petition Regarding Doctrinal Issues.** If serious concerns arise regarding conflict between General Council directives and Scriptural teaching, the District may request clarification or submit a petition through the processes prescribed in the C&MA Manual. All petitions must be conducted in a spirit of collaboration, unity, and humility in Christ.

**D. Determining Standard.** In any case of conflict or ambiguity between directives of the General Council or District and the teaching of Scripture, the authority of God's Word shall be the supreme standard and have decisive effect.

**E. Remedial Action.** If any policy, practice, or decision is found to be inconsistent with Scripture, remedial action will be taken promptly. This may include amending policies, ceasing certain practices, or adopting new measures to restore compliance.

### ARTICLE 2: ORGANIZATION AND GOVERNMENT

#### *Section 1: District Conference*

**A. Accredited Delegates.** The accredited delegates to the District Conference are those listed in Subdivision II.A, Article 2, Section 1, Item A above.

### *Section 2: Rules of Order*

**A. Duty of Attendance:** Every delegate must be present at all worship services and attend all business sessions throughout the District Conference. In the event of an emergency requiring an absence, approval must be obtained from the Conference Chair.

**B. Decorum in Debate:** Delegates must express their opinions in a gracious, courteous, and constructive manner. Each delegate has the right to speak a maximum of three (3) times, for no more than three (3) minutes each time, on any single issue. The Conference may allow one additional speaking opportunity by a majority vote. Delegates must not engage in direct dialogue with one another; all remarks must be addressed through the Chair.

**C. Prohibition on Campaigning:** No individual may campaign or solicit votes for themselves or for others, in order to maintain a reverence for God and to respect His will in all elections.

**D. Prohibition on Recording:** Audio or video recording in any form is strictly prohibited during the business sessions of the District Conference, unless explicitly authorized by the District Executive Committee (DEXCOM).

**E. Enforcement:** The Conference Chair has the authority to terminate the speaking privileges of any delegate who violates proper decorum. A delegate who intentionally violates these rules of order may have their delegate credentials revoked by a majority vote of the official delegates present.

### *Section 3: Committees under the District Executive Committee*

The Vietnamese District has the following Committees: (1) Audit Review Committee - per Subdivision II.A, Article 2, Section 2 above. (2) Nominating Committee - per Subdivision II.A, Article 2, Section 4 above. (3) Credentialing Council - per Subdivision II.A, Article 2, Section 4 above. (4) Christian Education Committee - per Subdivision II.A, Article 2, Section 4, Item F above.

### *Section 4: District Officers*

According to Subdivision II.A, Article 2, Section 4, Item C above, the officers elected at the District Conference are: (1) Members of the District Executive Committee. (2) Director and Executive Committee of the District Men's Ministry. (3) Director and Executive Committee of the District Alliance Women. All other officers such as Missions Director, Christian Education Director, etc., will be appointed by the District Executive Committee.

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## **DIVISION III: CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS OF LOCAL ACCREDITED CHURCHES**

### **SUBDIVISION III.A: UNIFORM CONSTITUTION FOR ACCREDITED CHURCHES**

*(Verbatim from C&MA Manual Section A5)*

**PREAMBLE** The New Testament teaches that the local church is the visible organized expression of the Body of Christ. The people of God are to live and serve in obedience to the Word of God and under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. The Christian and Missionary Alliance operates on the presupposition that the congregation finds broader meaning and outreach in fulfilling its biblical responsibilities within the life and witness of the denomination. This Constitution has three objectives:

1. Set out in general an outline for organization and administration for this church.
2. Define the relationship of this church to the district of which it is an integral part.

3. Relate this church to the denominational framework through which the worldwide work of The Christian and Missionary Alliance is carried out. The Uniform Constitution for Accredited Churches has been framed and adopted by the General Council, the denomination's highest governing body. The accredited churches of The Christian and Missionary Alliance have participated in this process through their authorized delegates. This church can, in accordance with this Constitution and in a manner that is consistent with the Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, formulate its bylaws so as to carry out its ministry appropriately and efficiently. This church is an integral part of the district, national, and worldwide fellowship of The Christian and Missionary Alliance and is united in governance, fellowship, and service in order to promote unity of faith in the fullness of Jesus Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King, and to facilitate the spread of the gospel at home and abroad under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

#### ARTICLE I: NAME

The official name under which this church is incorporated or organized is [Name of Church] (shall include the words "The Christian and Missionary Alliance" [which is the equivalent of "Tin Lành Việt Nam", meaning "Vietnamese Alliance Church" or "Vietnamese Evangelical Church"]).

#### ARTICLE II: RELATIONSHIP

This church is connected with and subordinate to its parent religious organization, The Christian and Missionary Alliance, a Colorado nonprofit corporation, headquartered in Reynoldsburg, Ohio. In consideration of the mutual benefits generated and derived from this relationship and understanding that The Christian and Missionary Alliance is relying hereon in agreeing to initiate or continue such relationship, this church agrees to be subject to and abide by the terms and conditions of Article XVI hereof relating to the reversion of property of accredited churches.

#### ARTICLE III: MEMBERSHIP

##### *Section 1. Qualifications.*

1. Confession of faith in Jesus Christ and evidence of regeneration.
2. Belief in God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scriptures as originally given; in the vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the eternal salvation of all who believe in Him and the eternal punishment of all who reject Him.
3. Acceptance of the doctrines of the Lord Jesus Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King.
4. Full sympathy with the mission and core values of The Christian and Missionary Alliance and cooperation by systematic support of its work.
5. Such other qualifications for membership as may be stated in the bylaws.

##### *Section 2. Removal.*

Persons may be removed from membership under one or more of the following circumstances:

1. Submission of a written letter of resignation to the elders of the church.
2. Failure to meet the qualifications of membership as stated above.
3. Disciplinary action taken under the Uniform Policy for Discipline, Restoration and Appeal of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. An appeal of decisions made to remove a person from membership for reasons of qualification or a disciplinary action may be submitted to the district superintendent within 30 days of the action.

#### ARTICLE IV: ORDINANCES

Baptism and the Lord's Supper are recognized as the two ordinances of the church. Believers' baptism by immersion is taught and practiced as the scriptural mode. The pastor or other elders shall oversee baptism. They shall provide the instruction about baptism and shall administer the baptisms themselves or choose

other spiritually respected people to do these ministries. The Lord's Supper is administered regularly. The pastor or other elders shall oversee Communion. They shall provide the instruction about Communion and shall administer the Communion themselves or choose other spiritually respected people to do these ministries.

#### ARTICLE V: GOVERNMENT

There shall be an annual meeting of the members of this church to be held at a time specified in the bylaws at which time the members shall receive reports of ministries, including audited reports of the treasurers, and shall elect church officers, elders, and members of the governance authority. Additional ministry positions shall be filled as specified in the local church bylaws. The governance authority, as specified in the local church bylaws, shall conduct the affairs of the church between annual meetings and shall be amenable to the membership and the district superintendent as constitutionally defined. Other meetings of the members may be called by proper notice to the membership as specified in the bylaws. On general church matters in which no legal questions are involved, it is understood that all members in good and regular standing who have reached the age of 16 years are entitled to vote, but in matters involving titles of property or legal procedure, the laws of the state determine the age at which members are eligible to vote.

#### ARTICLE VI: GOVERNANCE AUTHORITY

##### *Section 1. General.*

Each local church shall structure its governance authority in accordance with the governing documents of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, the responsibilities of elders as defined in Article X, Section 1, the bylaws of the district, and the laws of the state in which the church is located. The members of the governance authority shall satisfy the scriptural standards for church leadership and shall be members of this church. The lead pastor shall be chairman or, at his request, the governance authority shall elect an elder as chairman. An elder also shall be elected as vice chairman. Meetings shall be held for prayer and business, and abbreviated minutes shall be reported to the church as the church may decide. Special meetings may be called by the chairman or by written request of one-half of the governance authority membership. All officers, committees, and organizations except the Nominating Committee are amenable to the collective oversight of the elders.

##### *Section 2. Removal.*

In consultation with the district superintendent and the lead pastor, any officer or auxiliary official, except licensed pastoral staff, of this church, whether elected at the church annual meeting or appointed by the governance authority, or any individual member of the governance authority, may be removed by a two-thirds majority vote of the governance authority and the approval of the district superintendent if, in the judgment of the governance authority, the best interests of this church will be served thereby.

#### ARTICLE VII: OFFICERS

The officers shall be members of this church and shall satisfy the scriptural standards for church leadership. They shall consist of the following who, with the exception of the lead pastor, shall be elected at the annual meeting of the church: lead pastor, secretary, treasurer, assistant treasurer, and such other officers as may be designated in the church bylaws or in the state law.

