

# Recommendations to the 2017 General Conference



# RECOMMENDATIONS TO 2017 GENERAL CONFERENCE

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# Resolutions and Recommendations to the 2017 General Conference The Free Methodist Church in Canada

## 1. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

### a. ¶161 THE QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP\*

**MOTION:** That the Membership questions be changed to read as follows:

#### THE QUESTIONS FOR MEMBERSHIP/PARTNERSHIP\*

(In the Free Methodist Church in Canada, the term partnership may be used instead of the term membership with respect to those coming into or living in a covenant relationship with a FMCiC congregation.)

**Pastor:** Friends, you have been baptized into the life of Jesus Christ and are now part of the family of God. This morning you are indicating your desire to become a partner/member of this congregation of the Free Methodist Church. We're glad that God's mercy has brought you to this point in your journey; and we're joining our prayers with yours as you take this step.

1. Do you have assurance that God has forgiven your sins through faith in Jesus?

**Candidate: I do.**

2. Do you believe that the Bible is God's written word, uniquely inspired by the Holy Spirit and do you accept its authority for what you must believe and how you must live?

**Candidate: I do.**

3. Do you intend by God's grace, to be like Jesus in heart and life, to be fully open to the cleansing and empowering activity of the Holy Spirit, and to be guided by the Scriptures, and by the nurture and fellowship of this faith community?

~~Do you here resolve, by God's grace, to be Christ like in heart and life, opening yourself fully to the cleansing and empowering ministry of the Holy Spirit, the guidance of the Scriptures, and the nurture and fellowship of this church?~~

**Candidate: I do, by God's enabling grace, with the help of this community.**

4. Will you accept and endeavor to live in harmony with the foundational principles of the Free Methodist Church, including the Articles of Religion, the Membership Covenant and the goals for Christian conduct, and be guided by the leadership structures of the Free Methodist Church?

~~Do you accept the Articles of Religion, the Membership Covenant, the goals for Christian conduct, and the government of the Free Methodist Church, and will you endeavor to live in harmony with them?~~

**Candidate: I will do so, trusting God's power to help me.**

5. As a follower of Jesus Christ, will you partner with our faith community and the Free Methodist movement as we actively participate in the mission of God in this world; and will you joyfully join us in giving sacrificially of your time, talents and resources to help carry out that mission?

~~As a follower of Jesus Christ, will you embrace the mission of the Free Methodist Church within and beyond this congregation, and will you join us in giving sacrificially of your time, talents and resources to help us carry out that mission?~~

**Candidate: I will with God's help.**

**Pastor:**

We welcome you into our faith community and the wider Free Methodist Church. May the experience of partnership/membership in this body not only enrich your life and the life of our church; but also advance God's desires for our community and world.

~~I offer you the right hand of fellowship. I welcome you into The Free Methodist Church. May the experience of membership in this body enrich your life and the life of our church; and may your contribution to its life strengthen both you and all of us.~~

\* \* \* \* \*

**b. ¶305.5, 370.4 Removal of Fellowship Stage of Church Development**

**MOTION:**

*Whereas*, the Fellowship stage of Church development in the FMCiC has proven to be redundant,

*Therefore*, be it resolved that content related to Fellowship Status ¶305.5 and ¶370 be removed and status requirements be assigned to either the church plant or society paragraphs of The Manual.

**¶305.5 FELLOWSHIP STATUS**

~~Fellowship status is normally the second phase in the formation of most new churches.~~

~~5.1 The director of church planting, with the approval of the board of administration, may recognize a new congregation (church plant) as a Free Methodist fellowship when the following conditions have been met:~~

- ~~• The new congregation (church plant) has completed a diagnostic viability study.~~
- ~~• At least 12 members have been adequately prepared through membership instruction.~~
- ~~• These members give joint public assent to the adoption of *The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada*. (See questions in ¶384a.)~~
- ~~• A certificate of agreement prepared by The Free Methodist Church in Canada has been signed by the pastor, these members, and the bishop or (a designee) on behalf of the board of administration. This shall indicate that the pastor(s) and members of the fellowship have given joint consent to the adoption of *The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada*. (See certificate sample in ¶384b.)~~
- ~~• The fellowship has been approved by Canada Revenue Agency as a charitable organization under the terms of the Income Tax Act.~~

- ~~The fellowship shall obtain Trade Mark License/Association Agreements from The Free Methodist Church in Canada. (See ¶301.1)~~

~~5.2 The pastor or lay project leader and the fellowship shall be accountable to the director of church planting, and the conference. Together they shall guide the group toward becoming a Free Methodist society. The fellowship shall provide the director of church planting with periodic written reports of progress and need for further guidance.~~

~~5.3 The fellowship may receive adult and youth members.~~

~~5.4 The members of the fellowship shall elect an official board of no fewer than three members with officers as outlined in ¶320.2.3 for such additional organizational structures as are needed to administer its ministry programs. (See ¶325 for guidance.)~~

~~5.5 A fellowship shall hold and disperse its own funds. The conference shall receive a copy of the annual financial review.~~

~~5.6 A fellowship is encouraged to financially support conference and denominational ministries as a first step toward full participation in these financial responsibilities (See ¶375.3.2).~~

~~5.7 If a fellowship acquires real property, it shall be held in the name of the sponsor or the conference until the fellowship becomes a society. The official board may serve as the trustees of the fellowship. Any financial assistance provided by the denomination to assist in the acquisition or improvement of real property shall be in the form of mortgages or loans, repayable immediately if the fellowship is dissolved.~~

