THE

LAWS AND DISCIPLINE

OF

THE METHODIST CHURCH

OF

SOUTHERN AFRICA


ELEVENTH EDITION
FOREWORD

It is my fervent hope and prayer that clergy and laity will find this eleventh edition of the Laws and Discipline of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa a useful mission tool as we together ‘proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ for healing and transformation’.

The purpose of the “Laws and Discipline” is to facilitate the work of those who share the administrative and leadership responsibility in the ongoing life, ministry and mission of the Church. It provides the legislative framework for good governance and defines spiritual truths and practices in keeping with new revelations of God’s Spirit.

As indicated in paragraph 11.1 of this edition, the true spirit of Methodist discipline requires that it be exercised in harmony with the grace of Christ, with tenderness, patience and fidelity, seeking rather to win members back to Christ than to discontinue them.

This edition incorporates all the amendments and new legislation enacted by Conference and /or Connexional Executive since the publication of the 10th edition in June 2000. Most of the General Regulations have been added to the relevant chapters for easy reference.

All matters relating to Discipline have been incorporated into one chapter that applies to both members and ministers. The provisions of this chapter take effect on 1 July 2007 to enable Synods to put the necessary systems in place.

Organisational constitutions are excluded in this edition in accordance with the Connexional Executive resolution. They are to be published separately as a supplement to this edition, and as always are subject to the authority and discipline of the Church.

I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to the Executive Secretary, the Rev Vuyani Nyobole, the Legal Adviser, Advocate Keith Matthee and the Office Administrator/Personal Assistant, Mrs. Heather Fleming for their invaluable input in the preparation of this 11th edition.

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

Ivan M Abrahams
Presiding Bishop
Johannesburg
March 2007
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CHAPTER 1

THE CHURCH

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

METHODISM AND THE CHURCH UNIVERSAL

1.2 The Church is the company of the disciples of Jesus, consisting of those who confess Him as their Saviour and Lord, love one another and unite with those who serve the coming of His Rule on earth. These constitute the family of the redeemed children of God, who in the New Testament are described as 'Believers', 'People of God', and 'Christians'.

1.3 This Church, the creation of the Holy Spirit, also grows 'into a sacred temple dedicated to the Lord' in which the Spirit of God lives and works. 'Where the Church is', as Irenæus has truly said, 'there is the Spirit of God, and where the Spirit of God is, there is the Church and every kind of grace'.

1.4 This one flock of Christ is at present gathered in many folds, yet united as one indivisible fellowship 'in faith and knowledge of the Son of God ... a congregation of the faithful in which the pure Word of God is preached and the Sacraments are duly administered according to Christ’s ordinance'.

1.5 Within the Christian Church, 'one, holy, catholic and apostolic', which is the Body of Christ, the Methodist Church holds a true place, and cherishes this not alone for itself as an organised community, but for its Members wherever two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ and in obedience to the Spirit.

1.6 The Methodist Church throughout the world confesses the Headship of our Lord Jesus Christ, acknowledges the Divine revelation recorded in Holy Scripture as the supreme rule of faith and practice, rejoices in the inheritance of the Apostolic Faith, and loyally accepts the fundamental principles of the historic Creeds and of the Protestant Reformation.

1.7 Following also the practice and teaching of the New Testament, the Methodist Church is at once evangelical and sacramental. It recognises and observes two Sacraments, namely Baptism and the Lord’s Supper, as of Divine appointment and perpetual obligation.

1.8 In the Providence of God Methodism was raised up to spread Scriptural Holiness throughout the land by the proclamation of the Evangelical Faith. Its order and usages were designed to give expression to an unflinching resolve to be true to its divinely appointed mission.
THE METHODIST WITNESS

1.9 Whilst earnestly coveting fellowship with all those who call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord and love Him in sincerity, the Methodist Church lays particular stress upon certain privileges and duties which belong to the company of all faithful people. These may be briefly stated:

1.9.1 the primary vocation and responsibility, in accordance with the value set upon the apostolic ministry in the New Testament and in the early Church, of declaring the universality of the grace of God by preaching the gospel of ‘a free, full, present salvation’ for everyone who repents and believes upon our Lord Jesus Christ.

1.9.2 a change of heart wrought by the grace of God, issuing in a new birth, in a conscious personal experience of the forgiveness of sins, and the spiritual glow of a ‘joy unspeakable and full of glory’ as the present privilege of every believer in Christ.

1.9.3 the necessity of a living fellowship in the realities of the Christian experience in order to nourish the life of God in the soul and to enrich the Body of Christ, so that ‘when each separate part works as it should, the whole body grows and builds itself up through love’.

1.9.4 the teaching of the possibility, here and now, of Christians being made ‘perfect in love’ through the obedience of faith.

1.9.5 the reaffirmation and consistent exercise of the New Testament truth of the universal priesthood of believers. The Methodist Church, therefore, holds that while certain of its members are called of God and are ordained and separated to the holy office of the Ministry within the Church, these hold no priesthood differing in kind from that which is common to the Lord’s people, and have no exclusive title to the preaching of the Gospel or to the care of souls. These ministries are shared with them by others, men and women. ‘It is one and the same Spirit who does all this; as the Spirit wishes different gifts are given to each person’.

METHODIST ORIGINS

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

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

Baptism therefore proclaims God’s grace and looks forward to life-long growth into Christ in the fellowship of the Church. It calls for the response of faith that is also a life-long process. In the case of believers the initial profession of faith precedes the baptism. In the case of infants, parents and sponsors who are believers promise to provide Christian nurture and to prepare the child for personal profession of faith. In both cases the person baptised will be supported by the faith of the Church.

The baptism of a believer may be accompanied by the laying on of hands with prayer. In the case of persons baptised in infancy laying on of hands may accompany their personal profession of faith.

Methodism agrees with most major denominations that so-called rebaptism is inappropriate and may not be practised for the following reasons:

Baptism is unrepeatable because it signifies the once-for-all act of Christ and makes the baptised a member of the covenant community.

‘Rebaptism’ implies that the original baptism was invalid and thus calls into question the practice of infant baptism.

It implies that the prevenient grace of God was not active in the original baptism.

It makes the response of faith and obedience the most important feature of baptism and obscures its significance as a sign of God’s grace.

1.12 The Sacrament of Baptism shall, in general, be administered:

1.12.1 by an ordained Minister or probationer Minister duly authorised thereto. It may be administered by a member of the Church only in the exceptional circumstances of impending death when a Minister is not available.

1.12.2 with water, in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It may be by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion.

1.12.3 to those children only whose parents, one or both, are members of our Church or congregation. Instruction in the meaning of baptism shall be given beforehand. When parents wish to have their infant baptised in a Society other than that which they normally attend, they shall provide the Minister officiating with the written approval of their own Minister.
1.12.4 to older people who have not previously been baptised, and who desire upon profession of their faith in Jesus Christ to become members of the Church. Their preparation for such baptism shall be similar to that for persons being prepared for public reception into full membership or confirmation.

Baptism shall not be administered to persons who have previously been baptised. If there is doubt about previous baptism, the Minister shall use the words, 'If you are not already baptised, I now baptise you.... '

1.12.5 in a Church building in the presence of a congregation either at a worship service, in a Sunday School session, or as specially arranged in consultation with a Society Steward. Where possible, the Sacrament of Baptism shall be conducted at Sunday Services planned at regular intervals. In cases of emergency, and in the case of those persons who reside in places remote from our Church, exceptions may be made at the discretion of the Minister. The Society Leaders’ Meeting may be consulted about requests for Baptism. The responsibility for the final decision whether or not to conduct a particular baptism rests with the Minister.

1.13 The Certificate of Baptism issued shall be as approved by Conference.

1.14 After a Baptism the parents and their child, or the baptised adult, shall be under the special pastoral care of the Leaders’ Meeting and/or the Sunday School, which shall appoint those responsible for their care.

THE LORD’S SUPPER

1.15 The Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, also known as Holy Communion or the Eucharist, is the other Sacrament given to the Church by its Lord, Jesus Christ, who instituted it at the time of His Passion and after His resurrection, and who presides at the meal. It is of vital importance to all of our Members to partake regularly and frequently of this Sacrament, doing so reverently and with faith, for in this Sacrament they are built up and strengthened in their faith and spiritual life.

In Holy Communion the people of God of every time and place become united with God and with each other. They remember the death and celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, through which they receive forgiveness for their sins and the salvation of their souls. They enter into the new Covenant of God with God’s people – a new dispensation of Grace instead of the old dispensation of Law. They receive a foretaste of the heavenly feast to come and have the earnest of eternal life. God the Holy Spirit comes and makes the crucified and risen Jesus present.

In this Sacrament the people of God offer God their praise, their thanks and their lives, believing that these offerings, though unworthy, will be acceptable in grace to the Father. They join with Jesus Christ in His intercession for the world and participate in His mission to the world.
Holy Communion is administered by an ordained Minister or by a Probationer, duly authorised thereto, to the Members of the Church and to such Members of other Christian Churches as may wish to join with us in this Sacrament. Non-alcoholic wine shall be used.

**DOCTRINE**

1.16 The Methodist Church claims and cherishes its place in the Holy Catholic Church, which is the Body of Christ.

1.17 The Doctrines of the Evangelical Faith, which Methodism has held from the beginning and still holds, are based upon the Divine revelation recorded in the Holy Scriptures. The Methodist Church acknowledges this revelation as the supreme rule of faith and practice. These Evangelical Doctrines, to which the Preachers of the Methodist Church, Ministerial and Lay, are pledged, are contained in Wesley's Notes on the New Testament and his Forty-four Sermons.