## ARTICLE VIII: LICENSED STAFF

The governance authority shall not give consideration to any candidate for licensed ministry without the approval of the district superintendent. Licensed staff members shall be called by the governance authority and appointed by the district superintendent. The district superintendent shall suggest to the governance authority the names of such workers as in his judgment have proper qualifications for licensed staff. Upon appointment by the district superintendent, a licensed staff member and spouse become members of this church. Licensed staff include all those whose position calls for licensing as an "official worker," as defined in the General Regulations in the Manual of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. Any member of the licensed staff may resign from this church by giving due notice of this intention to the district superintendent and the governance authority. The governance authority may, in conjunction with the district superintendent, ask for the resignation of any member of the licensed staff. Before such action is taken, the governance authority and that member shall follow the guidelines as prescribed by the district superintendent. The district superintendent, with the approval of the District Executive Committee, shall have the authority to remove or transfer a member of the licensed staff when the governance authority is in disagreement or whenever circumstances make such removal or transfer advisable.

## ARTICLE IX: DUTIES OF CHURCH OFFICERS

### *Section 1. Lead Pastor.*

The lead pastor shall have oversight of this church. He shall be chairman of the governance authority except as he may choose to proceed according to the provisions in Article VI. He shall preside at all regular or special meetings of the church membership. He is a member ex officio of all church committees and organizations. When the membership has no pastor, the chairman or vice chairman of the governance authority shall have oversight of the church in conjunction with the district superintendent. The lead pastor shall be the president of this church where such office is required by law.

### *Section 2. Secretary.*

The secretary shall keep the minutes of membership meetings and conduct the correspondence of this church as directed by the governance authority. The secretary shall attend and keep minutes of other meetings as specified in the local church bylaws.

### *Section 3. Treasurer.*

The treasurer shall receive all monies of this church and shall be responsible for the payment of all bills on the order of the governance authority as specified by the local church bylaws, keeping proper book records of all transactions, and filing canceled vouchers and receipts for payments made. The governance authority shall determine where funds of this church shall be kept. No offerings shall be solicited from the membership except upon approval of the governance authority.

### *Section 4. Missionary Treasurer.*

When required by local church bylaws, the missionary treasurer shall account for all missionary monies and oversee the forwarding of the same to the treasurer of The Christian and Missionary Alliance on or before the tenth of the following month.

### *Section 5. Assistant Treasurer.*

The assistant treasurer shall, with another person or persons appointed by the governance authority, be responsible to count all monies and keep a separate record of all receipts. The assistant treasurer may be empowered to issue receipts to the donors.

## **ARTICLE X: COMMITTEES AND ORGANIZATIONS**

### *Section 1. Elders.*

The call of Christ the Chief Shepherd to men to serve as elders is both discerned and confirmed by the church membership. Elders shall therefore be male members of this church and shall be elected as specified in the church bylaws. Elders shall be the lead pastor, elected lay elders, and other male members of the licensed ministry staff as deemed appropriate by the local church. The lead pastor and the other elders are the highest level of servant leadership in the church. As undershepherds, elders shall serve with the lead pastor to oversee both the temporal and spiritual affairs of the local church in order to accomplish Christ's mission. They shall constitute the Committee on Membership. They shall be the Committee on Discipline in accordance with the Uniform Policy on Discipline, Restoration, and Appeal of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. All officers, committees, and organizations except the Nominating Committee are amenable to the collective oversight of the elders through the governance authority.

### *Section 2. Deacons.*

The deacons shall be members of this church and shall be appointed or elected as specified in the local church bylaws. The deacons shall have charge of those ministries and charities of the church as specified in the bylaws, receive offerings for such purposes and dispense the same, and make monthly reports as directed. Where there are no deacons, the governance authority shall assume responsibility for their ministries until such are elected or appointed.

### *Section 3. Deaconesses.*

Deaconesses shall be members of this church and shall be appointed or elected as specified in the local church bylaws. The deaconesses shall have charge of those ministries as specified in the bylaws. Where there are no deaconesses, the governance authority shall assume responsibility for their ministries until such are elected or appointed.

### *Section 4. Trustees.*

The trustees shall be members of this church and may be appointed or elected as specified in the local church bylaws. Trustees shall have charge of those ministries and duties as specified in the bylaws, or the laws of the state in which the church is located. Where there are no trustees, the governance authority shall assume responsibility for those ministries and duties until such are elected or appointed.

### *Section 5. Alliance Women.*

Local church Alliance Women may be established. They shall be organized according to the Alliance Women policies as contained in the CM Handbook.

## **ARTICLE XI: MISSIONS MOBILIZATION**

The church shall participate in the worldwide missions and church planting ministries of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, and the support of the Great Commission Fund. The Governance Authority shall specify the means by which it purposes to mobilize members' involvement, including prayer, recruitment of men and

women for vocational ministry both at home and abroad. A Missions Conference or congregation-wide event for missions mobilization shall be held each year.

## ARTICLE XII: DISCIPLEMAKING MINISTRIES

A major ministry of this church shall be making disciples of Jesus Christ. The discipling process includes evangelism, building up believers, equipping workers, and multiplying leaders, among adults, youth, and children. The Governance Authority shall specify how discipling is to be pursued. The purpose of discipling ministries is to bring people to a saving knowledge of Christ, teach biblical principles emphasizing missions and the centrality of Christ as Savior, Sanctifier, Healer, and Coming King, and equip people for evangelism and Christian service.

## ARTICLE XIII: PROPERTY AND RECORDS

### *Section 1. Property.*

This church may acquire, own, dispose of, improve, encumber, and convey property, real and personal, for church purposes, in conformity with the laws of the state where the property is situated. Real property may be purchased, sold, conveyed, exchanged, mortgaged, or encumbered only by order of the membership through the governance authority in consultation with the district superintendent. In states where trustees are required, the order of the membership shall proceed through them.

### *Section 2. Records.*

The official records of all officers of the church and all its departments are the property of the church. In the event of the death or resignation of the incumbent or upon the election of his successor, the current records of the office shall be passed on to the newly elected officer. All records other than current shall be kept in a secure repository selected by the governance authority.

### *Section 3. Audit.*

All financial records shall be examined annually or at more frequent intervals on order of the governance authority. At least three persons, none of whom is a financial officer or a church staff member, shall be appointed by the governance authority to conduct the examination. They shall follow procedures set forth in the current edition of the Manual for Alliance Church Treasurers (and Pastors). The governance authority shall authorize actions to conform with additional audit standards that may be required by the jurisdiction in which the church is located.

## ARTICLE XIV: NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A Nominating Committee shall consist of the lead pastor, two members from the church membership, selected by, but not necessarily from the governance authority, and two elected from the church membership in a manner stipulated by the local church bylaws, at least one month prior to the annual meeting.

## ARTICLE XV: ELECTIONS

In consideration of elections, the Nominating Committee shall present at least one name for each office to be filled. Other nominations may be made by the membership as stipulated in the church bylaws. The officers shall be elected by ballot at the annual meeting. Where only one name is presented, the ballot may be waived by unanimous vote.

## ARTICLE XVI: REVERSION OF PROPERTY

Recognizing the purpose of the members of this congregation to support both the doctrines and the mission of The Christian and Missionary Alliance through the contribution of their tithes, offerings, and special gifts, and to ensure that the future use of such assets and real property as this church may from time to time acquire shall not be diverted from this purpose, this church adopts the following property reversion clause.

### *1. Property Reversion Events.*

Any of the following shall constitute a “property reversion event:” (a) the decision or action of this church to disaffiliate or otherwise separate itself from The Christian and Missionary Alliance without the prior written approval of such decision or action by the District Executive Committee (or its equivalent) of the district in which this church is located, (b) the failure for any reason of this church to be subject to or abide by any of the purposes, usages, doctrines, or teachings of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, (c) the failure for any reason of this church to qualify as an “accredited church” of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (as such term is defined in the Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance), or (d) the termination of this church’s existence for any reason.

### *2. Determination of a Property Reversion Event.*

The determination of whether a property reversion event has occurred shall be considered and decided by the District Executive Committee (or its equivalent) of the district of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in which this church is located in accordance with procedures established from time to time by the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. The decision of such District Executive Committee (or its equivalent) shall be final and binding on The Christian and Missionary Alliance, the district of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in which this church is located, and this church, except an appeal from such decision may be taken, within 30 days of the declaration of a reversionary event, to a committee of three members of the Board of Directors of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. Such appeal shall be limited to the issues of fraud, collusion, or arbitrariness on the part of the district in declaring a reversionary event. The decision of such committee shall be final as a matter of ecclesiastical law.