~~5.8 A fellowship shall be granted an honorary membership in the general conference. Its delegate(s) is entitled to an honorary seat, with a voice, but without a vote.~~

~~5.9 A congregation may not remain in fellowship status for more than three years without the approval of the board of administration. If a fellowship is dissolved:~~

- ~~Letters of transfer shall be issued to its members in good standing.~~
- ~~All accumulated assets shall become the property of the conference.~~

#### **¶370.4 FELLOWSHIP STATUS**

~~When a new congregation is ready to establish a greater sense of ownership and independence, it may enter into the process of becoming a fellowship. The terms for doing so are to be negotiated with the sponsor to facilitate an orderly withdrawal from sponsorship as outlined in ¶305.5.~~

~~The point person and the fellowship shall be accountable to their network, their network leader, the director of church planting, and the conference. Together they shall guide the group toward becoming a Free Methodist society. The criteria for becoming a society are as follows:~~

- ~~A job description performance appraisal (JDPAS) process resulting in the development of a mission statement and ministry plan has been completed.~~
- ~~The congregation is able to demonstrate that it is self-propagating (growing)~~

\* \* \* \* \*

#### **c. ¶315.3 Society meetings (Notice Period)**

*Whereas*, the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporation Act mandates that Special Meetings need to be announced 30 days in advance, therefore let it be resolved that **¶315.3 Society Meetings be changed to read as follows:**

Special meetings shall be announced at least ~~15~~<sup>30</sup> days in advance, except in emergency situations. A special meeting may only consider the limited list of agenda items specified in the announcement.

\* \* \* \* \*

**d. ¶315.6 Society Meetings** (election guidance)

*Whereas:* Robert’s Rules of Order is declared in ¶315.6 of the Manual to be the standard of procedure for Society Meetings; and

*Whereas:* not every local church is well versed in Robert’s Rules of Order; and

*Whereas:* comments from church leaders suggest that election protocols at society meetings need to be clarified;

**Therefore be it resolved that ¶315.6 be amended to read as follows:**

6. Robert’s Rules of Order in the latest edition shall be the standard of parliamentary procedure. Unless otherwise specified, “elect” or “election” in this chapter means a simple majority vote (50% plus one) by show of hands, voice, ballot or other manner determined by the local church. Tellers may be appointed to distribute materials and count ballots.

\* \* \* \* \*

**e. ¶315.7 Society Meetings** (empowerment of the official board)

**MOTION: That the following sentence be added as the seventh point of ¶315:**

7. When The Manual gives the society the option to elect personnel or to empower the official board to do so, the society may so empower the official board by action taken annually or by standing policy.

\* \* \* \* \*

**f. ¶320.2.1 OFFICIAL BOARD SIZE**

**MOTION: *Whereas, the Canada Not-For-Profit Corporations act mandates that there be “no more than 15 members”, Therefore let it be resolved that ¶320.2.1 OFFICIAL BOARD be amended to read as follows:***

2.1 The society shall elect an official board of no less than three and no more than ~~14~~<sup>15</sup> members. (See ¶325.1)

\* \* \* \* \*

**g. ¶320.3.5 Election of Delegates**

*Whereas* ¶320.3.5 requires delegates to be elected by ballot without nomination; and

*Whereas* election by ballot without nomination can pose problematic procedural issues for society meetings; and

*Whereas* certain elements of ¶320.3.5 are redundant considering the proposed changes to ¶315;

**Therefore, be it resolved that ¶320.3.5 be amended to read as follows:**

5. The delegate(s) and reserve delegate(s) may be elected by the society or the society may choose to empower the official board to elect delegates from among its members. In order for delegates to have one year of service prior to attending general conference, and then to have two years to work with the pastor to implement the actions of the general conference, they may be elected at a society/official board meeting a year prior to the sitting of the general conference, and will serve until the next such election. (See ¶315.6-7)

The delegates should normally serve for a maximum of three consecutive terms. Delegates to be elected for additional consecutive terms must be elected by at least a two-thirds majority.

\* \* \* \* \*

**h. ¶320.5.2.2 and ¶373.2.6 Pastor's Cabinet**

*Whereas:* The Manual of the FMCiC states the following purpose/objectives for a Pastor's Cabinet in ¶373.2.6: *To assist the pastor by meeting with the pastor as a prayer cabinet, receiving recommendations and concerns arising from the congregation and reflecting on them with the pastor, and receiving recommendations and concerns from the pastor and offering support and counsel to the pastor and,*

*Whereas:* Some unhealthy situations can develop when a pastor exerts undue influence and power; in the selection of the whole cabinet and,

*Whereas:* Other unhealthy situations can develop when members are placed on the Pastor's Cabinet in a process completely overseen by the society/board and,

*Whereas:* a formula is needed in the creation of the Pastor's Cabinet in order to provide for a balanced leadership model that is especially helpful when conflict resolution is needed,

**Therefore, be it resolved that it be recommended to the 2017 General Conference that ¶320.5.2.2 and ¶373.2.6 Pastor's Cabinet be amended to read as follows:**

### **¶320.5.2.2 Pastor's Cabinet**

The pastor's cabinet shall be made up of three or six members, all of whom shall be members of the society. The Society shall determine which of the following options will be used to form the Pastor's Cabinet:

- A) The Cabinet will be created and approved by the Official Board following the ratio in this formula: one delegate, one board member selected by the board, one person selected by the pastor who may or may not be a board member (i.e. 1:1:1 or 2:2:2).
- B) The Official Board (or a portion thereof, if the Board is larger than 6) will serve as the Pastor's Cabinet.