The Notes on the New Testament and the Forty-four Sermons are not intended to impose a system of formal or speculative theology on Methodist Preachers, but to set up standards of preaching and belief which should secure loyalty to the fundamental truths of the Gospel of Redemption and to ensure the continued witness of the Church to the realities of the Christian experience of Salvation.

1.18 Conference is the final authority within the Church with regard to its doctrines and all questions concerning the interpretation of its doctrines.

1.19 Christ’s ministers in the Church are stewards in the household of God, and shepherds of His flock. Some are called and ordained to this sole occupation, and have a principal and directing part in these great duties.

1.20 It is the universal conviction of the Methodist people that the office of the Christian Ministry depends upon the call of God, who bestows the gifts of the Spirit, the grace and the fruit of which indicate those whom God has chosen.

1.21 Those whom the Church recognises as called of God, and therefore receives into its Ministry, shall be ordained by the imposition of hands with prayer to the Holy Spirit for authority for the office and work of a Minister in the Church of Christ, thus expressing the Church’s recognition of the Minister’s personal call.

1.22 The Preachers, itinerant and lay, are examined, tested and approved before they are authorised to minister in holy things. For the sake of Church Order and not because of any priestly virtue inherent in the office, the Ministers of the Church are set apart by ordination to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments.
DOCTRINAL MATTERS

1.23

The Holy Communion

The Methodist Church celebrates Holy Communion, also known as The Lord’s Supper or Eucharist, in obedience to the command of Jesus “who on the night when He was betrayed took bread, and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and said: ‘This is My body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance (anamnesis) of me.’ In the same way also the cup, after supper, saying: ‘This cup is the new covenant in My blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me.’ (1 Cor. 11:23-25; cf Matt 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:14-20).

Holy Communion is a sacramental meal that by visible signs communicates to us, through the power of the Holy Spirit, God’s love in Jesus Christ, crucified and risen. It therefore proclaims and celebrates the gift of new life in union with Christ and enables us, through faith, to share in the triumph of His death and resurrection which will be consummated at His coming again.

It is a sacrifice of praise in which the Church gives thanks to the Father for everything He has accomplished in creation, redemption and the gift of the Holy Spirit; for everything He is accomplishing now in the life of the Church and the world; and for everything He will accomplish in bringing His Kingdom to fulfilment.

It is the memorial (anamnesis) of the crucified and risen Lord that proclaims and makes effective in the present the one, perfect and sufficient sacrifice by which we are forgiven and reconciled to God. In this memorial the Church is united with the great High Priest as it offers itself in Him to the Father, joins in His continual intercession for the world and proclaims His Word in preaching and in sacrament. By sharing in this way in Christ’s sacrifice the People of God are enabled to be servants of forgiveness and reconciliation in the life of the world.

The crucified and risen Christ is present in the Holy Communion in accordance with His promise in the word of Scripture, in the community of the faithful and in the elements of bread and wine. These are the body and blood of Christ not in the sense that they cease to be bread and wine but in that they receive a new meaning as representing the person of Christ who has given Himself on the Cross and now meets with His people. His presence depends upon His own promise; it is discerned and appropriated by the faith of His people.

As we have communion with Christ, so also we have communion with one another. The whole Church is involved in each local celebration. By partaking of the one loaf and the common cup around the same table at the invitation of the same Lord, we are built up as members of His one undivided body,
and called to care for, and suffer and rejoice with, all other members in love. Thus Christ joins us together in one new humanity in which the barriers that divide us in this age are broken down. Every celebration of the Lord’s Supper is the assurance of the victory of Christ in which we share; it is the occasion when the future triumph, guaranteed by the death and resurrection of Christ, is celebrated in the present. Thus He sends us forth into all the world to be His witnesses in word and deed.

The Holy Communion has its origin in the saving purpose of God the Father; it is centred in the incarnate Son in whom our release is secured and our sins forgiven; and it is made effective by the power of the Holy Spirit for whom the Church prays to the Father in the Eucharistic liturgy. The Holy Spirit makes real among us the presence of Jesus Christ and makes effective the memorial of His sacrifice once offered. He inspires the faith that discerns Christ’s presence; the sacrifice of praise and prayer that we offer to God; the love which binds us together in Christ and enables us to care for the world; and the hope which confidently affirms that Christ will come again.

Because the Holy Communion is an act of the whole Church, the celebrant is a Minister whose call from God has been recognised by the Church as a whole and who has been set apart by ordination to the ministry of Word and Sacrament. All are welcomed to the Lord’s Table who have been baptised and who by faith respond to the grace set forth in their baptism.

1.23.2 Administration of the Sacraments

The Wesleyan tradition affirms that the celebration of the sacraments is an exclusive function of the office to which a Minister is duly ordained.

There is no theological or pragmatic reason why contemporary Methodism should deviate from this tradition.

Clearly it is the right of the Church to decide whom it will ordain for the purpose of administering the sacraments.

If the exigencies of stations, together with our responsibility to evangelise and extend pastoral care, through the administration of the sacraments, indicates that we have insufficient ordained Ministers to exercise a sacramental ministry, then we as a Church must act in accordance with our tradition in meeting this need, that is we must ordain more people.

An ordained Minister may invite lay persons to assist in the distribution of the elements. A Probationer who has been authorised to administer the sacraments shall first obtain permission from the Superintendent before issuing such invitations. (See Methodist Service Book 1975, page B.1)

1.23.3 Dispensation to Probationer Ministers

Conference adopted the following guidelines for granting dispensations to
Probationer Ministers to administer the Sacraments:

that circumstances in the Circuit concerned clearly require it;

that adequate instruction in the doctrine, liturgy and method of administration of the Sacraments be given.

1.23.4 Distribution of Holy Communion

Conference resolved that Superintendents may authorise laypersons to distribute the elements as soon as possible after a communion service to persons who are unable through illness or infirmity or for other sufficient reason to be present at that service. Such laypersons shall receive instruction for this ministry. They may read scripture and offer prayer but shall not repeat words of institution and shall make it clear that the communicant is being included in the worship of the congregation.

Conference directs that the elements remaining after a service of Holy Communion be disposed of reverently, and that communion stewards be so instructed.

Conference resolves that if it is necessary to set apart additional bread or wine while the elements are being distributed, the officiating minister shall offer the following or a similar prayer:

**Hear us, heavenly Father, and with your Word and Holy Spirit bless this bread/wine that it also may be the sacrament of the precious body/blood of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who took bread/the cup and said, “This is my body/blood”. AMEN.**

Conference draws attention to the fact that The Methodist Church of Southern Africa is in a relationship of reciprocal communion with the other member churches of the Church Unity Commission. Conference therefore affirms that ordained ministers of these churches are permitted to administer the sacraments in Methodist congregations and may be invited to do so, especially when the services of a Methodist minister are not available. Conference resolves that Superintendents consult the Bishop before inviting ministers of churches other than those belonging to the CUC to perform this ministry.

**[NB: The member churches of the CUC are the Church of the Province of SA (Anglican), the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, the Methodist Church of SA, the Presbyterian Church of Southern Africa, the Reformed Presbyterian Church in Southern Africa and the United Congregational Church of SA.]**

1.23.5 The Ministry and Ordination

The source of all ministry is Jesus Christ, who is the true minister (Mark 10:45) and bishop (1 Peter 2:25) and priest (Hebrews 9:11). The Church,
as the Body of Christ, carries on Christ’s ministry to the world, so that the Church as a whole is “a royal priesthood” (1 Peter 2:9; Exodus 19:6). The call of God is first and foremost into membership of the Church (1 Peter 2:9, 21; 5:10), so that the Church may glorify God (Ephesians 1:4-6), preach the Gospel (Philippians 1:5, 7) and show the service and love of Christ to all who are in need (John 13:14-16).

From the beginning certain persons were called and appointed to particular forms of ministry, of various kinds and for various purposes, but all directed towards the up building of the Church (1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 5:11-16). Though the New Testament provides evidence for several possible lines of development, it witnesses to the fact that appointment to office is due both to the call and gift of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:1-11; Ephesians 4:11) and to the Church itself through its ministerial representatives (Acts 6:6; 14:23; 2 Timothy 4:1-5; 2 Timothy 1:6). Persons so appointed are as a result set in a new relationship both with Christ and with the Church, and are representative both of the Church and of Christ Himself.

The development in subsequent centuries of the institutional ministry of the Church, already apparent in Acts and the Pastoral Epistles, was in line with the teaching of the New Testament. In the developed pattern there emerged a threefold order of bishops, presbyters and deacons, in which the bishop was seen as the focus of unity, linking the local church to the Church universal, of which he was the chief minister in each place. In Methodism, as in certain Reformation Churches, the threefold order of ministry was not retained, but we believe our pattern also to be in line with the teaching of the New Testament.

Ordination describes the act by which Christians are authorised by the Church to act in its name and on its behalf in certain ways. By the same act the ordained persons receive the grace of God in response to the prayers of the Church to enable them to fulfil the ministry to which they are ordained. In the Methodist Church they are set apart for the ministry of the Word and Sacraments and the pastoral oversight of the People of God.

Because of its importance the rite of ordination has always been accompanied by certain outward signs, which have always included the laying on of hands with prayer. The ordaining Minister has been the one who best represents the fullness of the universal Church. In episcopal Churches the Minister of ordination has therefore all along been the Bishop. In the Methodist Church the ordination is authorised by Conference that represents the wider Church and is performed on its behalf by the Presiding Bishop and other presbyters. The ordained Minister is recognised as being ordained to the ministry of the Church of God, and not simply of the Methodist Church.