### *3. Consequences of a Property Reversion Event.*

Upon the occurrence of a property reversion event as determined in accordance with paragraph 2 above, legal title to all real and personal property (tangible and intangible), appurtenances, fixtures, and effects of whatever type then owned, held, or used by this church, without regard to how or from whom acquired, shall, upon the demand of the district of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in which this church is located, revert to and become the property of such district of The Christian and Missionary Alliance. During the period of time between the occurrence of the property reversion event and the complete and final transfer of legal title to the district of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in which this church is located, this church shall hold such property in trust for such district to be used exclusively to further the purposes, usages, doctrines, and teachings of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

### *4. Waiver of Certain Property Reversion Events.*

In the event of a property reversion event attributable to differences in doctrine between this church and The Christian and Missionary Alliance, the property reversion process set forth above may be waived upon the approval of (a) at least two-thirds of the members in good standing of this church, (b) the District Executive Committee (or its equivalent) of the district of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in which this church is located, and (c) Church Ministries of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

### *5. Exclusion of Certain Property.*

Paragraph 3 above shall not apply to any real or personal property which (i) this church owned prior to its becoming an accredited church, and (ii) is expressly identified as property not subject to paragraph 3 above in a written agreement entered into in connection with such accreditation between this church and the district of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in which this church was located upon its accreditation. The exclusion of property pursuant to this paragraph 5, and the agreement described in the preceding sentence, shall (1) terminate ten (10) years after this church's accreditation, and (2) not apply to any church that was in developing status prior to its accreditation.

### **ARTICLE XVII: BYLAWS**

Church bylaws not in conflict with this Constitution, the provisions of the Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance, the bylaws of the district within which the church is located, or the laws of the state are required and will be adopted by a duly called meeting of the church. As a minimum, the church bylaws will include provisions for the composition and name of its governance authority that is in keeping with Article VI above. A copy of such bylaws shall be filed with the district superintendent.

### **ARTICLE XVIII: AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended only by the General Council of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in accordance with the provisions of Section 10.2 of the Amended and Restated Constitution and Bylaws of The Christian and Missionary Alliance as applied to the Uniform Constitution for Accredited Churches.

### **ARTICLE XIX: CONFORMANCE WITH APPLICABLE LAW**

In cases where any provision of this Constitution may not conform to state laws, the district concerned shall be authorized to make such adjustments as necessary in counsel with the vice president for Church Ministries of The Christian and Missionary Alliance so as to conform to such laws.

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## **SUBDIVISION III.B: DISTRICT REGULATIONS FOR OFFICIAL CHURCHES**

*(Note: Reference notes: The theological and biblical foundations for the sections in this Article are recorded and explained in detail in the "Biblical Basis for Bylaws" Manual published herewith. This section can only be changed by the District Executive Committee through the District Council.)*

### **ARTICLE 1: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE OF THE LOCAL CHURCH**

**A.** The local church is a community of regenerated believers who meet regularly for worship, teaching, fellowship, prayer, the ordinances, and mission, under the supreme leadership of Christ and the spiritual oversight of elders (see definition below). The local church is the visible expression of the Universal Church, consisting of all who believe in Christ.

**B.** The local church operates under the supreme lordship of Christ and the absolute authority of Scripture. Cooperation with denominational organizations—in fellowship, doctrinal alignment, and mission support—can provide many benefits. However, this cooperative relationship must never take precedence over the Church's commitment to biblical truth and biblical governance principles. The Church must always seek the glory of God by maintaining spiritual righteousness, guarding doctrinal purity, and demonstrating absolute loyalty to Jesus Christ—the only Head of the Church (1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17).

### C. Definition of Terms

1. **Elder:** Men qualified according to Scripture, serving as Pastors/Shepherds/Teachers, responsible for guiding and overseeing the spiritual and administrative affairs of the Church. Hereafter may be referred to as “Church Leaders.”
2. **Governance Authority (Ban Điều Hành):** This is the legal governing board of the Church. Depending on the governance model chosen by the local church, it may consist of all Elders or of a board in which Elders form the majority. In all models, the spiritual authority of oversight, doctrine, and discipline belongs exclusively to the Elders. Although there is a structured leadership system, neither the Governance Authority nor the Elders are to function by hierarchical rank or power.
3. **Lead Pastor:** Also known as the Senior Pastor, he is the “first among equals” within the Elders. He assumes the primary teaching role and is the official representative of the Church’s leadership, but remains equal, without hierarchical rank, to the other Elders..

D. The biblical leadership model of the Church includes two distinct groups:

1. **Board of Elders:** Responsible for spiritual leadership, shepherding, teaching, and management of the entire Church. They could be the Governance Authority or the majority in the Governance Authority.
2. **Diaconate (Board of Deacons):** Responsible for serving the practical needs of the Church under the guidance of the Governance Authority.

## ARTICLE 2: PRINCIPLES OF AUTHORITY & ORGANIZATION

### *Section 1: Christ Alone is the Head of the Church*

**A.** The local church reverently affirms Jesus Christ as the supreme and only Head of the Church (Colossians 1:18; Ephesians 1:22-23).

**B.** No organization, agency, or human structure may stand between the Lord and the Church to hold supreme authority over the Church, for Christ alone rules His Church as Shepherd and Lord (1 Peter 5:4).

**C.** All administration, leadership, and decision-making in the local church must be exercised in submission to the lordship of Christ.

**D.** The Church must seek His guidance through prayer, the ministry of the Holy Spirit, and obedience to the Word of God in Scripture (James 1:5; Acts 20:28).

**E.** All leadership authority in the Church is delegated authority and must be exercised under His lordship.

### *Section 2: Authority and Sufficiency of Scripture*

**A.** The Bible, including the Old and New Testaments, is the inspired, inerrant Word of God and holds absolute authority.

**B.** Scripture is final and sufficient for all matters of doctrine, lifestyle, organization, and guidance of the Church (2 Timothy 3:16–17; 2 Peter 1:3). Scripture shall be the ultimate authority in all matters of faith, doctrine, practice, and local church governance.

**C.** All ministries, structures, and bylaws of the Church must be measured by Scripture and must be corrected when not in alignment with God’s Word.

### *Section 3: Principles of Biblical Interpretation (Hermeneutics)*

**A.** The Church faithfully employs the **grammatical-historical method**, seeking the original meaning God revealed through the inspired author, within the literary, historical, and theological context of the text.

**B.** The Church affirms that Scripture has **objective meaning**, which does not change based on personal feelings. Therefore, the Church rejects the view that “everyone has their own interpretation” which views all interpretations as equal. Not all methods of interpretation are faithful to the text, especially those that place philosophy, ideology, or culture above the original meaning of the text.

**C.** The Church believes that central truths regarding the Gospel, salvation, holy living, and church leadership structures have been revealed by Scripture **clearly, intelligibly, and sufficiently** for God’s people, so that all may know and obey.

**D.** The Church distinguishes clearly between “**meaning**” (the sense of the text in its original context) and “**application**” (how to live out God’s Word today). Application may vary in modern contexts, but it must not alter the original meaning God intended to reveal.

### *Section 4: Relationship with the District and General Council*

**A. Respect for Cooperation:** The Church cherishes fellowship and cooperation with the Vietnamese District of The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA).

**B. Nature of Organizational Authority:** The denominational structure (District and General Council) is recognized as an administrative and supportive partner, exercising **constituted authority** as defined in the C&MA Manual. This relationship is a covenant of mutual accountability, where the District provides ecclesiastical oversight to ensure doctrinal integrity and unity, while respecting the local church’s responsibility for daily spiritual governance. These authority structures exist as a divinely commissioned means for the following purposes:

1. Preserving unity in the Spirit through the bond of peace (Ephesians 4:3).
2. Protecting the purity of doctrine and the moral life of church members (Titus 1:9).
3. Providing mutual accountability between churches and those serving the Lord (Hebrews 13:17).
4. Promoting effective cooperation in fulfilling the Great Commission (Matthew 28:19-20).

**C. Scripture is Supreme:** No doctrine, policy, or tradition of man, including guidelines from the District or General Council, is permitted to supersede or contradict the supreme authority of Scripture.

## ARTICLE 3: CHURCH LEADERSHIP OFFICES

Scripture establishes two primary offices: (1) Elder (Bishop/Pastor) and (2) Deacon/Deaconess (Philippians 1:1; 1 Timothy 3).

### *Section 1: Office of Elder*

#### **A. Definition & Nature:**

1. The three terms Elder—Overseer (Bishop)—Pastor (Shepherd) describe the same office (Acts 20:17, 28; 1 Peter 5:1–2) and thus may be used interchangeably.
2. Elders/Overseers/Pastors are responsible for ruling, teaching, caring for, guiding, and protecting the Church.
3. In these Bylaws, the term "Elder" is used as the primary designation because it emphasizes the biblical quality of spiritual maturity; the term "Overseer" is used equivalently when the emphasis is on the responsibility of oversight.
4. "Elder" does not simply mean the oldest person, but one who is mature in his walk with God and entrusted with the responsibility to shepherd, teach, and oversee the Church according to the Word of God.

**B. Qualifications:** Elders must fully meet biblical standards (1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9), including:

- Being above reproach.
- Holding firmly to sound doctrine.
- Demonstrating self-control and wisdom.
- Managing their own family well.
- Able to teach (individually or publicly).