~~5.2.2 **Pastor's Cabinet:** The pastor's cabinet shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee and elected by the society. It shall have no fewer than three members and no more than seven, who shall be members of the society. Alternatively, the society may direct to have the official board serve as the pastor's cabinet. At least one delegate shall be a member. (See ¶373.2.6)~~

### **¶373.2.6 Pastor's Cabinet**

The pastor's cabinet shall have either three or six members, all of whom shall be members of the society. The Society shall determine which of the following options will be used to form the Pastor's Cabinet:

- A) The Cabinet will be created and approved by the Official Board following the ratio in this formula: one delegate, one board member selected by the board, one person selected by the pastor who may or may not be a board member (i.e. 1:1:1).
- B) The Official Board (or a portion thereof, if the Board is larger than 6) will serve as the Pastor's Cabinet.

The pastor's cabinet will assist the pastor by meeting with the pastor as a prayer cabinet, receiving recommendations and concerns arising from the congregation and reflecting on them with the pastor, and receiving recommendations and concerns from the pastor and offering support and counsel to the pastor. The members of the pastor's cabinet need to be mature, trustworthy individuals who can be entrusted with sensitive and confidential information.

### **¶373.2.6 Pastor's Cabinet**

~~The Pastor's Cabinet is made up of members of the society, nominated by the Nominating Committee, elected by the society for the purpose of making ministry more effective. It may be elected by the society as a separate committee. The society may also assign the responsibility of choosing the pastor's cabinet to the official board. In the latter case, the official board may designate several of its members to serve the functions of a pastor's cabinet.~~

~~The pastor's cabinet will assist the pastor by meeting with the pastor as a prayer cabinet, receiving recommendations and concerns arising from the congregation and reflecting on them with the pastor, and receiving recommendations and concerns from the pastor and offering support and counsel to the pastor.~~

~~The members of the pastor's cabinet need to be mature, trustworthy individuals who can be entrusted with sensitive and confidential information.~~

\* \* \* \* \*

i. ¶320.6 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Motion: That the following be added as the sixth paragraph to ¶320:

¶320.6 CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is a conflict of interest if a member of the Official Board, a committee member or an employee of the church is in any way directly or indirectly interested or may become interested in a material way in an existing or proposed contract, transaction or arrangement with the local church.

A person also has a conflict of interest if:

- a. his/her family (with family defined as spouse, father, mother, child, sister or brother or spouse of such family members);
- b. his/her business partner or his/her business associate; or
- c. a corporation that he/she is involved with as either a director, shareholder, officer, employee or agent has in any way, directly or indirectly, an interest or may become interested in a material way in any existing or proposed contract, transaction or arrangement with the local church.

In all such instances such a person shall declare his/her conflict of interest fully to the chair of the official board and shall withdraw from any and all discussions or voting thereon. The Minutes shall document the declaration of the conflict of interest and the absence of the individual from all discussions and voting.

When a conflict of interest is declared by a member of the Official Board and following such disclosure, a proposed contract, transaction or arrangement with the local church is awarded which gives rise to a direct benefit to such person or his/her spouse, in the event the person decides to accept such awarded contract, transaction or arrangement, he/she shall immediately resign from the Official Board unless the award of such contracts, transaction or arrangement is approved by the Court.

Failure to follow these guidelines could result in the loss of the church’s charitable status.

\* \* \* \* \*

j. ¶Par 325.1 Official Board (CRA references removed)

MOTION: *Whereas, government circulars and bulletins are regularly updated and titles change, therefore let it be resolved that ¶Par 325.1 (second paragraph) be changed to read as follows:*

1. *Membership:*

~~To comply with Income Tax Act regulations regarding charities~~ To ensure that the local church does not become classified by Canada Revenue Agency as a private foundation, more than 50% of the members of the official board must be “at arm’s length”. ~~For our purposes, “arms length” means people unrelated by blood, adoption, marriage, or employment. (See Canada Revenue Agency – Taxation Information Circular 80-10 and Interpretation Bulletin IT-419)~~

\* \* \* \* \*

**k. ¶325.4.2 MEETINGS – Absentee Board Meetings**

**Motion: That ¶325.4.2 MEETINGS be amended to read as follows:**

**¶325.4. MEETINGS**

- 4.1 The official board shall meet regularly. The interval between meetings should not exceed two months.
- 4.2 Members who are unable to attend should notify the chair in advance. Members who attend less than 50% of the meetings within any 12 month period may be replaced.
- 4.3 Robert’s Rules of Order in the latest edition shall be the standard of parliamentary procedure. The official board may adopt standing rules provided that they are not in conflict with Robert’s Rules of Order.

\* \* \* \* \*

**l. ¶350 Incorporation and Deeds**

**Motion: That ¶385 (Incorporation and Deeds) be incorporated into ¶350 so that it reads as follows:**

**¶350 PROPERTY**

**1. Incorporation and Deeds**

Before an annual conference, district conference, a pastoral charge, or a society purchases real estate, a lawyer should be consulted and given a copy of *The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada* for reference, and wherever the civil laws will permit, proceed to incorporate. The articles of incorporation, wherever the law will permit, should provide that the corporation shall be subject to the rules, regulations, doctrines, and *The Manual of The Free Methodist Church* incorporated as “The Free Methodist Church in Canada,” as from time to time adopted by the general conference of that church insofar as they do not contravene the civil laws, and that the secular affairs of the corporation shall be managed by trustees elected according to the provisions of this chapter. When incorporation is complete, the deed shall be made out directly to the owning body in its corporate name and shall without exception contain the trust clause given in the following paragraph.