The ordained Minister is one of the outward signs of the unity of the Church in space and time. For this reason ordination is one element among many in the concept of apostolic succession, whereby the Church today is linked to the Church of previous centuries and to the time of the New Testament.
Ordination places ordained Ministers in a new relation both with Christ and with the Church. Under Christ they are the leaders and teachers of the congregation, setting forth in their own life the headship of Christ over themselves and over the Church.

As president at the Holy Communion, the presbyter represents the whole Church and shows the Communion to be the act of the whole Church as it offers unceasing worship of God.

In the life and ministry of the ordained Minister is focused the calling of every member of the people (Laos) of God, so that though the ordained Minister has a different commission and authority from other members of the Laos, the distinction must not be overstressed.

1.23.6 **Children and Holy Communion**

Conference adopted the Statement on Children and Holy Communion:

- the attitude of Jesus was to include children in His Kingdom;
- children are able to make a response of faith appropriate to their age and grow in faith by participating in worship;
- children can make a valid contribution to the life of the Church and should not be separated from their parents in this central act of worship;
- children need to be affirmed and made welcome and to enjoy a greater sense of community in the Church;

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

1.26.7 **Guidelines – Children and Communion**

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

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

Conference recommends the following reading matter:
Children and Holy Communion” – British Council of Churches.
“Peter and Paula at a Communion Service” – Methodist Division of Education and Youth
CHAPTER 2

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

NAME OF THE CHURCH

2.1 The name of the Church is THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA, as provided by section 2 of ‘The Methodist Church of Southern Africa (Private) Act 111/1978’. (For the full text of the Act see Appendix 1).

2.2 For many years the Church was designated and known as ‘The Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa’, (Wesleyan Methodist Church (Private) Act, 1927). It became known and designated as ‘The Methodist Church of South Africa’ in 1932 (The Methodist Church of South Africa (Private) Act, 1932).

2.3 By reason of the fact that the Church had been established and carried on for so long under the name of the ‘Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa’ many of its Titles to Property and other legal documents stand in that name; but the position was adjusted and legalised in that regard by the provisions of the Act of 1932 which read as follows:

‘In lieu of the name “Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa” wheresoever the said name occurs, there shall be deemed to be substituted the name “The Methodist Church of South Africa”, and all title deeds of immovable properties wherein the said name occurs shall be deemed to be amended accordingly’.

Because the work and activities extend beyond the borders of the Republic of South Africa in certain neighbouring States, the Conference in its Sessions in 1975 resolved that the name of the Church be changed to ‘The Methodist Church of Southern Africa’.

Act No. 111/1978 provides that:

‘All movable and immovable property of whatsoever kind or nature, including all interests and rights in and to movable and immovable property, and all mortgage bonds, debts, securities and obligations and the benefit of all existing contracts which immediately prior to the date of commencement of this Act were owned or were held by or vested in The Church as formerly constituted and designated, shall at the commencement of this Act continue to vest in and be owned by and be receivable, recoverable and enforceable by The Church as constituted by this Act without the necessity of any transfer, conveyance or other continuing or connecting title or separate investiture other than this Act, and nothing in this Act shall be deemed to alter or affect the continued corporate existence or the rights or liabilities of The Church’. 
BEGINNING OF THE CHURCH

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

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

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

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

INDEPENDENCE AND AUTONOMY

2.5 The South African Conference exercised its jurisdiction and carried out its functions subject to the stipulations made by the British Conference until the year 1926 when the South African Conference resolved that it would be in the interests of both that the affiliation and control should cease, and that the South African Conference should become an independent body under the name of ‘the Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa’ having full control over its Members and Properties.

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

INCORPORATION OF THE TRANSVAAL MISSIONS

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

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

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

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

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

AREA OF OPERATION

2.8 The Church is established and carries on work within the boundaries of the Republic of South Africa, and in Botswana, Lesotho, Mozambique, Namibia and Swaziland.

Its area of operation may be extended at any time by resolution of the Conference, which also has special power under the Act of 1978 to unite or amalgamate with any other Church or religious body, whether the same be within or without the limits of the present area of operation.
CHAPTER 3

CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

CONDITIONS OF MEMBERSHIP

3.1 The conditions, privileges and duties of membership in the Methodist Church follow the tradition common to the Methodist People from the beginning. Membership is not conditional upon the profession of theological tenets, or dependent upon traditional authority or ecclesiastical ritual. It is based upon a personal experience of the Lord Jesus Christ, brought about by the Spirit, ranging from the earliest signs of Divine Grace in the soul to its crowning blessedness in the joy of 'perfect love', and upon a sharing of such gifts of grace with others seeking or enjoying a similar experience.

3.2 All persons are welcomed into membership who sincerely desire to be saved from their sins through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and show the same in life and conduct, and who seek to have communion with Christ Himself and His people by taking up the duties and privileges of the Methodist Church.

THE METHODIST ETHOS

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

The Methodist Rule of Life:

3.4 Upon the same foundation of Christian love rest the social obligations and the sacrificial service for the Kingdom of God, to which those who confess Christ commit themselves after the example of their Lord and Master. No code of rules can fully contain these obligations. 'The Rules of the Society of the People called Methodists', drawn up by John and Charles Wesley in
1743, still enshrines the spirit of fellowship and universal fervour in the new world order of social relations and civic and international responsibilities.

3.5 The directions we accept as our rule of life from the early Methodists fall into three principal groups:

3.5.1 that of ‘doing no harm, avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is more generally practised’. Besides the open and publicly acknowledged sins of life, all doubtful and dissipating pleasures, selfish indulgence, personal ostentation, love of money and covetousness, all gains made to the injury of others by trading upon their ignorance, weakness or necessity, all dishonest evasion of lawful dues or neglect of civic duties, all abuse of public office or influence for private ends, and all foolish, careless or malicious talk come under this condemnation;

3.5.2 that of ‘doing good by being merciful after one’s own power, doing good of every possible sort to the bodies of people as well as to their souls and, as far as possible, to all’. Within this obligation are embraced personal testimony for Christ, sacrificial giving to the work of God, missionary effort, the manifold forms of social and philanthropic service, and the pressing necessity for promoting lasting peace and goodwill among all people. Every Methodist should be an evangelist and in spirit a missionary. The familiar line, ‘O let me commend my Saviour to you’, expresses the true genius of Methodism;

3.5.3 that of ‘attending upon all the ordinances of God’. These include public worship of God, observance of the Lord’s Supper, maintenance of Christian community, private prayer, reading the Scriptures, and habits of self-discipline. The practice of family worship is earnestly commended. The New Testament contemplates families as Christian as well as individuals.

**ADMISSION AND PUBLIC RECEPTION OF MEMBERS**

3.6 Persons falling under the category set out in para. 3.2 shall be admitted as Members on Trial to Preparation Classes, also called Confirmation Classes. They shall continue On Trial for not less than three months before the Leaders’ Meeting considers them for admission to membership.

3.7 If the Leaders’ Meeting declares any person On Trial to be unfit for membership, the Superintendent shall not admit such person. The guiding principles when the Leaders’ Meeting makes such a decision shall be those set out in para 3.2.

3.8 New Members shall be publicly received at a service conducted by the Minister in the presence of the Church, which shall be followed by the administration of the Lord’s Supper. If they have not received Christian Baptism, that Sacrament shall be administered either before or in the Reception Service.
3.9 The Public Reception of new Members, also called Confirmation, in a solemn service of recognition, commitment, prayer and blessing, is in accordance with long-established Christian practice. It emphasises the responsibility being accepted by the candidate, the promise of the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the shared life of the Church.

3.10 When persons admitted into membership of the Church have been publicly received, the Certificate of Public Reception of Members approved by Conference shall be used.

3.11 A Member is a person who has been confirmed in the Society or duly transferred to the Society, and whose membership has not been removed or suspended by due process.

3.12 All Members are required to acquaint themselves with and observe the requirements of Church Members, which includes adherence to the Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church.

3.13 A Roll of Church Members shall be kept in every Society. The number of Members, and of persons admitted on Trial as taken at the Synods, shall be the number recorded in the annual return of Members.

**CLASS MEETINGS**

3.14 As membership in the Church also involves Christian community it is the duty of all members in the Church to seek to cultivate this in every possible way. The weekly Class Meeting, which includes Home Bible Study and Fellowship Groups, has from the beginning proved to be the most effective way of maintaining true communion in Christian experience. It is intended to provide Christian community and instruction.

3.15 Members should have their names entered in a Class Book and be under the Pastoral care of a Class Leader. They are expected, as far as possible, to contribute to the funds of the Church and to do some form of Christian service.

**TRANSFER OF MEMBERS**

3.16 When Members move from one Circuit to another, the Leaders’ Meeting of the Society from which they move shall give them a signed Note of Removal, and shall send to the Minister of the Circuit into which they remove a duplicate of this Note of Removal.
ADHERENTS

3.17 Adherents are in general all persons linked with the life of the Church who are not Full Members or Members on Trial. This category includes:

3.17.1 children or young people who attend Sunday School or are regularly associated with the youth work of the Church;

3.17.2 pre-school or school children of parents who are members or adherents of the Methodist Church and have not themselves joined another denomination;

3.17.3 Adults who are neither members nor members on trial but who associate with the Methodist Church as:

Worshippers;

Parents of Sunday School scholars;

Persons receiving pastoral care who regard themselves as Methodists;

Persons who claim to be Methodist by virtue of confirmation in the past but who are not at present in regular communion with a Society;

Members of other Churches who participate in the life of the Methodist Congregation but do not wish to transfer their membership;

Members of any organisation associated with the Methodist Church;

Contributors to the funds of the Church.

THE METHODIST DISCIPLINE

3.18 No member, acting in their personal or official capacity, shall institute legal proceedings against the church or any minister or member thereof for any matter that in any way arises from or relates to the mission, work, activities or governance of the church. The process and forums referred to in paragraph 5.11 must be used.