#### **C. Responsibilities:**

1. The local church is governed by a Governance Authority (Board of Elders), consisting of those entrusted with the responsibility of shepherding, teaching, and overseeing the Church according to Scripture (Acts 14:23; 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3).
2. Church Leaders shall shepherd the flock, ensuring spiritual growth and pastoral care (Acts 20:28), including:
  - Teaching and guarding doctrine.
  - Shepherding and caring for souls.
  - Prayer.
  - Spiritual oversight.
  - Protecting against apostasy or error.
  - Serving as the Committee on Membership.

- Overseeing church discipline and restoration.
- Setting an example and leading with humility.

#### **D. Plurality of Leadership:**

1. The group of Elders is also called the Council of Elders or the Board of Elders (Ban Trưởng Lão). The Governance Authority (Ban Lãnh Đạo) is the legal governing board of the Church, which must be composed of all Elders or a majority of Elders, depending on the governance model chosen by the local church (see Article 5, Section 1 and III.C). In all models, the spiritual authority of oversight, discipline, and doctrine belongs exclusively to the Elders within the Governance Authority
2. The Church is led by a plurality of Elders, not by a single person (Acts 14:23; James 5:14). The Elders are a group of qualified men, the number depending on the needs of the Church, and not a single sole leader. When the local church uses a governance model in which the Governance Authority includes non-Elders, those members serve under the leadership and spiritual oversight of the Elders in matters of doctrine, discipline, and shepherding (Acts 14:23; Philippians 1:1).
3. The authority to govern the Church belongs to the Governance Authority as a collective body. No individual, including the Lead Pastor, has the right to unilaterally decide important matters on behalf of the entire Governance Authority.
4. In the event the Church does not have enough qualified elders, the biblical principle of group leadership should still be pursued as a goal by confirming or training additional elders from among the congregation (those meeting the standards in 1 Timothy 3:1-7 and Titus 1:5-9) to serve together.

#### **E. Equality of Authority:**

1. Elders are equal in the principle of authority without rank; differences lie only in gifts and function, not status.
2. The Elders are equal in spiritual authority among themselves. Although there may be a structured leadership system within the Governance Authority, there is no hierarchical ranking or power structure among the Elders

#### **F. “First Among Equals”:**

1. One Elder may coordinate to facilitate unity in the work. This is a function, not a hierarchical authority.
2. The Lead Pastor Representative, also known as the Lead Pastor, is “first among equals” within the Elders. He assumes the primary teaching role and is the official representative of the Church's leadership, but remains equal, without hierarchical rank, to the other Elders.

#### **G. Limitation to Men:**

1. The office of Elder is restricted to qualified men (1 Timothy 2:12; 3:1–7), consistent with the order of creation and New Testament practice. In governance models where the Governance Authority consists entirely of Elders, all members are men. In governance models where the Governance Authority includes non-Elders, only the office of Elder is restricted to qualified men.
2. Scripture establishes the office of elder/overseer/pastor as the ruling and shepherding leadership of the local church. Elders must be men of biblical character, called by Christ, appointed under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and recognized by the congregation.
3. Women serve importantly in many ministries. Scripture assigns the office of Elder, with its ruling and teaching authority, to qualified men. This does not prevent women from serving in other ministries or, where permitted by the local church's governance model and consistent with Scripture, in non-Elder governance roles (see Appendix - Article 3.A, 3.B, 3.C, 3.D, 3.E).
4. The Church affirms the current position of the District regarding the designation of "Ordination" and the title "Pastor," which are used to indicate the General Council's endorsement of all male personnel who hold credentials and meet the stated qualifications for office within the C&MA.

### *Section 2: Appointment and Confirmation of Governance Authority Members*

- A.** Members of the Governance Authority are called by the Holy Spirit, vetted by the Council of Elders, confirmed by the congregation, and some are credentialed by the General Council.
- B.** The call of Christ, the Chief Shepherd, to a man to serve in the office of Leader (Elder) needs to be discerned by the local church and, after a period of testing and prayer, confirmed (Acts 6:3; 1 Timothy 5:22). Therefore, Governance Authority members (Elders) must be male believers of the local church and shall be elected according to the church bylaws.
- C.** The selection process shall be conducted by the current members of the Governance Authority according to God's Word and approved by the congregation.
- D.** The Church expresses confidence and confirmation through the election of Governance Authority members at the Annual Church Conference or a Special Church Conference convened by the current Governance Authority. The method of confirming confidence may be done by ballot (the method of which shall be determined by the local church bylaws) with a majority ratio, or as specifically prescribed in the local church bylaws.
- E.** All members of the Governance Authority must be trusted and entrusted with leadership responsibility by the Church; this is the necessary and sufficient condition to serve in this office. However, some members may simultaneously carry responsibility toward The Christian and Missionary Alliance (C&MA) through the Vietnamese District and be issued a License/Credential by the National Office according to National Office regulations.
- F.** Credentialing is useful, but it does not determine the office of Elder in the local church; Scripture and the confirmation of the Church determine that.

**G.** The Lead Pastor (Principal Elder) needs to be a person holding a License/Credential.

### *Section 3: Service Term and Supervision of Elders*

#### **A. Term and Accountability of the Governance Authority:**

1. Elders serve without term limits if they maintain standards and their ministry remains fruitful.
2. Governance Authority members may continue to serve indefinitely, provided they maintain biblical standards, are faithful to their assigned duties, and retain the confidence of the Church (1 Peter 5:4).
3. A member of the Governance Authority may request a leave of absence, resign, or be removed if he no longer meets the biblical standards of life and ministry, or when continued service is no longer beneficial to God's work.
4. All reviews and decisions must be conducted in a spirit of love, discipline, and respect according to biblical principles.

#### **B. Periodic Evaluation:**

1. The Governance Authority evaluates the character, doctrine, and effectiveness of each Elder.
2. The Governance Authority is responsible for collectively discerning and evaluating the effectiveness of each member in God's work, viewing it as one of the necessary conditions for continuing in office.
3. The Church is also responsible for expressing continued confidence in each member of the Governance Authority individually by ballot at the annual conference.

#### **C. Congregational Confirmation:**

1. While the Governance Authority is responsible for spiritual oversight and administration of Church affairs, the congregation plays an important role in participating and ensuring a balanced governance structure according to Scripture (Acts 6:3–5; 1 Thessalonians 5:12–13).
2. The congregation fulfills this role by: (a) Electing biblically qualified persons to the Governance Authority; (b) Respecting, praying for, and cooperating with the Governance Authority in a spirit of unity; (c) Exercising its authority in major decisions according to the Church's constitution and bylaws.

#### **D. Discipline & Removal of Elders:**

1. The discipline of Elders must be conducted with a righteous heart and the fear of God, as this is an office carrying special spiritual responsibility (James 3:1).
2. Scripture clearly teaches in 1 Timothy 5:19–21 that the Church must not entertain an accusation against an Elder unless there are two or three witnesses, to protect them from arbitrary and emotional accusations. But when there is clear evidence of sin, correction—and when necessary,

public rebuke—must be carried out “so that others may take warning,” without partiality and “keeping these instructions without prejudice” before God and Christ.

3. Elders may need to be corrected or removed when they no longer meet the biblical standards in 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1—such as:
  - Teaching false doctrine,
  - Lacking an exemplary life,
  - Lacking integrity,
  - Abusing authority,
  - Or causing harm to the holiness and unity of the Church.
4. The primary goal of discipline is always the restoration of the leader, but when sin or deficiency continues to endanger the Church, suspension or removal is necessary to protect the whole body (1 Corinthians 5:6-7).
5. For Elders who are personnel licensed by the District (Elder License / Ministry License), the investigation, discipline, suspension, or revocation of the license falls under the jurisdiction of the District, consistent with the *Manual* and C&MA structure. The local Church must fully inform, provide information to, and cooperate with the District in all processes regarding licensed personnel. District disciplinary outcomes may include:
  - Correction,
  - Formal warning,
  - Suspension of ministry,
  - Or revocation of license leading to the loss of Elder status even at the local level.
6. For Elders and members without a ministry license, the local Church is responsible for administering discipline according to Scripture; however, in accordance with the Uniform Policy on Discipline, Restoration, and Appeal of The Christian and Missionary Alliance in the US, the Church must conduct the disciplinary process in consultation with the District Superintendent to ensure integrity, fairness, and consistency throughout the church system.
7. Thus, Elder discipline is a process combining justice, mercy, and protection of the Church, carried out strictly according to the principles of God's Word and the concurrent authority between the local Church and the District, under the holy presence of God.

## ARTICLE 4: DIACONATE (OFFICE OF DEACON)

### *Section 1: Nature & Purpose*

**A.** The office of Deacon (*diákonos* – “servant”) was established to meet practical service and care needs in the Church, based on Acts 6:1–6.

**B.** The Apostles chose men who were “of good reputation, full of the Spirit and wisdom” to handle material needs, enabling Elders to focus on “prayer and the ministry of the word.”