**1.1 Trust Clause**

The Free Methodist Church in Canada was incorporated by an Act of Incorporation assented to on July 8, 1959, by the Parliament of Canada.

In provinces where the law requires church property to be held by trustees, and where incorporation is not secured as provided for in the above paragraph, all deeds shall be made to the trustees, naming them and their successors. The deed should be drawn up by a lawyer, and contain a trust clause drawn in harmony with the Second Schedule

of the Act of Incorporation of The Free Methodist Church in Canada. A copy of this schedule may be obtained from the Ministry Centre.

The deed shall also include a clause indicating that in the event of dissolution of the local society or other organization, for whatever reason, the trustees shall convey the net proceeds of sale of local properties to The Free Methodist Church in Canada, or if no trustees remain, that titles of all properties shall be transferred to The Free Methodist Church in Canada, in accordance with ¶350 of *The Manual*.

All property, whether real or mixed, acquired by any local society, pastoral charge, conference or other body, whether incorporated or unincorporated, shall be held subject to the foregoing trust as set forth in section 2 whether appearing in the evidence of title, or whether left out of such evidence of title, by mistake, inadvertence, willfully, or otherwise; and can only be released pursuant to the provisions outlined below....

## **2. Real Property and Trustees**

**2.1** The trustees ...

**2.2** The Free Methodist Church in Canada was...

**a.** In keeping with the Act of incorporation:

## **3. Other Property**

**3.1** All other property (equipment,...)

**3.2** The Act of Incorporation requires...

**3.3** Funds (donations...)

## **4. Dissolution**

\* \* \* \* \*

## **m. CHAPTER 5**

**MOTION:** That Chapter 5 be approved as presented and added to The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada with provision that the Board of Administration be empowered to approve revisions submitted by the Mission District with such revisions to be reported to the 2020 General Conference.

### **CHAPTER 5**

#### **CHURCH IN FORMATION, MISSION DISTRICT, ANNUAL CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION**

**¶ 500 Introduction**

**¶ 505 Church in Formation**

**¶ 510 Mission District**

**¶ 511 Members and Officers of the Mission District**

- ¶ 512 Board of Administration
- ¶ 513 Ministerial Education Guidance and Placement Committee (MEGaP)
- ¶ 514 Nominating Committee
- ¶ 515 Role of the Superintendent
- ¶ 516 Role of the Zonal Overseer
- ¶ 517 Funding
- ¶ 518 MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

¶ 520 Provisional Annual Conference

¶ 530 Annual Conference

¶ 540 Provisional General Conference

## **CHAPTER 5: CHURCH IN FORMATION, MISSION DISTRICT, ANNUAL CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION**

### **¶ 500 INTRODUCTION**

In the spirit of the Great Commission, Free Methodists desire to do their part to see healthy churches established in every nation on earth. Every national expression of the Free Methodist Church begins with believers who have come to Christ joining together to form a local church. The Lord Jesus desires to see the multiplication of communities of believers. In time, these local churches need to be linked together in order to bring their combined efforts to bear on the work of establishing a presence in the nation.

The following paragraphs describe administrative structures and procedures for each stage of development. As the Lord Jesus builds his church and the leadership demands on the structures become larger than can be healthily supported, the church will move toward the next stage of development.

### **¶ 505 CHURCH IN FORMATION**

The formation of a core of believers is the first level for forming a national presence for the Free Methodist Church. It usually involves researching options as to where and how to begin. This initial phase of the development of a national presence involves the following activities:

#### **1. Organization**

- a) Membership instruction
- b) Training of ministerial personnel – 3 courses
  - Introduction to Free Methodism
  - Introduction to Christian Doctrine
  - Inductive Bible Study Class
- c) Reception of members
- d) Designation by missionary of pastor/leader for the country

#### **2. Development**

- a) Formation of a lightly structured Administrative Committee
- b) Development of a financial structure, budget (national and external support)

- c) Initial steps toward a constitution, legal status and being incorporated
- d) Discipleship and leadership training of laity and ministerial candidates
- e) Strategic Plan for expansion developed for:
  - Church growth leading to organized local churches (12 adult members minimum)
  - Church planting/expansion

## ¶ 510 THE MISSION DISTRICT

When, in the judgment of the bishop and the director of global ministries, a church in formation reaches the following minimum developmental markers, it may be organized as a mission district.

1. Board of Administration formed and functioning
2. At least two organized churches
3. At least one ordained minister
4. A national budget established
5. Progress on the Constitution and legal incorporation process
6. Strategic Plan for expansion further developed for:
  - a. Discipleship and the leadership training program for laity and ministerial candidates
  - b. Church growth leading to organized local churches (12 adult members)
  - c. Church planting/expansion goals
  - d. Viable financial program developed (national and external support)
7. Property purchases and construction of facilities have begun.