3.19 In the event of a complaint being lodged against a member the procedures set out in Chapter 11 must be followed.
CHAPTER 4

ORDAINED MINISTRY

GENERAL

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

4.2 The Church encourages those who are called of God and who have the qualities of Christian character, evangelical zeal and preaching ability to offer for the Ministry. The primary qualifications for the work of the Christian Ministry are the sense of a divine call, spiritual and intellectual gifts, the graces of Christian character, and the fruits of Christian service.

4.3 The Church recognises its pastoral responsibility to care for the welfare of its Ministers. Nevertheless, notwithstanding any provision contained in the Laws and Discipline or the decisions of Conference or of the Connexional Executive which seem to indicate the contrary, no legally enforceable contract shall exist at any time between the Church or any of its Circuits on one hand and a Minister on the other hand, in respect of the payment of stipends, allowances or any other material benefit, in cash or kind, the provision of a station or any benefit of any kind which may have at any stage accrued to a minister.

CANDIDATES FOR THE MINISTRY

Requirements:

4.4 A Candidate shall be a Member of this Church for a minimum of two years before being nominated in the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

4.5 The minimum educational standard of Candidates for the Ministry is the Senior Certificate, a Matriculation Exemption or an equivalent qualification.

4.6 A Candidate must have passed at least the first year in the Senior Course of the Local Preachers’ Examination and shall have the following credits, or their EMMU approved equivalents, Interpreting texts’ (7/6004), ‘Growing spiritually, thinking theologically’ (7/6003), ‘Engaging with people pastorally and ethically’ (7/6002), and ‘Developing skills for theological study’ (7/6000).

4.7 The Superintendent of a married Candidate shall satisfy Synod that the Candidate’s spouse has accepted the implications and demands of being married to a Minister.
Candidating Procedure:

4.8 A Superintendent who intends to nominate a Candidate shall notify the Director of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit in writing before the 31st July and shall forward to the Director a copy of the Candidate’s birth certificate and copies of the highest educational certificates or qualifications held by the Candidate. The Candidate should preferably have already been through the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

4.9 The Director shall forward the following documents to the Superintendent of a Candidate, to be dealt with as directed:

- a medical examination form to be completed by the Candidate’s medical practitioner;
- a personal schedule to be completed by the Candidate;
- a questionnaire to be completed by the Candidate and submitted to the District Candidates’ Committee;
- the form required in para. 4.10.

4.10 Candidates shall state in a Form provided by the EMMU what portion of the cost incurred by the Church for their training they are able to pay. They are expected to contribute as much as possible however no less than a minimum of 30% of each year’s training cost is expected. Further, they shall give a signed undertaking to repay to the Church, should they resign from the Ministry before the completion of five years’ service after ordination, such proportion of the cost of their training as may not have been discharged by ministerial service rendered. The amount to be repaid shall be reduced by one-fifth for each year of service in the Circuits as an ordained Minister. Any candidate who is over the age of 55 years shall be expected to cover the cost of his or her training in full.

4.11 A Candidate shall be nominated by the Superintendent in the Quarterly Meeting of the Circuit in which the Candidate is a Member and Local Preacher. The Superintendent’s recommendation shall include the subjects of age, spirituality, involvement in the life and work of the Church, moral character, suitability for ministry, knowledge of and attachment to our doctrines and discipline, health, freedom from debt, and, where the Candidate is married, the attitude of the spouse to being married to a Minister. The Superintendent shall sign the recommendation.

4.12 If a Candidate has not resided for two years continuously in the Circuit, the Superintendent of that Circuit shall obtain a written report concerning the Candidate from the former Superintendent or Superintendents so as to cover the previous two years, and shall present it to the Quarterly Meeting and Synod.

4.13 The Quarterly Meeting shall give special attention to the Candidate’s suitability as a Minister. If the Meeting approves the nomination, the Candidate shall be admitted to the usual examinations and, if successful, recommended by the Superintendent to Synod. The character of the voting in the Quarterly Meeting
shall be recorded and forwarded immediately to Synod together with the Superintendent’s written recommendation.

Examinations and Selection:

4.14 All Candidates shall be examined according to the syllabus published by the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit. [The written examination shall take place in the presence of a Minister.] This last section can be deleted. We now expect credits for entrance (cf. 4.6 above).

4.15 A candidate who does not have at least the following credits, or their EMMU approved equivalents, Interpreting texts’ (7/6004), ‘Growing spiritually, thinking theologically’ (7/6003), ‘Engaging with people pastorally and ethically’ (7/6002), and ‘Developing skills for theological study’ (7/6000), shall not be considered for candidature.

4.16 In each District a Candidates’ Screening Committee appointed by the Bishop shall interview Candidates for the Ministry prior to Synod. The Committee shall comprise at least two Ministers, and three lay Members, with the District Supervisor of Studies as convener. The Education for Ministry and Mission Unit shall send delegates from its Connexional Committee. The prescribed form and procedure shall be followed including whatever prior medical and other testing is specified. The Committee shall report its impression of each Candidate and make its recommendations to Synod.

4.17 All Candidates shall be examined at Synod respecting their Christian experience, call to the Ministry, belief in Methodist doctrine, and attachment to Methodist discipline. Each Candidate shall be required to give the following undertakings:

4.17.1 I will adhere to the Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church.

4.17.2 I will accept and obey the discipline and decisions of Conference and the Connexional Executive;

4.17.3 I will go to whichever Circuit or Station I am appointed;

4.17.4 I will not malign this Church, its Ministers, doctrines or practices;

4.17.5 Should I leave the Ministry of this Church for any reason, I will not conduct another Ministry in the Circuit or area to which I was appointed.

4.17.6 Should I leave this Church, I will not encourage any member or adherent of the Church to follow me;

4.17.7 Should I leave this Church I will accept the decision of the Connexional Executive or of the Presiding Bishop governing the termination of my service and my occupancy of Church property.
4.18 Each Candidate who has been recommended by the Quarterly Meeting and has the required academic credits to proceed with candidature shall conduct at least two Trial Services in the presence of at least two Ministers and two lay Members of the District, to be selected by the Bishop, but excluding the Superintendent who nominated the Candidate. One of these trial services is to be conducted in the candidates’ home circuit, and one in another circuit as directed in L&D 5.2.2.3.6. A report of the Services shall be made in Synod and forwarded to the Secretary for Education for Ministry.

4.19 The Candidate’s marks, the recommendation signed by the Superintendent and the report on the Trial Service shall be entered in the Minutes of Synod.

4.20 A Candidate who has satisfied the above requirements is then referred to the Connexional Executive and, if accepted, shall commence Probation at the beginning of the following year.

**List of Reserve:**

4.21 When there are more Candidates for the Ministry than can be appointed to Circuits or sent for Theological Training, they may apply for their names to be placed on the Presiding Bishop’s List of Reserve. They are not thereby received on Probation; their Probation begins only once they are appointed to a Circuit.

4.22 The Presiding Bishop alone has power to call out persons from the List of Reserve to supply or to go into full Circuit work.

4.23 If any accepted Candidate is called out by the Presiding Bishop at or before the end of February to labour in a Circuit, the year shall be reckoned the first of Probation, subject to successful completion of the prescribed study course.

4.24 The names of those on the List of Reserve shall be given by the Executive Secretary to the Bishops concerned in order that due enquiry may be made concerning them and that the Connexional Executive may have a regular report as to their continued fitness for our work.

**PROBATIONERS**

**Length of Probation:**

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

4.26 The normal course of Probation is five years of which at least two years shall be spent in Circuit work. The Connexional Executive may defer a Probationer’s ordination so that the Probationer may complete two years in
Circuit work. Advancement in Probation takes effect from the beginning of the following year. A Probationer may apply for Ordination in the year in which the Probationer believes s/he will be able to meet the exit outcomes and requirements to advance from Phase 2 to Phase 3. These requirements and exit outcomes are out in the ‘Handbook for Probation’ obtainable from EMMU.

**Synod Examinations:**

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

4.28 Each Probationer shall preach before a committee of four, of whom at least two shall be Ministers and the others Lay Members all drawn from the District. The Committee shall report to Synod, using the approved mark sheet and giving a brief outline of the sermon and a general description of the service.

**Probationers at Theological Colleges:**

4.29 All Probationers shall receive theological training from a Theological College unless the Connexional Executive directs otherwise.

4.30 Probationers who are in full-time residential training in a Theological College shall be reported on in the Synod of the District in which the College is situated. The person in authority at the College shall answer Synod on behalf of the Probationers when the Discipline Questions are before the Synod. Synod shall make recommendations regarding the advancement of such Probationers.

4.31 Probationers at Theological Colleges who need financial assistance shall make application to the person in authority at the College.

4.32 Probationers at College who must unavoidably be absent for any part of the College term shall first obtain the permission of the person in authority at the College and of the Bishop.

4.33 Probationers moving to one of our residential Colleges or from such College to a Circuit may claim their removal expenses from the Removals Fund.

**Supervision of Probationers’ Studies and Work:**

4.34 The Superintendent of each Probationer shall present a written report to Synod on the Probationer’s Circuit work.

4.35 A Minister in each District shall be appointed by Synod as District Supervisor of Studies who is to meet the following requirements:

- A passion for forming persons for the vocation of ministry.
- A high level of administrative skill and competency (including Computer literacy, or the availability of an office that can perform such functions...
as record keeping, typing, email and, or, fax communication).
• Own transport and the ability to travel within the District and Connexion when needed.
• A pastoral concern for ministers in training, and the training needs of the laity.
• The ability to mark / evaluate the work of ministers in training (such assessment includes both academic & vocational competency).
• Teaching and facilitation skills.
• Impeccable religious and moral character.
• A sense of responsibility to the Connexion, the District and the local Circuit.
• A clear understanding of the polity of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa as it relates to education and ministerial formation.
• An ability to build and oversee the work of a strong District EMMU team.
• A willingness to stay up-to-date with the training regime of the church.
• A minimum of an honours degree in Theology, or obvious suitability for the work, or at least 5 years post ordination experience in ministry.