C. Thus, Deacons hold an essential role in preserving unity and helping the Church operate orderly. This is an office reflecting the heart of Christ, who came to “serve” (Mark 10:45).

### *Section 2: Biblical Foundation*

A. Scripture presents the office of Deacon as an official office parallel to Elders (Philippians 1:1). 1 Timothy 3:8–13 provides clear standards, showing this is a high office requiring maturity and trustworthiness.

B. Romans 16:1–2 introduces Phoebe as a “deacon” (*diákonos*), and 1 Timothy 3:11 also mentions “the women,” indicating that the office of Deacon/Deaconess has biblical grounds.

C. The office of Elder is limited to men, but the office of Deacon extends to both men and women according to New Testament context.

### *Section 3: Qualifications for Deacons*

A. According to 1 Timothy 3:8–13, Deacons must be dignified, not double-tongued, not addicted to much wine, not greedy for dishonest gain, holding the mystery of the faith with a clear conscience.

B. They must be “tested first,” reflecting careful vetting to ensure they have an exemplary life and are faithful in their families.

C. These standards are similar to Elders, showing the Diaconate carries significant responsibility. Those who serve well gain a “good standing” and great boldness in the faith.

### *Section 4: Responsibilities of Deacons*

A. Deacons are responsible for service tasks that help the Church be united and operate effectively.

B. Deacons care for practical needs and support the ministry but do not hold authority to lead, govern, teach with authority over men in the assembly, or make decisions of spiritual rule (1 Timothy 2:12; 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9).

C. This includes caring for the needy, visiting the sick, assisting the worship team, preparing Communion, ushering, organizing logistics, managing facilities, supporting audio/visuals, administration/finance (under Elder supervision), and supporting women’s, children’s, and family ministries.

D. The main focus is handling practical needs so Elders can devote themselves to teaching and prayer (Acts 6:4).

### *Section 5: Diaconate Operational Structure*

A. The office of Deacon serves under the supervision of Elders and does not operate independently.

B. Deacons may be divided into specialized service teams: mercy, visitation, ushering, facilities/operations, security/logistics, admin/finance, and women/family ministry.

C. One person may be assigned the role of Deacon Coordinator to assist in connection and organization, but without ruling authority.

- D. All spiritual decisions and Church direction remain with the Elders.
- E. This structure ensures clear function, effective teamwork, and order in the Church.

### *Section 6: Appointment, Supervision & Removal*

- A. Deacons are nominated based on actual need and demonstration of a holy life and service. Elders vet, the congregation confirms, and appointment is carried out according to Church Bylaws.
- B. Deacons serve under the supervision of Elders and must maintain biblical standards.
- C. When there are signs of misconduct, causing division, or lack of qualification, Elders will proceed with correction according to Matthew 18 and 1 Timothy 5.
- D. If necessary, Deacons may be admonished, suspended, reassigned, or removed.
- E. The spirit in all processes remains restoration and protection of Church unity.

## **ARTICLE 5: MINISTRY STAFF**

### *Section 1: Definition and Purpose*

- A. The Ministry Staff consists of persons invited by the Church to serve under the supervision of the Council of Elders (Governance Authority).
- B. Their purpose is to support the ministries of the Church through:
  - Teaching the Bible (in biblically appropriate contexts),
  - Discipleship,
  - Pastoral care,
  - Administration – Coordination,
  - Worship leadership,
  - Supporting other service needs as assigned by the Council of Elders.
- C. Ministry Staff do not hold spiritual ruling authority unless recognized as Elders according to the standards of 1 Timothy 3 and Titus 1, and confirmed by the Church.

### *Section 2: Relationship with the Council of Elders*

- A. Ministry Staff serve under the direct supervision of the Council of Elders (Governance Authority), following the collective leadership model taught in Scripture (Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2–3).
- B. Administrative supervision is carried out by the Lead Pastor (Guiding Elder - “first among equals”), who leads in a coordinating role but does not exceed other Elders in hierarchical authority.
- C. No staff member—whether pastor, worker, or assistant—is considered a superior or subordinate in the spiritual authority system. Ministry Staff serve according to the direction established by the Governance Authority, in a spirit of unity and humility (Ephesians 4:1–3).

### *Section 3: Distinction of Ministry Staff*

Ministry Staff are distinguished based on service function and the type of License or Certificate issued, not on ruling rank or leadership status in the Church.

#### **A. Pastors and Official Ministry Workers (Licensed Official Workers & Licensed Church Ministry Workers)**

**(1)** Includes: Ordained Pastor, Provisional Pastor (Mục Sư Nhiệm Chức), and Church Ministry Worker.

**(2)** Function: Teaching God's Word, discipleship, pastoral care, guiding and coordinating spiritual programs and church ministries. Church Ministry Workers serve under the direct supervision of an Ordained Pastor.

**(3)** Authority and Responsibility:

- Issued a License by the District.
- Subject to District supervision according to the C&MA Manual regulations.
- Have official delegate status and voting rights at the District Conference according to current regulations.

**(4)** Important Note: A person issued a License may be invited by the Church to serve on the Governance Authority. However, the issuance of a License only intends to recognize the ministry function, not automatically grant ruling authority (such as the position of Elder). Ruling authority is only established when that individual is validly elected by the local Church to the Governance Authority according to Bylaws.

#### **B. Certified Workers / Christian Workers**

**(1)** Function: Support ministries in the local Church, including: care, administration, discipleship, training, and teaching the Bible within the assigned scope.

**(2)** Authority and Scope:

- Issued a Certificate or recognized by the local Church to confirm service status.
- Are not Official Ministry Workers.
- Not under the regular supervision of the District, except in special cases of service outside the local Church.

**(3)** Limitations:

- Being recognized to serve as a Certified Worker means explicitly not being on the track toward the office of Pastor according to Manual regulations.
- The Certified Worker position is not a mandatory stepping stone, nor does it automatically lead to the office of Pastor. Progression to the office of Pastor is only undertaken when the individual applies, is vetted, and is issued an appropriate License according to the official process of the District and The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

- Do not have automatic voting rights at the District Conference, unless appointed by the Church as a lay delegate.

**(4) IMPORTANT TRANSITION NOTE:** To align with the 2025 C&MA Manual, the title "Pastoral Ministry Associate" (Công Tác Viên Mục Vụ - per 2019 Bylaws) is no longer considered "Official Ministry Staff" if the individual only holds a Certificate. These individuals will be classified as Certified Workers and under the direct management of the local Church. If any individual wishes to be recognized as a member of the Official Pastoral Staff and have official delegate status, they need to apply for conversion to a **Church Ministry Worker License** according to current District regulations.

**(5) GUIDANCE FOR CONVERTING OLD STATUSES & TITLES (Per 2019 Bylaws):**

**(a) Un-ordained Pastor (Mục Sư Nhiệm Chức) and Worker (Truyền Đạo):**

- If the individual is on the track for Ordination, has been vetted and licensed by the District, the corresponding current status is **Provisional Official Worker**.
- If the individual serves full-time in the Church but does not pursue the Ordination track, the corresponding status is **Church Ministry Worker** according to current regulations.

**(b) Female Worker (Nữ Truyền Đạo - old term):**

- If the individual meets full requirements regarding education, call, and District vetting, they may be considered for a license under the status of **Consecrated Woman** based on the C&MA Manual.
- In other cases, the individual may be licensed as a **Church Ministry Worker** or recognized via a **Certificate** suitable for the scope of service.
  - *Note:* Avoid using the title "Nữ Truyền Đạo" for cases holding only this Certificate (may use titles like Department Head, etc.).
- Conversion is not automatic but must go through the official District review process.

**(c) Licensed Worker (Truyền Đạo Nhiệm Chức - old term):**

- For those in training, testing their call, or not yet appointed to an official pastoral position, the corresponding current title is **Ministry Apprentice** and they may be issued an Apprenticeship Ministry Certificate.
- If the individual has been called by the Church and appointed by the District to an official shepherding position while completing studies, they may be considered for conversion to **Provisional Official Worker** status according to regulations.
- Conversion is not automatic but must go through the official District review process.

**C. Ministry Apprenticeship**

**(1)** A Ministry Apprenticeship is a person in a training phase to verify the call to ministry, serving under the direct guidance of an Elder or personnel designated by the District.

(2) An Apprentice may be issued an **Apprentice Ministry Certificate** with a maximum term of two (2) years, non-renewable, and not implying permanent appointment.

#### **D. Women in Ministry**

(1) Function: Serve in areas suitable to gifts and calling, including: discipleship, training, administration, pastoral care, and teaching in contexts consistent with biblical principles.

(2) Limitations: Do not hold the role of Elder and do not teach with ruling authority over men in general worship assemblies of the Church, according to the District's position and policy.

(3) Recognition: Depending on the nature and scope of service, Women in Ministry may:

- Be issued a **License** by the District (e.g., Consecrated Woman or Church Ministry Worker), or
- Be issued a corresponding **Certificate**.
- The issuance of a license or certificate aims to confirm service status and delegate rights according to current regulations.