## ¶511 MEMBERS AND OFFICERS OF THE MISSION DISTRICT

1. The membership of the mission district of The Free Methodist Church in <<insert name of country>> shall consist of the bishop (or his designate) who shall chair the annual meeting, the superintendent, the pastor(s) and a lay delegate(s) elected by each of the churches. Each church is entitled to send one delegate for every pastor. Members of the board of administration who are neither pastors nor lay delegates shall also be members until their terms are completed.
2. Two-thirds of the total members seated (ministerial and lay delegates) shall constitute a quorum.
3. The mission district shall meet annually on <<day/month>> unless otherwise arranged by the board of administration.
4. Until a provisional annual conference is formed, the mission district is the only legislative body in the church. It shall have full power to make rules and regulations subject to the limitations and restrictions of *The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada*.
5. The mission district shall have general organizational and supervisory powers over all activities of the church in <<insert name of country>>. It shall be the only law-making body. Parliamentary Procedure (Robert's Rules of Order) shall be used.
6. It shall define the responsibilities of the superintendent and elect a superintendent from among its ordained ministers.

7. It shall elect a board of administration, determine its powers, determine the number of its officers and define the qualifications of its members. The term of a board member shall be three years. Board members (with the exception of the superintendent and zone leaders) shall be limited to two terms. To ensure continuity of its leadership, the terms of the members of the board shall be staggered.
8. The officers of the mission district are as follows: The bishop is the president. The superintendent is the first vice president.

## ¶512 BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION

### 1. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of the board of administration shall be constituted as follows – the superintendent, two ordained ministers and two lay people. The bishop shall receive notification of all board of administration meetings and minutes and shall be entitled to be present and participate fully without vote in all meetings.

### 2. AUTHORITY AND FUNCTIONS

- 2.1 The board shall have general organizational, promotional and supervisory powers over all activities of the Free Methodist Church. The board members who are trustees of the Trust (by virtue of their offices) have supervisory powers over all property of the Trust (movable and immovable) and over its bank accounts. (See ¶518.)
- 2.2 It shall meet quarterly, the times and locations to be determined by the board. A majority of the members elected shall constitute a quorum.
- 2.3 The Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Bishop shall constitute the trustees of the Trust known as Free Methodist Church.
- 2.4 The board, in consultation with the presiding bishop, shall have the power to accept resignations, remove any of its members “for cause” and fill any vacancies however created in the interim between the Mission District meetings. If a board member is also a trustee of the Trust by virtue of his or his/her office and he/she is removed from the board, he/she is also automatically removed as a trustee of the Trust.  
  
Likewise, a board member automatically becomes a trustee of the Trust, if he/she is elected to one of the following positions on the board: Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer. The presiding bishop, by virtue of his/her office is automatically a trustee of the Trust.
- 2.5 If the office of superintendent becomes vacant for any reason, a new superintendent shall be elected at a special sitting of the mission district except for vacancies occurring in the last three months preceding a mission district meeting.
- 2.6 The board shall have the responsibility to determine the number of staff members to be employed by the mission district, to define the general duties and responsibilities of these positions, to hire such staff members and, if necessary, remove them for cause.
- 2.7 The board shall have general oversight of the financial resources of the Corporation of The Free Methodist Church in <<insert name of country>>, prepare annual budgets for approval by the mission district and act as administrators of the Ministers’ Pension Plan. It shall annually publish a financial statement outlining the assets, liabilities, and financial standing of the corporation of The Free Methodist Church in <<insert name of country>>. The financial statement, together with supporting documents, shall be subject to a financial review by an external reviewer who shall submit his/her report to the mission district and to the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

- 2.8 If a church does not have the personnel and financial resources needed to carry out an effective ministry plan, or is unable to elect an official board, the board will direct the zonal leader of that church to enter into discussions about taking steps to close the church.
- 2.9 The board shall also have the authority to declare the property of a closed church or any national church property as surplus property. It shall sell or otherwise dispose of such property in accordance with the laws of <<insert name of country>>. The proceeds of such sale shall be used as directed by the board (in consultation with the FMCiC), provided they are first applied to clearing any remaining debts related to the property.
- 2.10 The board shall be involved in the discipline of lay and ministerial members and congregations as provided for in chapter nine of this Manual. If a minister is suspended, he/she must return movable property to the Free Methodist Church and vacate immovable premises according to the conditions of the Property Waiver Agreement he/she signed.

### **3. OFFICERS OF THE BOARD OF ADMINISTRATION**

The officers of the Board of Administration are the superintendent (chair), vice-chair, secretary, and treasurer. When employees of the mission district participate in meetings of the board of administration, they do so without a vote.

## **¶513 MINISTERIAL EDUCATION GUIDANCE AND PLACEMENT (MEGAP) COMMITTEE**

### **1. MEMBERSHIP**

The mission district shall elect a national MEGaP committee composed of the following: the superintendent, an ordained minister and a lay person from each zone. The bishop and the superintendent shall receive notification of all MEGaP meetings and minutes. The superintendent shall serve as chair in the absence of the bishop.

### **2. AUTHORITY AND FUNCTIONS**

2.1 The committee shall assist the superintendent in the recruiting, interviewing, screening and evaluation of ministerial candidates in each zone.

Candidates for ministerial candidacy shall be screened at the time of the teaching of the “Heart of Free Methodism” course.

Ministerial candidates applying for ordination shall be interviewed a team composed of the superintendent, zone leader and two lay people from the zone. This committee shall make ordination recommendations to the board of administration which shall have authority to approve candidates for ordination.

When a candidate is being interviewed, his/her pastor shall participate in the interview if possible. If a pastor is the candidate, his/her board chair shall participate in the interview if possible.

It shall be available to counsel ministers in personal growth and professional advancement.

2.2 The committee shall consider the character and performance of each minister and report to each session of the mission district.

2.3 The committee shall appoint ministers to their various ministries, in consultation with the bishop, superintendent and pastoral leadership task forces. The process for changes of appointments is described in the “Transitions Handbook for Churches.” The MEGaP committee shall have the authority to make changes in appointments without the request of the local society when this is deemed to be in the best interest of the local church or pastor.