4.36 The District Supervisor of Studies shall present to Synod a written report of the studies of all Probationers.

4.37 The primary purpose of ministerial training is the study of the Scriptures and cognate subjects in preparation for the work of the ministry. While Ministers and Probationers are encouraged to follow other courses of study, their training shall not thereby be deflected from its primary purpose.

4.38 When a Probationer is first appointed to a Circuit the Bishop or someone appointed by the Bishop shall hold an Induction Service.

4.39 A Probationer may, with the recommendation of the Superintendent and the written endorsement of the Bishop, be granted a Certificate of Authority by the Presiding Bishop to administer the Sacraments according to our established usages. Such Certificate is valid for only the year of issue and only within the Circuit for which it was issued.

4.40 Unless duly licensed as a Marriage Officer no Probationer may purport to perform a Marriage.

4.41 No Probationer other than a Candidate for Ordination shall be invited to labour in a Circuit.

4.42 Before entering upon marriage a Probationer shall consult colleagues and inform the Superintendent, the Bishop and the Executive Secretary.

ORDINATION AND ADMISSION INTO FULL CONNEXION

4.43 Synods may examine and recommend for Ordination and Reception into Full Connexion only such Probationers as were designated Ordinands in
the previous year. A Probationer may apply for Ordination in the year in which the Probationer believes s/he will be able to meet the exit outcomes and requirements to advance from Phase 2 training to Phase 3 training. These requirements and exit outcomes are out in the ‘Handbook for Probation’ obtainable from EMMU.

**Ordinands’ Examinations:**

4.44 Each Candidate for Ordination shall conduct a Service before at least two but preferably three Ministers and one lay Member in the District, who shall give a written report to Synod. The report shall use the approved mark-sheet and contain a brief outline of the sermon and a general description of the service.

4.45 Candidates for Ordination are required, in their District, to make a Public Witness of their Conversion, Call to the Ministry, and present Christian experience. The Minister appointed to preside at such a meeting shall report to Synod on the Candidate’s witness.

4.46 Each Candidate for Ordination shall be orally examined by Synod as determined by the Connexional Executive and shall reaffirm the undertakings given at Candidature.

4.47 Having satisfied all requirements the Candidate may be received into Full Connexion.

**Full Connexion:**

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

**Ordination:**

4.49 Candidates for Ordination, before or after they have been received into Full Connexion, are ordained by the solemn imposition of hands at a special public service conducted by the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Secretary, assisted by other Ministers. If approved by the Presiding Bishop, ordained Ministers from other Christian denominations may be invited to assist.

4.50 A Minister so ordained shall receive a Certificate of Ordination signed by the Presiding Bishop, the Secretary and the assisting Ministers.
MINISTERS FROM OTHER CHURCHES

4.51 An ordained Minister or Probationer Minister of another Christian Church who desires to enter the Methodist Ministry shall apply to the local Bishop. Before the Connexional Executive accepts their application or otherwise, all such applicants shall:

4.52 Provide a letter of recommendation from their Church;

4.52.1 possess the basic education qualification (Std 10 / Grade 12) or equivalent and at least a theological diploma equivalent to that which was offered by the Joint Board for the Diploma in Theology up to 2005, or a Diploma or Degree in Theology from a Seminary or University recognised by EMMU

4.52.2 be interviewed by the District Candidates’ Screening Committee (refer to L&D 5.3.4.1);

4.52.3 appear before Synod as do Candidates for the ministry.

4.53 The Candidates’ Screening Committee shall, prior to its interview, arrange for an investigation of the reasons for the application and shall hold confidential consultation with the authorities of the Church to which the applicant belongs.

4.54 Ministers in training for Ordination shall be received as Probationers of a status to be determined by the Connexional Executive.

4.55 Ordained Ministers, whose ordination is recognised, shall be received as ordained Ministers on Trial, and shall:

4.55.1 serve a trial period of not less than two years but no longer than four years;

4.55.2 complete the required studies and In Service Training within the on trial period;

4.55.3 in the final year take the usual Synod oral examination for Ordinands.

TRANSFER TO OTHER CHURCHES OR CONFERENCES

Other Methodist Conferences:

4.56 A Minister wishing to transfer to another Conference of the Methodist Church shall request permission to negotiate such transfer from the Presiding Bishop through the Bishop.

4.57 The Presiding Bishop has discretion to grant such permission and authorise the Executive Secretary to provide the Conference to which application is being made with such information and documentation as it may require.
4.58 When the Conference to which application has been made indicates in writing that it is willing to accept the Minister, the applicant shall be transferred to the relevant Conference as a Minister in good standing.

4.59 Such transfers shall take effect at the end of our Connexional year unless arrangements for supply have been made which are satisfactory to all parties.

Other Churches:

4.60 A Minister who wishes to transfer to another Church (other than a Conference of the Methodist Church) may request permission from the Presiding Bishop through the relevant District, to negotiate such transfer. The Presiding Bishop shall appoint a Pastoral Committee to consider the request and to ascertain whether:

4.60.1 the application arises from serious doctrinal or disciplinary disagreements with Conference;

4.60.2 the Minister, if already ordained, will be received as an ordained Minister by the Church to which the transfer is to be made.

4.61 On receipt of the report of the Pastoral Committee, the Presiding Bishop has discretion to:

4.61.1 reserve the matter for decision by the Connexional Executive;

4.61.2 grant permission for the Minister to negotiate such transfer while continuing to serve, in which case the conditions in para 4.63 shall be observed.

4.61.3 require the Minister to resign and authorise the Executive Secretary to provide a statement of the Minister’s service and standing.

4.62 A Minister seeking a transfer to another Church shall give adequate notice to the Bishop and Circuit officials to afford a fair opportunity to fill the resultant vacancy by invitation.

4.62.1 when the Minister is to leave at the end of the period of invitation, at least one year’s notice shall be given.

4.62.2 when the Minister will not complete the period of invitation, at least two years’ notice shall be given.

4.62.3 the Connexional Executive may waive or reduce the requirements in para. 4.63.1 or 4.63.2.

DIVORCE AND THE MINISTRY

4.63 It is permissible in principle, subject to careful scrutiny and safeguards, to
admit persons who are divorced, or divorced and remarried, as Ministers in Connexion with The Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

4.64 The Presiding Bishop shall immediately suspend any Minister who institutes divorce proceedings or against whom such proceedings are instituted. Such suspension shall not necessarily involve the forfeiture of emoluments.

4.65 A District Pastoral Committee, constituted by and presided over by the Bishop or a Minister deputed by the Bishop, shall interview every Minister and Candidate involved in divorce proceedings or to whom any of the situations referred to in para 4.66.1 – 4.66.5 below apply. The Committee is to consider:

4.65.1 the lifting of the suspension imposed on a Minister because of divorce;
4.65.2 an application for reinstatement of a former Minister who has been divorced;
4.65.3 the fairness of the divorce settlement negotiated by the Minister;
4.65.4 an application to marry by any Minister who has been divorced;
4.65.5 an application by any Minister to marry a person who has been divorced;
4.65.6 the candidature of any person who has been divorced or who is married to a divorced person.

4.66 The District Pastoral Committee shall report and make a recommendation to Synod that shall recommend to the Connexional Executive.

4.67 In the case of a Minister who is suspended in terms of para 4.65, the District Pastoral Committee shall make a recommendation to the Presiding Bishop. If the Committee recommends that the suspension be lifted, the Presiding Bishop may lift the suspension. Otherwise, the Presiding Bishop shall refer the matter to the District Disciplinary Committee that may decide on remedial measures and/or disciplinary procedure.

4.68 A two-thirds majority vote by the Connexional Executive is required before it approves any application in regard to remarriage, reinstatement, candidature of a divorcee, or marriage to a divorced person.

**APPOINTMENT AND REMOVAL OF MINISTERS**

4.69 The Connexional Executive reviews all appointments annually and appoints all Ministers, as published in the Annual Directory, for 12 calendar months from the 1st January following their appointment, subject always to the Laws and Discipline. Any invitation of a minister or recommendation at the instance of the Church about any appointment, shall not derogate from the authority of the Connexional Executive to decide the annual appointments of all ministers. Before making such annual appointments, notwithstanding
any provision contained in the Laws and Discipline or any practice or usage of the Church and without derogating from the Connexional Executive’s sole discretion as to the process it may chose to follow before any specific appointment is made, no minister shall have the right to be heard by the Connexional Executive.

4.70 Ministers who are removing shall arrive in their new Circuits not later than the 20th December. They shall commence their duties not later than the first Sunday in January.

4.71 No Minister leaving a Circuit shall continue to occupy the Circuit house after the 19th December or such earlier date on which the successor is to arrive. Any exception to this provision shall require the approval of the successor, and the Superintendent, and the Bishop.

4.72 The rules governing the removal of Ministers shall govern the removal of Ministers becoming Supernumeraries.

4.73 Ministers shall not perform any official duty in any other Circuit without the approval of the Superintendent of that Circuit. No Minister may travel outside the Connexion without the approval of the Bishop and advising the Presiding Bishop.

Ministers left without Appointment:

4.74 Should the Connexional Executive decide to leave a Minister without appointment to any Circuit or Connexional office (and such decision shall be final and conclusive) it may ask such Minister to resign from the Ministry of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa. If the resignation is not made, the Minister shall be deemed to have resigned on the expiry of twelve months from the last day of the meeting at which the Connexional Executive made its decision to ask such minister to resign.