(4) **DISTRICT SPECIFIC IMPLEMENTATION NOTE:** Based on the document "Guidelines for Implementing Men and Women in Spiritual Leadership Status" approved by the C&MA Board of Directors on June 22, 2023, specifically for the Vietnamese District, the following regulations apply within the Vietnamese District:

(a) The offices of **Elder** and **Pastor** in Churches belonging to the District are **male only**.

(b) The designation "**Ordination**" and the title "**Pastor**" (**Reverend**) are only used for qualified male personnel.

(c) Female personnel issued a License will hold the title of "**Consecrated Woman**" (Nữ Truyền Đạo - corresponding to Consecrated Woman in the General Council Manual) and are encouraged to serve in roles permitted by Scripture, but may not hold the position of leadership oversight (Eldership).

#### *Section 4: Appointment and Confirmation*

**A. Vetting by the Council of Elders (Governance Authority):** The Governance Authority vets all ministry staff candidates regarding: doctrine, life and character, spiritual maturity, gifts and service ability, compatibility with Church vision.

**B. Cooperation with the District:** The District may refer, license, or assist in staff selection. However:

- Spiritual shepherding authority belongs to the local Elders (Acts 20:28).
- The District exercises **ecclesiastical oversight** regarding licensing, credentialing, and compliance with C&MA polity.
- No one may serve in a licensed ministry role without the concurrent approval of both the Governance Authority and the District Superintendent.

**C. Announcement Before the Church (if applicable):** The Church may announce the confirmation of personnel as an expression of unity; this does not confer ruling authority.

### *Section 5: Responsibilities of Ministry Staff*

**A.** Ministry staff serve according to the assignment of Elders, including:

- Teaching the Bible and discipleship in assigned contexts.
- Pastoral care and visitation.
- Coordinating Church programs and activities.
- Supporting administration – finance – communication.
- Leading worship and prayer.
- Supporting missions and community outreach.

**B.** All responsibilities are executed in submission to the doctrine and direction established by the Governance Authority.

### *Section 6: Supervision and Evaluation*

**A.** Ministry staff are directly accountable to the Governance Authority through the Lead Pastor (Guiding Elder).

**B.** Periodic evaluation considers:

- doctrine and stability in truth;
- life and character;
- ministry effectiveness;
- spirit of cooperation;
- alignment with Church vision.

**C.** If there are weaknesses, Elders may:

- advise,
- train,
- create an improvement plan,
- adjust tasks,
- suspend or terminate service, accompanied by appropriate pastoral care.

### *Section 7: Term of Service*

**A.** Ministry staff serve without a fixed term limit provided they:

- maintain doctrine and a holy life,
- serve effectively,
- meet ministry needs,
- continue to be confirmed by the Governance Authority.

**B.** Administrative terms of the District do not replace the spiritual oversight authority of the Governance Authority (Council of Elders).

### *Section 8: Participation in Church Governance*

**A.** Unless recognized as an Elder, ministry staff:

- do not vote in governance meetings,
- may be invited to attend to present and contribute ideas,
- do not decide Church doctrine or policy,
- do not supervise Elders.

**B.** This maintains the biblical distinction between ruling (elders) and serving (staff).

### *Section 9: Transition From Old Bylaw Structure*

**A.** To maintain unity and respect for those currently serving, the Church will:

- review and realign old titles into the new structure,
- ensure no one loses position or respect—only clarifying roles according to Scripture,
- allow those qualified as Elders to enter the vetting process,
- allow those not yet qualified to continue serving in appropriate pastoral roles,
- coordinate with the District to ensure a smooth and biblically faithful transition.

**B.** Transition Period and Active Elder Development

Churches are permitted to maintain the current Executive Committee (Ban Chấp Hành) structure for a transition period of maximum four (4) years from the adoption of these bylaws, for the purpose of training and appointing Elders according to these regulations.

During this transition period, the following provisions apply:

**(1) Mandatory Active Pursuit.** The transition period is not a governance exception but a development mandate. From the date these bylaws are adopted, the Lead Pastor shall immediately and actively pursue the Elder identification and vetting process as described in Article 3, Section 2 of these regulations. The church shall not treat the transition period as permission to defer this work.

**(2) Role of the Executive Committee During the Transition.** During the transition period, the Executive Committee shall be responsible for administrative and operational functions necessary to maintain the church's ongoing ministry, including: financial management, facility oversight, organizational coordination, and personnel administration. The Executive Committee does not assume the spiritual governing authority of Elders by virtue of this clause.

**(3) Spiritual Functions During the Transition Gap.** If the church does not yet have confirmed Elders, core spiritual Elder functions — including doctrinal oversight, admit membership, pastoral care of the flock, church discipline, and ministry direction — shall be the responsibility of the Lead Pastor, who as a licensed official worker retains spiritual oversight of the church under the authority of Scripture and in consultation with the

District Superintendent as provided in the C&MA Manual. This consultation is an institutional accountability measure and does not affect the local church's sole authority to identify, vet, and confirm its own Lay Elders without District licensing or District approval.

**(4) Men in Elder Development.** Men who are actively in the Elder identification and vetting process (Article 3, Section 2) may, at the Lead Pastor's invitation, support the Lead Pastor in non-governing spiritual ministry — including prayer, visitation, biblical encouragement, and discipleship — during the transition period. Such service does not constitute Elder office or Elder authority. Governing authority is established only upon formal congregational confirmation in accordance with Article 3, Section 2.D.

**(5) Progress Accountability.** The church shall report on its Elder development progress to the District Superintendent no less than annually during the transition period. This report is for the purpose of institutional accountability and district support, not for District approval of individual Elder candidates.

### *Section 10: Protecting Unity and Biblical Submission*

**A.** All ministry staff commit to:

- revering God's Word as supreme authority,
- submitting to the leadership of the Council of Elders,
- maintaining unity and avoiding division,
- teaching and serving according to the Church's beliefs,
- serving with humility, joy, and love.

**B.** Any staff member who teaches falsely, causes division, abuses influence, or violates biblical standards may be corrected, have tasks adjusted, be suspended, or dismissed according to the decision of the Governance Authority, along with appropriate pastoral care.

## **ARTICLE 6: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP**

In addition to the doctrinal confirmation stated in Subdivision III.A, Article 3, Section 1, the membership status of a believer must be confirmed by the Church Membership Committee according to Subdivision III.B, Article 3, Section 1, Point C(2). If the church is in a transition phase without Elders, the Church Executive Committee will assume this task, adhering to the criteria that "An official believer [is] 16 years of age or older, actively participating in the local Church for at least three (3) months."

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## **SUBDIVISION III.C: SAMPLE LOCAL CHURCH BYLAWS**

### **(SAMPLE LOCAL CHURCH BYLAWS - Use with Prayerful Discernment)**

*Note: This text is a detailed model bylaw to help the local church implement the District Constitution and Regulations. The Church may adjust details (numbers, times, etc.) to suit its specific context, provided they do not conflict with the General Council Constitution and District Bylaws.*

## **ARTICLE 1: GOVERNANCE STRUCTURE AND ELECTIONS**

*(Detailing Subdivision III.A Article 15, III.B Article 1, and III.B Article 3 Section 1.D)*

### *Section 1: Three Governance Systems*

1. The Board of Elders shall govern the Local Church through one of the following three systems, in accordance with the C&MA National Manual, Section E14, Article 3, Paragraph 3.2:
  - a. Single Board System with all Elders. The Governing Board shall be designated as the Board of Elders, consisting of at least five (5) church members who meet the biblical qualifications for an Elder (1 Timothy 3:1–7 and Titus 1:5–9). This includes the Lead Pastor and the following positions: Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Members-at-Large.
  - b. Single Board System with a Majority of Elders. The Governing Board shall be designated as the Governance Authority, consisting of at least five (5) church members. This includes the Lead Pastor and the following positions: Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Members-at-Large. However, there must be a sufficient number of elders (more than two) to consistently maintain an elder majority on the Governing Board. Non-elder members must meet the biblical qualifications for a deacon (1 Timothy 3:8–13).
  - c. Two-Board System (Board of Elders and Board of Deacons). The Governing Board shall be designated as the Board of Elders. Their work shall be supported by a Board of Deacons or a Board of Ministries (comprising the Board of Deacons and Ministry Directors). The Board of Elders is the primary decision-making body that determines all ministry delegations, the required levels of authority, and mutual accountability.
    - i. Board of Elders: Must consist of at least three (3) members, including the Lead Pastor.
    - ii. Board of Deacons or Board of Ministries: Must consist of at least five (5) members. The Board of Ministries may include the Secretary, Treasurer, Assistant Treasurer, and Members-at-Large. The Board of Elders shall appoint a Chairperson from among those elected to this board.
2. Quorum: The valid quorum for conducting the official business of any board shall be two-thirds (2/3) of the total membership of the respective board.