2.4 A minister may be appointed to a church without being given charge of that church. In such cases, the church shall be listed “under the superintendent” who shall assume responsibility for its administration.

Any minister who refuses to serve when appointed shall not be appointed by another conference without the approval of the MEGaP committee.

The MEGaP committee may grant a leave of absence to any ordained minister. If not restored to active ministry after a two-year leave of absence, the minister’s membership shall be located to a local church (see ¶845). Located ministers may be restored to active ministry by the MEGaP committee. Leave of Absence appointments shall designate the reason for a leave of absence (e.g. illness, education, secular work, personal reasons).

Located Ministers have the place of their membership determined by the MEGaP committee. In the process, the minister and official board of the church involved shall be consulted.

The MEGaP committee shall rule on divorce cases related to persons preparing for or involved in ordained ministry. (See ¶816) The superintendent shall appoint a Divorce Review Committee of four MEGaP members to assist with the preparation of recommendations related to divorce cases.

#### **¶514 NOMINATING COMMITTEE**

The mission district shall elect a nominating committee (normally a minister and a layperson from different churches in each zone) who are not members of another standing board/committee of the mission district elected to a three year term. The superintendent shall be an ex officio member of the committee. The committee shall elect its chair, vice chair and secretary.

##### **¶514.1 Election of the Nominating Committee**

The Zone Leaders will consult in advance with local pastors regarding gifted and credible candidates. The Zone Leaders and superintendent will then present a slate of nominees to the nominating committee from the zones.

In the District Meeting, an opportunity will be given for nominations from the floor (after the nominations from the superintendent and Zone Leaders are presented) provided that the nominator has the permission of the person being nominated.

To ensure continuity, nominating committee members’ terms will be staggered.

#### **¶ 515 ROLE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT**

The superintendent is elected to serve the church as an overseer. This ordained minister functions as a teacher and defender of the faith, a general shepherd, a pastor to the pastors, and an administrator who by good example and faithful application of The Manual assures the order of the church. The superintendent is to inspire the church by preaching and being an example of one who carries out Christ’s great commission.

As the national pastoral leader and chief executive officer of The Free Methodist Church in <<insert name of country>>, the superintendent's ministry of leadership encompasses spiritual, governance, administrative and representative dimensions. Overseeing a broad range of persons, teams and activities, the primary responsibilities of the superintendent include the development of spiritual vitality, effective administration and the strategic direction of the national church. The superintendent guides in the creation of vision and mission for the church today and in the future, leading to the growth and development of the church in <<insert name of country>>. The following serves as a general job description:

**THE SUPERINTENDENT:**

- a) is an ordained minister elected by the mission district. His/her term shall be for three years. He/she may be re-elected. There is no limit to the number of terms.
- b) Each term of office shall be until the closing of the annual meeting of the mission district at which his/her successor is elected.
- c) is directly responsible to the bishop, mission district and it's BOA.
- d) is *primarily* responsible to:
  - Oversee and assist with the work of the BOA and the Zone Leaders;
  - Be the national vision caster through strategic planning, policy development, public ministry and use of media;
  - Represent the denomination at (inter)denominational events;
  - Oversee the MEGaP committee – the recruiting, interviewing, screening and evaluation of ministerial candidates of the mission district, the recommendation of candidates for ordination, the professional development of ministry personnel and, when necessary the discipline of pastors.
  - Fulfill other responsibilities assigned by *The Manual* or the BOA.
  - Assist in a local church situation when requested by the church or a zonal overseer.
  - May only be removed from office by disciplinary action or by a majority non-confidence vote of the mission district.

**¶516 ROLE OF THE ZONE LEADER**

Zone leaders are mature pastors who willingly and sacrificially work as team members with the Superintendent to oversee the ministry of the Free Methodist Church in Sri Lanka.

- They are elected to a three-year term by their zone caucus during the meeting of the Mission District.
- They may be re-elected; there is no term limit.
- They are trained and resourced by the superintendent and bishop.

They are responsible to cultivate an environment to see The Free Methodist Church in Sri Lanka's common vision being fulfilled:

- They build relationships among the pastors in the zone through pastors meetings.
- They work with the pastors and lay people to plan zone rallies to build relationships among the churches.
- They promote and actively encourage people to participate in:
  - the annual Elders Meeting
  - the annual Family Camp and Mission District meetings
- They support the work of the Communication Representative in their zone to receive and pass on communication to the zone and from the zone.
- They support the work of the Ministerial Education Guidance and Placement Committee by

arranging interviews for candidates for the ministry from their zone. They serve on the zone interview team with the superintendent and two lay people.

- They are the relational contact point for the superintendent. They regularly report to him on the health of the pastors and local churches and advise him of pastors and churches who need his attention.
- Under the leadership of the superintendent, they build relationships with churches that want to affiliate with the Free Methodist Church in Sri Lanka and give coaching during the process of affiliation.

#### ¶517 FUNDING

Each church in The Free Methodist Church in <<insert name of country>> shall contribute XX% of its general operating income to fund the operations of the Mission District.