Ministers ‘Without Appointment (Marriage):

4.75 If a suitable appointment is not found for a woman Minister by reason of circumstances arising from her marriage, she may be classified, or she may apply to be classified, as ‘without appointment (marriage)’. This application is to be made through Synod and she is expected, as far as possible, to complete the current year of service. If so classified, she is exempt from normal stationing at no cost to the Connexion. Her name is printed in the Circuit where she resides as ‘without appointment (marriage)’ but she remains under the discipline applying to Ministers and is expected to give such help to the Circuit as she can. In appropriate cases she may receive some remuneration for duties undertaken by decision of the Quarterly Meeting. She is a member of the Quarterly Meeting and the Local Preachers’ Meeting.
Maternity Leave:

4.76 If a married Minister becomes pregnant, the Circuit shall make the best arrangements possible in consultation with the Bishop. Such arrangements include, but are not limited to, requesting the Presiding Bishop:

4.76.1 to relieve the Minister of the duties associated with the appointment;
4.76.2 to appoint a Supply;
4.76.3 to authorise or negotiate equitable arrangements relative to the stipend and allowances.

4.77 The following arrangements shall apply if a Minister becomes pregnant:

4.77.1 the Minister shall commence maternity leave two months before the birth of the child and shall be entitled to a further six months after the birth. If the Circuit and the Minister are in agreement she may resume duty earlier or start maternity leave earlier.

4.77.2 a Minister commencing maternity leave shall receive her full stipend for three months. She shall also be paid for any annual leave or long leave that is included in her maternity leave.

4.77.3 a Minister on maternity leave is entitled to continue to reside in the Circuit house if such an arrangement is acceptable to the Circuit.

4.77.4 if a change of station is due to take place in the period of maternity leave, both Circuits shall be involved in the arrangements.

4.77.5 a Minister who is pregnant may apply for leave of absence until such time as family responsibilities allow her to resume her calling. In this event, she may be required to vacate the Circuit house but is entitled to the payments referred to in para. 4.78.2.

4.77.6 the Bishop shall ensure that the Minister and the Circuit to which she is appointed are aware of these provisions before she takes up her appointment.

4.78 A Minister who is ‘without appointment (marriage)’ shall attend Synod and answer the usual Discipline questions.

DUTIES OF MINISTERS

General:

4.79 Ministers, as those who have been overwhelmed by the saving love of Jesus Christ, are called to proclaim by word and by deed this saving love for all people. As the Lord has accepted all sinners without condition, so
Ministers must declare unconditional acceptance and forgiveness for all. The Ministers' duty is to use the pulpit to preach this Gospel and this Gospel only, preaching both pastorally and prophetically. Therefore they must faithfully nurture their own spiritual life, they must be diligent in preparation and in studying the Scriptures and other material which will provide equipment for their Calling, and their homes must be led in such a way as to be a witness to the Gospel. The Minister is to be the servant of all Christ's people by being a pastor to them in their homes and in every other situation. The Minister's duty is to set before the people by precept and example the ideal of Scriptural Holiness, and to instruct people in Christian faith and life.

4.80 Ministers are to preach and to perform all acts of Worship, to exercise oversight and to apply the Methodist Discipline, in the churches or other places of worship already erected or to be erected in the Circuit to which they are appointed.

4.81 Ministers shall administer the Sacraments but shall not, without the approval of the Bishop, use set forms of worship for the Sacraments other than those that have been authorised by Conference.

4.82 Ministers shall observe and implement the provisions of Laws and Discipline and all other policies, decisions, practices and usages of the Church.

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

*Officiating at Ordinations in other Churches:*

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

**SUPERNUMERARY MINISTERS**

4.85 Ministers desiring to become Supernumerary Ministers (to retire from the full work of the Ministry) shall normally apply through Synod to the Connexional Executive. In special cases the application may be made direct to the Connexional Executive or to the Presiding Bishop.

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

4.87 Supernumeraries are members of the Quarterly Meeting of the Circuit in which they reside and any ministry they perform in the Circuit is under the direction of the Quarterly Meeting.
4.88 Supernumeraries are permitted to supply for another denomination only when suitable opportunity for service cannot be found within the Methodist Church, and only with the written consent of the Presiding Bishop, which is given for one year at a time.

4.89 Travelling expenses of Supernumeraries attending Synod are a charge on Connexional funds.

RESIGNATION OF MINISTERS

4.90 Ministers who resign their Connexion with Conference shall receive such benefits as are provided for in the Rules of the Methodist Supernumerary Fund. They and their families have no claim on any Church funds.

4.91 Ministers who fail to take up their appointment or who abscond from their appointment shall be deemed to have resigned under charges that affect their moral character.

4.92 A Minister who takes up a party-political post or any other appointment that Conference or the Connexional Executive considers will compromise the necessary independence of the Church in its witness to the Gospel in society, shall resign from the ministry failing which shall be deemed to have resigned.

4.93 A Minister who resigns, or has been deemed by Conference or the Connexional Executive to have resigned from the ministry ceases to be a Minister of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa and may not perform any of the functions or use the title or dress of a Minister of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.

MINISTERS NOT IN CIRCUIT APPOINTMENTS (SECONDMENTS)

General:

4.94 The Methodist Church Of Southern Africa trains and ordains its ministers for the mission – leadership and pastoral care of its congregations in the ministry of Word and Sacrament. However the Conference may permit a minister to be seconded to an organisation outside the Church if it is satisfied that the position is in line with the calling and work of a minister and that it clearly needs to be filled by a minister in full connexion.

4.94.1 Secondment shall only be granted if the position is considered to be in harmony with the ministry and mission of the Methodist Church Of Southern Africa. It shall not be granted for positions of a party-political nature, or any appointment which compromises the necessary independence of the Church in its witness to the Gospel in society.

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

4.94.3 Secondment shall not normally be granted to a minister who has served less than five years in Circuit following ordination.

Application Procedure and Process

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

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

4.95.3 The Pastoral Commission shall investigate the following matters:
  • the nature of the organisation to which secondment is sought and whether this is in harmony with the mission and ministry of the Methodist Church Of Southern Africa
  • the role and function the minister in the seconded position and whether it is in line with the calling and work of a minister and the ministry of Word and Sacrament
  • the gifts and training of the minister and how these relate to the position
  • the motives of the minister and whether there is any loss of call or other factors which have led to the application
  • how the secondment would affect the minister’s family
  • what payment and other incentives the minister will receive
  • any other matters considered relevant

4.95.4 The Pastoral Commission shall also investigate with the District Bishop and the Circuit in which the minister is stationed whether he/she can be released from the appointment and receive some evaluation of his/her work in the Circuit.

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

4.96.1 All secondments must be referred to the Connexional Stationing Committee for ratification.

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

4.96.3 The initial period of secondment shall be five years unless a shorter period is requested. Extensions shall be for a further five years at a time and shall be applied for in writing to the Presiding Bishop. During the last year of
each five year period the secondment should be reviewed by a Pastoral Committee appointed by the Presiding Bishop in terms of the applicable criteria in 4.98.3.4 above and shall include an assessment of the minister’s performance during secondment. An assessment and recommendation should be obtained from the organisation.

4.96.4 The Bishop shall twice a year initiate a pastoral consultation with each seconded minister in the District.

4.96.5 Seconded ministers must accept that they can be recalled at any time by the Methodist Church Of Southern Africa to take up an appointment in Circuit. In such a case the minister would be required to resign from their post in the organisation and take up the appointment required by Conference. At least three months notice should normally be given to the minister and the organisation.

4.96.6 When a minister wishes to terminate a secondment and return to a circuit appointment he/she shall advise the Presiding Bishop in writing. The Presiding Bishop shall obtain an assessment and recommendation concerning his/her performance during secondment from the organisation to which he/she has been seconded.

**Regulations**

4.97 Seconded ministers have responsibilities to both the Church and the organisation to which they are seconded.

4.98 They are employees of the organisation to which they are seconded in terms of their contract and in terms of normal labour legislation and are therefore responsible in the first instance to the authority, discipline and requirements of the organisation.

4.99 They nevertheless continue to be in a covenantal relationship with the Methodist Church Of Southern Africa through their ordination and are subject to its discipline and requirements in order to remain in good standing with the Church.

4.100 As representatives of the Church they must not conduct themselves in any way which will bring discredit on the good name of the Methodist Church Of Southern Africa.

4.101 They must remain faithful to the doctrines, mission and values of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, especially in matters of conscience.

4.102 Their job description, remuneration, pension and service benefits will be determined and administered by the organisation to which they are seconded.

4.103 Their relationship to the funds of the Methodist Church Of Southern Africa will be determined in consultation with the Connexional Office.
4.104 Whilst recognising that the organisation to which the minister has been seconded has the primary call on his/her time and work, the minister shall also be required:

4.104.1 to attend the annual synod of the District in which he/she resides and if possible at least one ministerial retreat a year.

4.104.2 to submit a written annual report on his/her work through the Bishop to Synod.

4.104.3 to be involved in his/her local Circuit and Society as much as possible under the authority of the Superintendent and minister concerned.

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

4.105 No Minister shall be without an appointment or be absent from the Circuit, other than on leave provided for by the Connexional Executive, without being granted Leave of Absence by the Connexional Executive or, in case of emergency, the Presiding Bishop who shall report on each case to the next Connexional Executive. All applications shall be made through the Bishop.

4.106 No Leave of Absence shall be granted unless suitable arrangements for supply have been made by the Minister going on leave and approved by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and the Bishop.