### *Section 2: Bilingual or Multi-Congregational Ministry within One Local Church*

1. One Church under One Governance Authority: The Church may conduct ministry through more than one language, worship service, or congregational setting while remaining one local church under one Constitution, one membership roll, and one Governance Authority.
2. Elder Oversight: The Board of Elders shall retain responsibility for doctrine, discipline, membership oversight, ordinances, pastoral direction, and spiritual shepherding of the whole Church, including each ministry congregation.
3. Pastoral Assignment to a Ministry Congregation: The Governance Authority may assign a licensed pastor or other approved ministry staff member to shepherd a particular ministry congregation, language fellowship, or worship community of the Church. Such assignment may include preaching, teaching, discipleship, pastoral care, ministry coordination, leadership development, and other duties delegated by the Governance Authority. A licensed pastor serving a language or ministry congregation may:
  - o lead that congregation's regular ministry;
  - o recommend membership candidates, ministry plans, and budget needs;
  - o participate in planning and coordination meetings; and
  - o submit pastoral concerns and recommendations to the Board of Elders.

4. Delegated Ministry Responsibility Distinguished from Elder Office: Delegated responsibility for shepherding a ministry congregation does not by itself constitute the office of Elder. A District License recognizes ministry function and fitness for ministry service, but ruling authority as an Elder is established only through the Church's process of biblical vetting, nomination, and congregational confirmation according to Subdivision III.B and these local bylaws.
5. Representation in Leadership: When biblically qualified men are available, the Church should prayerfully seek wise representation of its major ministry congregations in leadership, while maintaining that biblical qualification, doctrinal soundness, proven character, and congregational trust remain the primary standards for Elder recognition.
6. Elder Confirmation in a Bilingual or or Multi-Congregational Setting: When such a licensed pastor or other approved ministry staff member from a particular ministry congregation, language fellowship, or worship community of the Church is biblically qualified and formally confirmed by the Church as an Elder, he may serve on the Board of Elders and participate fully in spiritual oversight for the whole Church, not merely for one ministry congregation.
7. Unity of the Church: All ministry congregations remain part of one Church and shall not function as separate legal churches, independent memberships, or independent governance bodies unless lawfully organized and approved through a separate constitutional process.

### *Section 3: Annual Church Conference (Annual Membership Meeting)*

1. **Time:** The Church shall hold an Annual Church Conference once each year, typically in [e.g., January or the first quarter] of the calendar year, with the specific time determined by the Governance Authority.
2. **Purpose:** The Annual Church Conference is convened to:
  - Hear and ratify reports on ministry activities of the past year.
  - Hear the audited financial report from the Treasurer.
  - Elect Church officers, Elders, and members of the Governance Authority for the new term.
  - Discuss and vote on other important matters related to the development direction of the Church.
3. **Notice:** The time, location, and agenda (including the list of candidates) must be publicly announced to the entire congregation at least **two (2) weeks** prior to the opening date of the conference.
4. **Chairman:** The Lead Pastor is the Chairman of the Annual Church Conference ex officio. In the event the Church is without a Lead Pastor, the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Governance Authority shall preside with the consultation or presence of a District representative.

### *Section 4: Special Church Conference (Special Membership Meeting)*

1. **Authority to Convene:** The Lead Pastor and the Governance Authority have the authority to convene a Special Church Conference to discuss and vote on urgent or important Church matters that cannot wait until the Annual Church Conference.
2. **Notice:** The decision to organize must be publicly announced to the congregation at least **one (1) week** prior to the meeting date (unless state law or specific bylaws require a longer notice period). The notice must state the purpose of the meeting.
3. **Chairman:** The Lead Pastor is the Chairman of the Special Church Conference ex officio. In the event the Church is without a Lead Pastor, the Chairman of the Governance Authority or a person designated by the District Superintendent shall preside.

### *Section 5: Spiritual Development Conference*

1. **Purpose:** To build up a deep life of faith, rekindle love for the Lord, and equip believers with ministry skills.
2. **Organization:** The Lead Pastor and Governance Authority are responsible for planning and organizing Spiritual Development Conferences depending on the spiritual needs and resource capabilities of the Church.

### *Section 6: Nomination and Election Process for Governance Authority*

1. **Nominating Committee:** The Nominating Committee must be established at least **two (2) months** prior to the Annual Church Conference. The committee is responsible for interviewing and verifying the spiritual character of all candidates (Elders, Deacons, and other officers) based on biblical standards (1 Timothy 3, Titus 1) and the Constitution.
2. **Posting of List:** The list of candidates must be publicly posted for the congregation at least **two (2) weeks** prior to the election date for the congregation to pray and provide feedback.
3. **Election Method:**
  - o All Elder and Governance Authority positions should be elected by ballot.
  - o The elected person must achieve at least a majority vote (over 50% of valid votes) of the official believers (members) present.
  - o In the event there is only one candidate for a position, the congregation may vote by show of hands or general consensus (if allowed by church bylaws).
4. **Absence:** The Church may not accept voting by proxy or absentee ballots, unless required by state law or if there is a special provision for force majeure approved in advance by the Governance Authority.

### *Section 7: Rules of Order*

1. **Delegate Conduct:** All statements in the Conference must maintain a spirit of gentleness, edification, and mutual respect (Ephesians 4:29). The Chairman has the right to suspend a delegate's right to speak if this principle is violated.
2. **Speaking Limits:** To ensure order, each delegate may speak a maximum of **two (2) times** on the same issue, each time not exceeding **three (3) minutes**, unless granted additional time by the Conference.
3. **Campaigning:** All forms of campaigning or divisive voting are strictly prohibited to maintain unity in the Spirit.

### *Section 8: Proposal Submission Process*

1. Members wishing to submit a proposal for discussion at the Annual Church Conference should send a written document to the Secretary of the Governance Authority at least **three (3) months** prior to the meeting date.
2. The Governance Authority is responsible for reviewing, praying over, and deciding whether to include the proposal in the conference agenda. If rejected, the Governance Authority must explain the reason to the proposer.

## **ARTICLE 2: CALL AND RETENTION OF LEAD PASTOR**

*(Detailing Subdivision III.B Article 2)*

### *Section 1: Pastor Search Process*

1. **Search Committee:** When the Church is without a Lead Pastor, the Governance Authority will elect a Search Committee consisting of representatives from the Governance Authority and departments representing the congregation. This committee must work closely with the District Superintendent.
2. **Recommendation and Vetting:** The committee may only consider candidates who have been recommended or approved by the District Superintendent regarding credentials and moral character.
3. **Voting:** After the candidate preaches as a guest and interacts with the congregation, the Church will organize a Special Church Conference to vote on confidence. Calling a Lead Pastor requires high consensus, at least **two-thirds (2/3)** of the votes of the official members present is recommended.

### *Section 2: Reappointment and Resignation*

1. **Reappointment:** If the term is defined with a time limit, reappointment will be proposed by the Governance Authority and voted on by the congregation.

2. **Termination of Office:** If the Church or the Lead Pastor wishes to terminate the office, written notice must be sent to the District Superintendent and the relevant party at least **six (6) months** prior to the end date, except in cases of discipline or emergency.

### *Section 3: Licensed Pastoral Staff Serving Ministry Congregations*

1. **Calling and Appointment:** An Associate Pastor, Assistant Pastor, English Ministry Pastor, or other licensed pastoral staff member may be called by the Church in accordance with District regulations and appointed in cooperation with the District Superintendent.
2. **Nature of Service:** Such pastoral staff may be entrusted with real and substantial shepherding responsibility for the congregation or ministry entrusted to them, including preaching, discipleship, counseling, visitation, ministry oversight, and leadership development, under the overall oversight of the Council of Elders or Governance Authority.
3. **No Automatic Elder Status:** No licensed pastoral staff member shall be considered an Elder automatically by virtue of licensure, title, or ministry assignment alone.
4. **Pathway to Eldership:** If a licensed pastoral staff member is a biblically qualified man and the Church discerns that he is called to share in the ruling and shepherding oversight of the whole Church, he may be presented for Elder recognition through the same process of examination, nomination, and congregational confirmation required by Subdivision III.B, Article 3.
5. In churches with more than one pastor or more than one ministry congregation, the Governance Authority shall maintain a written ministry responsibility plan that clearly identifies:
  - the congregation or ministry entrusted to each pastor;
  - lines of reporting and accountability;
  - responsibility for membership process, baptism preparation, and pastoral care;
  - how recommendations regarding discipline, doctrine, staffing, and budget are brought forward; and
  - whether a non-Elder pastoral staff member attends leadership meetings with voice only or with voice and assigned administrative vote where permitted by the adopted governance structure.