For this purpose (only) the local church general operating income is defined to include all donations to the local society, MINUS funds raised for:

- a) Programs in support of church planting
- b) Special short-term fund raising programs for local church projects
- c) Funds raised for special ministry programs outside of the local church (funds transferred to other Christian organizations).
- d) Bequests

#### ¶518 MOVABLE AND IMMOVABLE PROPERTY

1. All movable and immovable property of the mission district is owned and managed by the Trust known as the Free Methodist Church. The trustees of the Trust are the following members of the board of administration: chair, vice chair, secretary, treasurer. The presiding bishop is also a trustee.
2. The Trust shall have the legal authority to act on behalf of the mission district in all matters pertaining to administration and management of the properties (movable and immovable) and the bank accounts of the mission district.
3. By a majority vote of its members, the trustees of the Trust (with the knowledge of the presiding bishop) have the authority:
  - 3.1 To approve, remove and replace signatories for its bank account.
  - 3.2 To take action (with or without notice according to the circumstances) to retrieve the Trust's movable property.
  - 3.3 To approve who may occupy the properties of the Trust and to evict those previously approved to occupy its properties and to remove the movable property of an occupant(s) from the Trust's immovable property.
4. The Trust shall have the power to mortgage, lease, sell or otherwise encumber the real property of the mission district. Financial actions by the board of administration in excess of XXXX shall require the consent of the mission district.

#### ¶520 PROVISIONAL ANNUAL CONFERENCES

The Board of Administration of the FMCiC upon the recommendation of the bishop and the director of global ministries, may approve the formation of a provisional annual conference from a mission district, when it has adopted *The Manual of the FMCiC* in principle, has filed the appropriate governmental registration and

documents (constitution adapted to local culture and circumstances) and has reached the following minimum developmental markers:

1. 5 organized churches
2. 5 ordained ministers
3. 300 adult members
4. A Manual is being drafted
5. A functioning Board of Administration, MEGaP Committee and Nominating Committee
6. A Strategic Plan and track record that demonstrates the existence of the following:
  - a) Discipleship and the leadership training programs for laity and ministerial candidates
  - b) Church growth leading to healthy organized local churches as evidenced by their ability:
    - to care for the people/members
    - to support their pastors
  - c) Church planting/expansion goals
  - d) Financial structures – a viable budget (national and external support)
    - a clear strategy for becoming auto-sufficient in finances, stewardship
  - e) Missions goals
7. Property purchases and construction of facilities

### ¶530 ANNUAL CONFERENCES

When a provisional annual conference has fulfilled the following requirements and has reached the stage where it has a *Manual* that has been approved by the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church in Canada and has demonstrated that it is able to operate satisfactorily under *its Manual*, it shall approved as an annual conference.

It has:

1. 10 organized churches
2. 10 ordained ministers
3. 600 adult members
4. A *Manual* approved by the Free Methodist Church in Canada
5. A functioning Board of Administration, MEGaP Committee Nominating Committee
6. A Strategic Plan and track record that demonstrates the healthy existence of the following:
  - a) Discipleship and the leadership training programs for laity and ministerial candidates
  - b) Church growth leading to healthy organized local churches as evidenced by their ability:
    - to care for the people/members
    - to support their pastors
  - c) Church planting/expansion goals
    - divided into districts for greater growth and use of human resources
  - d) Financial structures – viable budget
    - an established track record in pastoral support
    - auto-sufficiency in finances, stewardship
  - e) Missions
7. Property purchase and construction of facilities

### ¶ 540 PROVISIONAL GENERAL CONFERENCE

Requirements for forming a provisional General conference are found in ¶221 and those for a general conference in ¶222.

To prepare for a new provisional general conference, the Bishop of the Free Methodist Church in Canada shall form a provisional general conference task force of the superintendents, lay representatives from the participating annual conferences and the global missions director to prepare a provisional general conference proposal. It shall be presented to the participating annual conferences for adoption in principle

The Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church in Canada shall elect an ordained minister(s) who is a national citizen of the country of the provisional general conference as a suffragan bishop(s) from the nominee(s) presented by the annual conferences of that country. The suffragan bishop(s) oversees his/her provisional general conference under the supervision and counsel of the Bishop of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

The size and composition of the provisional general conference and its Board of Administration shall be recommended by the provisional general conference task force and be approved by the Board of Administration of the Free Methodist Church in Canada.

## 2. MINISTERIAL EDUCATION GUIDANCE AND PLACEMENT (MEGAP) COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

### Resolution C: “Pastoral Appointments-smaller churches-Roth/Hogeboom

*Whereas:* Many smaller churches find the present selection process for a new pastor challenging and leave them without a pastor for a longer time than need be,

*Whereas:* Many pastors are left hanging without an appointment longer than need be,

*Whereas:* Some churches may prefer to be given more direction about who would be a good pastor for their situation,

*Therefore, be it resolved that a second option of how a church chooses who they would like to be appointed as their pastor be offered, which would involve, for those churches who chose so, the Bishop and Director of Personnel giving a list of 3 potential pastors to choose from, without requiring the heavy task of the present selection process.*

### NMEGaP Recommendation in response to Resolution C:

*Whereas:* An informal modified church transition process has been in use in recent years with a few local churches where it has been determined that the regular process of developing pastoral and church profiles is too overwhelming; and,

*Whereas:* This modified transition process has been used at the following churches with reasonable success: Uxbridge, Campbellford, Athens, and Mewassin; and,

*Whereas:* The Director of Church Health is currently working with three other churches using this modified process.

*Therefore* let it be resolved that **Resolution C: "Pastoral Appointments-smaller churches-Roth/Hogeboom"** be referred to the September 2017 National MEGaP meeting for further study with a view to incorporating an alternate church transition process in Chapter 8 of The Manual of The Free Methodist Church in Canada.