4.107 Ministers on Leave of Absence shall attend the Synod of the District in which they reside and answer the Discipline Questions. A Minister on Leave of Absence who resides outside the Connexion shall answer the Discipline Questions to the Presiding Bishop before the 1st May. Any Minister on Leave of Absence who fails to answer the Discipline Questions as required is guilty of not having observed our discipline and may be deemed to have resigned from the Ministry.

**DISCIPLINING MINISTERS**

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

**GENERAL RESOLUTIONS**

4.109 **EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY AND MISSION UNIT**

Regulations Respecting Probationer Ministers

4.109.1 *Length of Probation*

The normal course of Probation is five years of which at least two shall be spent in Circuit. In at least one of these years every Probationer shall be
stationed in a Circuit to minister in a cross-cultural situation. A Probationer may apply for Ordination in the year in which the Probationer believes s/he will be able to meet the exit outcomes and requirements to advance from Phase 2 to Phase 3. These requirements and exit outcomes are out in the ‘Handbook for Probation’ obtainable from EMMU.

4.109.2 **General Regulations For Probationers’ Examinations**

Probationers in Circuit should devote at least 15 hours a week to their studies. Superintendents and Circuit Stewards are asked to understand and co-operate.

The minimum pass mark for all examinations conducted by the Department is 50%. The following classes apply:

- A = Excellent (80% and above)
- B = Very Good (70% – 79%)
- C = Good (60% – 69%)
- D = Fair (55% – 59%)
- E = Weak (50% – 54%)
- F = Failure (49% and under)

4.109.3 **Failure in Examinations**

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

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

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

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

4.109.4 **Internship Training**

All Phase 2 Probationers who are not at College and all ordained Ministers On Trial shall be part of Internship Training. The purpose is:

- to continue the integration of academic studies and practical skills started in the Phase 1 programme.
- to afford regular meetings (optimally once a fortnight) between groups
of Probationers and experienced Ministers (particularly supervising Ministers). These groups should meet for no less than 8 days per annum.

- to involve lay members in Circuits in the process of ministerial training.
- there shall also be an annual Connexional Seminar for all Probationers doing Internship Training.

Phase 3 Probationers (Ordinands) will not be part of Internship Training but will attend a pre-ordination retreat and follow a structured program of preparation for Ordination.

4.109.5 Trial Services

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

4.109.6 Synod Oral Examinations

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

4.110 Regulations Respecting Candidates for the Ministry

4.110.1 Notification by 31st July

The final date for Superintendents to submit written notice of Candidates’ names to the Director is the 31st July of the year preceding candidature.

4.110.2 New Format for Candidature

4.110.2.1 The new format for the academic component requires that Candidates:

- be at least in the first year on trial as a Preacher in the Senior Course.
- pass ‘Interpreting texts’ (7/6004), ‘Growing spiritually, thinking theologically’ (7/6003), ‘Engaging with people pastorally and ethically’ (7/6002), and ‘Developing skills for theological study’ (7/6000) at TEE College or an EMMU-approved Theological Seminary or University by the end of year in which a Candidate’s name is submitted to EMMU.
- these credits replace the Local Preachers’ studies if the Candidate has not passed the Senior Course before.
- in the year in which a Candidate appears before Synod s/he is strongly encouraged to pass further Joint Board courses.

4.110.2.2 The benefits of the proposed system include:

- the candidate will not need to repeat courses up to 3 times as is the present system (in Local Preaching, then the Candidates’ exam, again in Phase 1).
- the Outcomes Based system of a year’s worth of continuous assessment replaces the very stressful single exam event.
- a Phase 1 already has at least 3 credits (and preferably 5) towards a Diploma.
- EMMU can register more probationers for post-graduate studies at College.
- this is also a creative way of responding to the ever – pressing budget constraints on our training system. People take some responsibility for their own training.

4.110.2.3 The Complete Candidature process will now consist of:

- names are submitted to the EMMU by 31 July. (A Candidate must be registered for ‘Interpreting texts’ (7/6004), ‘Growing spiritually, thinking theologically’ (7/6003), ‘Engaging with people pastorally and ethically’ (7/6002), and ‘Developing skills for theological study’ (7/6000) at TEE College and pass this year if this has not previously been done. Exam results of these courses are submitted to EMMU by not later than 15 Dec.
- register for further EMMU approved degree or diploma courses.
- an Essay on Methodism is submitted by 31 March, marked, and moderated Connexionaly. Candidates who obtain the sub-minimum of 40% proceed.
- a screening interview in the District is conducted with a District-appointed panel, including the district Supervisor of studies, a Connexional EMMU representative and a Social Worker or Psychologist. A sub-minimum of 40% must be attained.
- an Oral Exam is held on the same day as the Screening interview, examining Methodist Theology. Set books will be prescribed. This committee consists of at least four people with Theological competency, of which one is a Connexional representative from EMMU. A sub-minimum of 40% must be achieved two trial services are conducted – one in the Candidate’s circuit, one in another circuit. A sub-minimum of 40% must be attained in each.
- if a sub-minimum of 40% has been attained for EACH component AND the Candidate achieves 50% for the whole process as calculated, s/he appears before District Synod.
- based on the report of the process, as well as hearing a Candidate’s Testimony as to her/his conversion to Jesus Christ and call into the Ordained Ministry the Synod votes for or against a Candidate’s acceptance

4.111 Trial Services

Candidates are required to conduct one Trial Service as required in Laws and Discipline para. 4.18, and the second in the Candidate’s home Society, with a committee of three including at least one Minister and one lay person.
4.112 **Re-candidature**

Where candidature is unsuccessful and the candidate offers in a subsequent year, the Superintendent shall submit a special report through the Unit to the District Screening Committee and Synod in place of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting Vote. The candidate will have to complete all of the required tasks and expectations for candidature each time s/he re-candidates.

4.113 **Candidates from Moçambique**

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

4.114 **Approval of District Screening Committee**

The Connexional Executive resolves that those candidates who do not receive the approval of the majority of the District Screening Committee should not appear before the Synod. Reports must be forwarded to the Bishop and Director of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit.

4.115 **Ministers Transferring In**

In addition to the stipulation of Laws and Discipline paras 4.52-4.55, the following procedures shall apply in respect of ministers transferring in:

- Bishops must send names to the EMMU as soon as they receive them, with their addresses
- the EMMU will send them the following:
  - application form
  - personal questionnaire
  - medical form
- they will have to write an essay on Methodism which is comprised of a syllabus set annually by EMMU
- they must appear before the District Candidate’s Screening Committee where there will be Connexional presence
- they must appear before Synod, if recommended by the Screening Committee
- the Synod report is to be tabled at the EMMU general Committee in July by the District Supervisor of Studies for recommendation to the Connexional Executive.

In the District Screening Committee the minister on transfer be examined along the following lines:

In the Readiness and suitability for Methodist Ministry screening committee:

- The minister’s conversion experience, call to preach and call to the
Ordained ministry need to be heard and evaluated by the screening committee. In particular the Committee should assess how the individual’s call to the Ordained Ministry has been confirmed through their ministry in the other denomination in which they have served.

In the Theological examination Committee:

- The minister being examined is to be questioned about the content of Methodist Doctrine, an understanding of Methodist polity, and his or her calling to participate in, and further, the work of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Upon hearing and evaluating the responses to the questions, the theological examination committee should award a mark. In order for the minister being examined to pass he or she will need to achieve a minimum mark of 50%.

NB All Ministers who have resigned and wish to be reinstated will go through the District Pastoral Commission appointed by the District Bishop, for recommendation or otherwise to Synod and the Connexional Executive.

4.116 REGULATIONS FOR FULL TIME NON-ITINERANT ORDAINED MINISTERS

4.116.1 Definition

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

4.116.2 Motivation

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

“Our present model of ministry makes it difficult to move quickly into new or developing settlements of people. Our existing model forces us to either wait until sufficient Methodists who can pay their way have moved into a new area or we attach these new areas to existing Circuits which then become more cumbersome and stretched for resources. The result is that while other churches are evangelising and planting churches in such areas, we are often left behind.”

4.116.3 Selection

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

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

4.116.5 *Stations and Removals*

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

4.116.6 *Stipend and Allowances*

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

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

4.116.7 *Housing, Furnishing and Equipment*

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

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

4.116.8 *Appointment of These Ministers*

4.116.8.1 *Procedure*

Prospective candidates for the ministry shall follow the normal procedures for candidature except that the application shall include a letter from the Circuit Stewards indicating that the relevant Circuit Quarterly Meeting has indicated willingness to have such candidate stationed in the Circuit and that the Circuit will reimburse the Connexion for training costs incurred in respect of such minister should a decision be made by the Circuit to rescind the appointment during probation.

4.116.8.2 *Term of Appointment*

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

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

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

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

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

4.117.1 **Definition**

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

4.117.2 **Motivation**

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

“Where the circumstances of a local church are such that the inability to afford a full-time Minister will have a negative impact on the health and growth of the Church and no viable alternative exists for a shared ecumenical appointment ......”

4.117.3 **Training**

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

They shall serve probation, undergo such theological and pastoral training and satisfy all the requirements for ordination as the Conference, Connexional Executive and Education for Ministry and Mission Unit (EMMU) shall prescribe.

4.117.4 **Stations and Removals**

They shall not be available for stationing and removal in the same way as Itinerant Ministers, but may be appointed to labour in terms of regulation 7 below.
4.117.5  **Stipend and Allowances**

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

4.117.6  **Housing, Furnishing and Equipment**

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

4.117.7  **The Work of These Ministers**

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

4.117.8  **The Appointment of These Ministers**

4.117.8.1  **Procedure:**

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

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

4.117.8.2  **Term of Appointment**

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

In the Event that the Recommendation, Endorsements and Appointment are not made or given:

- A part-time Minister who has applied but who has not been granted any or all of such recommendation, endorsements or appointment
shall not be eligible to serve in a leadership capacity in the Circuit, be a member of a Society Leaders’ Meeting in the Circuit or the Circuit Quarterly Meeting for the year following the application, where after either a new application for recommendation may be made to the Quarterly Meeting, or the Minister may be recorded in the Minutes of Conference as being ‘without appointment’.