## **ARTICLE 3: TERMS AND QUALIFICATIONS OF OFFICERS**

*(Detailing Subdivision III.B Articles 3 & 4)*

### *Section 1: Service Terms of Elders and Governance Authority*

1. **Service Principle:** Consistent with District regulations, the office of Elder (and member of the Governance Authority) is not limited by a fixed administrative term. Elders serve continuously as long as they maintain biblical moral qualities, are faithful to doctrine, and serve effectively (1 Timothy 3; Titus 1).
2. **Annual Biblical-Qualification Review:** To ensure confidence, accountability, and unity in the Church, at each Annual Church Conference the congregation shall evaluate each member of the Governance Authority individually through a signed biblical-qualification ballot, as follows:
  - **Ballot Format.** The ballot shall ask about biblical qualifications for each Elder (1 Timothy 3:1–7; Titus 1:5–9; 1 Peter 5:1–4) and provide three response options: (a) Qualified, (b) Not qualified, or (c) No Opinion. Space must be provided for specific written biblical disqualification.
  - **Signed Ballots Only.** Only signed ballots shall be counted. Ballots marking "Not qualified" without a stated biblical basis, and unsigned ballots, shall not be counted toward the threshold for that member. "No Opinion" responses shall not be counted toward the threshold.

- **Ballot Submission and Counting.** Ballots should be submitted in sealed envelopes. They should be counted by the Governance Authority together with at least two (2) members selected from the congregation for this purpose.
  - **Threshold.** If twenty percent (20%) or more of valid signed ballots expressing an opinion (i.e., excluding "No Opinion") indicate "Unqualified" for a member, that member shall step aside from active duties and enter a review and consult process with the Elders and District Superintendent. *(Note: Each church may adjust this threshold in its own bylaws; 20% is the recommended default for signed, reason-based ballots.)*
  - **Review Process.** The Governance Authority, in consultation with the District Superintendent if needed, shall evaluate the validity and biblical basis of the stated concerns. If the concerns are substantiated, the Governance Authority and District Superintendent shall determine the appropriate course of action, which may include a development plan, temporary leave, reassignment of duties, or removal from office per the discipline provisions (District Regulations III.B, Article 3, Section 3.D). If the concerns are not substantiated, the Elder shall be restored to full active duties.
  - **Confidentiality.** Results shall be communicated to the congregation only in summary form: either that all members of the Governance Authority have been affirmed, or that a review process has been initiated. Individual vote counts, specific concerns, and ballot contents shall remain confidential to the counting group and the Governance Authority.
  - **Restorative Spirit.** The spirit of this process is restoration and pastoral care (Galatians 6:1), not punitive action. Stepping aside is the beginning of a care process, not a verdict of guilt.
3. **Administrative Officers:** The positions of Secretary and Treasurer (if not Elders) have a term of **one (1) year** and are elected (or re-appointed) at the Annual Church Conference.

### *Section 2: Recognition of Licensed Pastoral Staff as Elders*

1. Eligibility: A licensed pastoral staff member may be recognized as an Elder only if he:
  - meets the biblical qualifications for Elders;
  - demonstrates doctrinal soundness, spiritual maturity, and proven fruitfulness in ministry;
  - is examined by the Governance Authority or Elder Board;
  - is presented to the congregation in accordance with the Church's election procedures; and
  - is confirmed by congregational vote as prescribed in these bylaws.
2. Equal Standing upon Confirmation: Upon valid congregational confirmation as an Elder, such pastoral staff member shall serve as an Elder with the same spiritual duties, accountability, and governing authority as the other Elders, unless otherwise limited by the lawful structure adopted by the Church.
3. Service Prior to Confirmation: Before such confirmation, the pastoral staff member may attend leadership meetings when invited, may present reports and recommendations, and may carry delegated ministry responsibility, but shall not exercise the governing authority of an Elder or vote in matters reserved to the Elders or Governance Authority.

### *Section 3: Terms and Qualifications of Deacons*

1. In addition to the biblical standards in 1 Timothy 3:8-13, Deacon candidates must be official members of the Church for at least **twelve (12) months** and faithful.
2. To avoid conflict of interest and concentration of power, members of the same family (spouse/children) should not serve simultaneously on the Governance Authority or hold financial control positions (Treasurer and Secretary).
3. The term for a Deacon is **two (2) years** (at the Church's option) and may be re-elected.
4. To ensure continuity, terms should be staggered so that only a portion of the members are re-elected each year.

#### *Section 4: Staff Training and Sabbatical Practice*

1. To provide opportunities for new personnel, spiritual enrichment, and renewal of strength, an officer should not serve more than six (6) consecutive years in the same position, after which they should rest for at least one year. This is a set-aside time for rest before being re-elected, not a termination of office.
2. To encourage long-term learning and spiritual freshness, the Lead Pastor (and full-time staff) after every seven (7) years of continuous service at the Church may submit a request for Sabbatical leave (usually from 1 to 3 months) for study, prayer, or rest. This plan needs to be approved by the Governance Authority based on the needs of the Church and the Pastor's plan.

### **ARTICLE 4: FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION**

*(Detailing Subdivision III.A Articles 9 & 13)*

#### *Section 1: Financial Controls*

1. **Two-Signature Principle:** All checks or payment orders of the Church must have at least **two (2) signatures** of authorized persons (usually the Treasurer and a member of the Governance Authority, not necessarily the Lead Pastor).
2. **Counting Money:** Weekly offerings must be counted immediately at the Church by at least **two (2) persons** not from the same family, and a cash count sheet must be created with confirming signatures before handing over to the Treasurer.
3. **Reporting:** The Treasurer must prepare a monthly income and expense report to send to the Governance Authority. The annual financial report must be posted for the congregation to view before the Annual Church Conference.

#### *Section 2: Internal Audit*

1. Each year, the Governance Authority must appoint a Financial Control Committee consisting of at least **three (3) members** knowledgeable in accounting and not currently on the Governance Authority or in the Treasurer's family.
2. This committee is responsible for examining books, bank documents, and income/expense procedures, then reporting the results (confirming accuracy or stating errors) to the Annual Church Conference.
3. **Procedure:** The audit procedure will follow the specific guidelines and checklists prescribed in **Appendix F** of the "Church Treasurer Finance Manual" of The Christian and Missionary Alliance.

#### *Section 3: Contribution to District*

1. Demonstrating a spirit of unity and shared responsibility, the Church commits to giving a predetermined percentage according to District regulations of the Church's total income to the District Operating Fund.
2. Contributions for missions (Great Commission Fund) must be transferred to the National Office before the 10th of the following month.

### **ARTICLE 5: MINISTRY STAFF BENEFITS**

*(Detailing Subdivision III.B Article 5)*

#### *Section 1: Annual Vacation*

1. To regenerate strength for service, full-time ministry staff are entitled to paid vacation based on years of service in the District (per 1989/2010 guidelines):
  - Under 1 year: **1 week.**
  - From 1 to 5 years: **2 weeks.**
  - From 6 to 15 years: **3 weeks.**
  - From 16 years and over: **4 weeks.**

### *Section 2: Salary and Benefits*

1. The Governance Authority is responsible for reviewing the salary and benefits for the Pastor and staff annually, based on the financial ability of the Church and the cost of living in the local area, to ensure that staff can "live by the Gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14).
2. The District recommends that the minimum salary should be equivalent to that of teachers in the area.

## ARTICLE 6: MEMBERSHIP AND ORDINANCES

*(Detailing Subdivision III.B Article 6)*

### *Section 1: Official Membership Conditions*

1. An official member with the right to vote and run for office is a person who:
  - Has been baptized.
  - Is **16 years** of age or older (to vote) and **21 years** or older (to run for leadership office).
  - Has completed the membership catechism class and committed to adhering to the Statement of Faith and Bylaws of the Church.
  - Has participated regularly and faithfully in the Church for at least **three (3) to six (6) months**.
  - Has been officially approved by the Committee on Membership and entered into the membership roll.

### *Section 2: Marriage and Family*

1. **Wedding Ceremony:** The Lead Pastor only officiates weddings at the Church for couples consisting of one man and one woman (according to the biblical definition of marriage), of the same faith, and who have completed the pre-marital counseling course prescribed by the Church.
2. **Divorce and Remarriage:** The Church adheres to the position of The Christian and Missionary Alliance regarding divorce and remarriage. Complex cases need to be consulted with the Governance Authority for appropriate guidance and pastoral care before performing any ceremony.

## ARTICLE 7: ORGANIZATION AND MISSIONS

*(Detailing Subdivision III.B Article 10)*

### *Section 1: Missions Conference*

1. The Church will organize a **Missions Conference** annually to encourage missionary spirit, update information from the fields, and call for Faith Promise pledges for the Great Commission Fund.

### *Section 2: Political Independence*

1. To maintain unity in the body of Christ and focus on the Gospel mission:
  - The Church does not participate in, endorse, or represent any political party.
  - Do not hang the national flag of any country in the sanctuary or Church premises (except in special cases permitted by the Governance Authority for specific historical or cultural reasons, provided it does not cause division).

[This is the end of draft 1.2d, April 2026 – please consult <https://vayhub.us/hoidong> for sources or <https://bit.ly/brc-info> for questions]