### 3. NOMINATING COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION

#### ¶420.2.3.3 (Nominating Committee Process)

*Whereas*, proportional geographic representation is a valued principle in the election of the Board of Administration and the committees of the General Conference, and

*Whereas*, challenges have arisen in identifying available ministerial representatives in some geographic regions,

*Therefore* let it be resolved that the following paragraph be added to ¶420.2.3.3 Process:

#### ¶420.2.2.3 Nominating Committee

##### 2.3.1 Election of the Nominating Committee .....

##### 2.3.2 Authority and Functions .....

##### 2.3.3 Process:

In order to ensure that the standing board and committees are made up of gifted and credible Christian leaders, the general conference nominating committee will solicit input from local churches, network leaders and national leaders.

If the nominating committee is not able to identify an ordained minister from a geographic region to serve on the board of administration or on a general conference committee, it may nominate a ministerial candidate. If no ministerial candidate is available from that geographic region, the nominating committee is authorized to set aside the principle of regional representation in this case and nominate an ordained minister from another region.

#### 4. FREE METHODIST WORLD CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

The Constitution of the Free Methodist Church (Chapters 1 and 2 in The Manual) can only be changed through a referendum vote involving all of the General Conferences of the World. The following two Resolutions were put into referendum by the World Conference when it last met in South Africa in October 2015.

### REFERENDUM #1: TO BE VOTED ON BY ALL FREE METHODIST GENERAL CONFERENCES

*At the Free Methodist World Conference held in Port Shepstone, South Africa, October 22-24, 2015, the following resolution was passed and subsequently approved for referendum.*

#### **RESOLUTION: A Resolution to edit ¶230.5 and ¶230.6 of the Common Constitution**

[Where applicable, *highlighted, bold and italics* text indicates an addition, while strikethrough text indicates a deletion to the current text of the Common Constitution.]

**WHEREAS** the Common Constitution of Free Methodism presently states that the roles of Secretary and Treasurer of the World Conference be the responsibility of one member of the Executive Committee; and,

**WHEREAS** it has been determined that this is too heavy of a work load for a single individual;

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that ¶230.5 and ¶230.6 be changed to read as follows and that this change be put into referendum:

#### **¶230.5. Officers of the World Conference**

The officers shall be *President*, *Vice President*, *Secretary*, and *Treasurer* secretary-treasurer.

- 5.1 The officers shall be members of the World Conference Executive Committee.
- 5.2 Officers may serve for two terms. A term is defined as the period between regularly scheduled meetings of the World Conference.

#### **¶230.6. The World Conference Executive Committee**

The World Conference Executive Committee shall meet at least every two years (preferably in conjunction with the meetings of the Council of Bishops and the World Conference) and shall be composed as follows: President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer *Secretary*, *Treasurer*, and three *two* members at large, including the outgoing president. These members shall be elected so as to allow equitable representation worldwide and to provide substantially equal representation of lay and ministerial members on the Executive Committee.

- 6.1 The President shall be the chairperson.
- 6.2 The World Conference Executive Committee shall present a budget, including a schedule of conference allocations, to the World Conference for approval.
- 6.3 The World Conference Executive Committee is amenable for its actions to the World Conference. If a vacancy occurs on the World Conference Executive Committee, the remaining members may elect a person, preferably a delegate to the prior World Conference, to fill the vacant position

until the next meeting of the World Conference *the Council of Bishops shall act as a Nominating Committee to nominate a replacement for an officer(s) or member(s) to be elected by the World Conference Executive Committee to fill the term of the vacancy until the next meeting of the World Conference. If the vacancy is the President, the current Vice President shall assume the Presidency.*

- 6.4 A designated World Conference Executive Committee member may represent the World Conference at each area fellowship.”

\* \* \* \* \*

## **REFERENDUM #2: TO BE VOTED ON BY ALL FREE METHODIST GENERAL CONFERENCES**

*At the General Conference of the Free Methodist Church-USA, held in Rochester, New York, July 13-16, 2015, the following resolution was passed and subsequently approved for referendum by the Free Methodist World Conference, held in Port Shepstone, South Africa, October 22-24, 2015.*

### **RESOLUTION: A Resolution to edit ¶230.2.1 of the Common Constitution**

[Where applicable, *highlighted, bold and italics* text indicates an addition, while strikethrough text indicates a deletion to the current text of the Common Constitution.]

**WHEREAS** the current reading of ¶230.2.1 of the Common Constitution has created uncertainty as to whether the General Conference that originates a referendum proposal must subsequently vote again on the referendum they have initiated;

**THEREFORE**, be it resolved that ¶230.2.1 be changed to read as follows and that this change be put into referendum:

#### **¶230.2. Legislative Authority**

The World Conference has the authority to supervise the voting of the general conferences on all matters pertaining to referenda according to the following provisions:

- 2.1 Proposals to amend the constitution (except for ¶213) may be initiated by a two-thirds majority vote of a general conference or by a two-thirds majority vote of the Free Methodist World Conference when it is meeting in session. Proposals shall then be circulated as referenda under the supervision of the World Conference Executive Committee to be voted on by all general conferences. *If a resolution initiated by a general conference goes into referendum unchanged by the World Conference, the initiating general conference shall not need to vote again during the referendum period. Instead, it shall report the results of the original vote taken to propose the amendment.*

A two-thirds aggregate vote of all general conferences shall be required for approval of referenda. If a general conference has a structure not constituted of the equivalent of one ministerial and one lay member for every six hundred full members, its vote results shall be adjusted to have the weight of two votes per 600 members.”