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

4.117.9 Change of Status

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

(Endnotes)

1 These requirements were circulated through SYNODS in 2006 and accepted by CE in 2006.
2 These resolutions relating to ministers on transfer were circulated to SYNODS in 2006, amended and carried at the June 2006 EMMU meetings and accepted by CE in 2006.
CHAPTER 5

THE CONNEXION

THE CONFERENCE

5.1 Conference provides direction and inspiration for the Church and is the Church’s governing authority and supreme legislative body. Conference is the sole and final authority in respect of the doctrines of the Church and their interpretation.

5.2 Conference, at one time affiliated to the British Conference and subject in certain respects to its control, acquired complete independence and autonomy under and in terms of Act 17 of 1927 referred to in para. 2.2. Subject to the provisions of Act 111 of 1978, Conference has power to alter its Constitution, to make Rules and Regulations for the good government of the Church and for the due and proper exercise of its jurisdiction, and to do all such acts, matters and things as are expedient and necessary for the maintenance, advancement and benefit of the Church and its objects.

5.3 Conference shall meet annually.

Functions and Duties:

5.4 The functions and duties of Conference are:

5.4.1 to give spiritual and missional leadership to the Connexion, this being Conference’s primary function;
5.4.2 to exercise general oversight over all matters in the Connexion;
5.4.3 to decide the general policy and direction of the Connexion;
5.4.4 to determine the doctrines of the Church and their interpretation;
5.4.5 to delegate to the Connexional Executive the functions in para. 5.38 and any other functions;
5.4.6 to delegate whatever powers and functions it may deem necessary to Districts, Committees, Organisations and Units.
5.4.7 to elect the Lay President and Executive Secretary by an absolute majority of votes cast;
5.4.8 to conduct any other business it deems necessary.

MEMBERSHIP OF CONFERENCE

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

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

5.6 Districts should ensure a balanced representation of women, men and youth.

5.7 Each District, Unit, Organisation and Order shall bear the costs of its Representatives.

5.8 If any Representative is unable to attend for the full duration an Alternate may be appointed, by the District or Organisation represented, to attend for the balance or the whole of the time. The Organisation concerned shall bear any additional cost.

LEGAL PROCEEDINGS

5.9 All legal proceedings by or against the Church shall be instituted in the
name of the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Secretary for the time being or in the name of the Registrar if such an appointment has been made by the Connexional Executive for and on behalf of the Church.

5.10 Acting in their official capacity, no person holding any office in the Church, and no organisation, Society, Circuit or Synod in the Church shall institute legal proceedings for or against the Church, save as provided for in para. 5.9.

5.11 No legal proceedings shall be instituted by any formal or informal structure or grouping of the church or any minister or any member of the church, acting in their personal or official capacity, against the church or any formal or informal structure or grouping of the Church, Minister or member thereof for any matter which in any way arises from or relates to the mission work, activities or governance of the church. The mediation and arbitration processes and forums prescribed and provided for by the church for conflict dispute resolution (Appendix 14) must be used by all Ministers and members of the church. If a matter is referred to arbitration, the finding of the Arbitrator shall be final and binding on all Ministers and members of the church. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary contained in this paragraph, the provisions thereof do not apply to the Presiding Bishop in conjunction with the Executive Secretary when acting in their official capacity in the interests of the Church.

5.12 Any notice, writ or other legal process to be served on the Church shall be served on the Presiding Bishop and the Executive Secretary for the time being. They shall be reimbursed and fully indemnified out of the funds of the Church for all loss and expense they may sustain in consequence of any action or proceeding instituted by or against them for and on behalf of the Church.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

5.13 If the Bishop is unable to attend Conference, the Vice-Chairperson failing whom an elected Representative shall attend. The District may make up the number of its Representatives from among the elected Alternates.

5.14 Any Representative to Conference who is unable to attend shall immediately notify the Bishop who shall arrange for an Alternate to attend.

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

5.15.1 Districts and Circuits shall as far as possible shall be consulted when making decisions which affect them.

5.15.2 Only matters which directly affect major policy or the life and mission of the Circuit should be referred to Circuit Quarterly Meetings
5.15.3 Matters relating to doctrine, procedures, changes to Laws and Discipline and the general management of the Church should normally be processed at District level through Synods and District Executives.

5.16.1 No new legislation of a material and important nature introduced by Conference shall come into effect until it has been referred to District Synods, their reports have been considered and such legislation has been confirmed by the next Conference. Such legislation before coming into effect shall be considered by the Revision Committee and the Connexional Executive.

5.16.2 If proposed new legislation, which amends the Laws and Discipline, is opposed by more than one-third of the Synods it shall not be authorised by Conference, or by the Connexional Executive, provided that where Synods ignore or do not respond to resolutions, that Synod shall not be taken into account as one of the Synods in determining the “one-third requirement”.

**OFFICERS OF CONFERENCE**

*The President:*

5.17 The President, who is known as the Presiding Bishop, is the official head and chief pastor of the Church and shall exercise the powers, privileges and authority of that office subject to the directions of Conference and the laws and usages of the Church.

5.18 The Presiding Bishop shall be a Minister of the Church and be elected according to the provisions of Appendix 10.

5.19 The Presiding Bishop shall normally assume duty on the 1st January some 18 months after election and shall continue in the office for a three-year term, but is eligible for re-election. S/he shall be inducted by the Presiding Bishop who most recently vacated the office and who is available.

5.20 The powers, duties, privileges and authority of the Presiding Bishop are inter alia:

5.20.1 to give spiritual leadership to the Church;

5.20.2 to watch over the interests of the Connexion, to give counsel and guidance where necessary, and to promote within the provisions of the Laws and Discipline and Regulations the spiritual advancement of the Church and its general well-being;

5.20.3 to be pastor to the Bishops and the Executive Secretary and other persons in the Church;

5.20.4 to be a member of and to preside at or depute the power to preside at the Sessions of Conference, the Connexional Executive and all Connexional Committees;

5.20.5 to ensure the observance of the resolutions and directions of Conference and of the Connexional Executive, having authority to permit exceptions or departures;
5.20.6 to approve or otherwise the suspension from office or ministry of any Minister who is the subject of disciplinary procedure;
5.20.7 to appoint when necessary a Committee to consult and make recommendations as to the manner of dealing with questions of public importance;
5.20.8 in association with the Executive Secretary to ordain Ministers to the Ministry of the Word and Sacraments;
5.20.9 to be the Official Trustee and Vestee for the Church of all property, movable and immovable, belonging to or which may be acquired by the Church;
5.20.10 to execute on behalf of the Church, subject to there having been compliance with all of the relevant regulations and requirements, any power of attorney or other document which may be required in connection with the acquisition, alienation, transfer or mortgage of landed property (Chapter 9);
5.20.11 in conjunction with the Executive Secretary to represent the Church in all legal proceedings instituted by or against it unless a Registrar has been appointed by the Connexional Executive
5.20.12 to assist or to depute someone to assist at any Synod if applied to for that purpose by the Bishop or by a majority of the Superintendents in the District;
5.20.13 to visit any Circuit to inquire into its affairs and, in consultation with the Bishop, to redress any grievance;
5.20.14 to exercise all other powers, privileges and authority entrusted by Conference or the Connexional Executive.
5.20.15 to institute such processes as may be deemed necessary for the proper exercise of the Oversight Ministry implicit within the normal duties and responsibilities of the Presiding Bishop

5.21 The Presiding Bishop has the privilege and power of two members in all the acts of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

5.22 In Conference, the Connexional Executive and all Connexional Committees the Presiding Bishop shall represent and be charged with the general interests of the Connexion.

5.23 Should any matter arise in the interval between Conferences or meetings of the Connexional Executive for which no provision is made in Laws and Discipline or in the decisions of Conference or the Connexional Executive, and which cannot be deferred for decision by the next Conference or dealt with by the Connexional Executive without the interests of the Church or individuals concerned being prejudiced thereby, the Presiding Bishop may take any necessary action and such action shall be deemed to be the act of Conference or of the Connexional Executive and to have the full force and effect thereof. When using this power The Presiding Bishop shall only be obliged to consult with or give a hearing to such person or persons as he/she at their sole discretion deems necessary.

5.24 In the event of the death, affliction, impeachment of or inability to serve for any other reason, of the Presiding Bishop:

5.24.1 the Presiding Bishop-elect shall temporarily or permanently, as the case
may be, assume the office. Such extra term of office shall not be considered part of the Presiding Bishop-elect’s first term of office.

5.24.2 if a Presiding Bishop-elect has not yet been elected, the Executive Secretary shall as soon as possible convene the Connexional Executive who shall elect an interim Presiding Bishop. The first meeting of the District Synods thereafter shall elect a Presiding Bishop who shall immediately assume the office.

5.24.3 the Presiding Bishop shall designate one of the District Bishops as Acting Presiding Bishop during any period of extended absence from the Connexion.

5.24.4 a properly appointed or designated substitute shall assume all the duties, powers, privileges and authority of the Presiding Bishop. A certificate by the Executive Secretary shall be sufficient proof of such substitute’s power to act.

5.25 An accusation made against the Presiding Bishop should be dealt with in terms of Chapter 11.

The Lay President:

5.26 Conference shall elect a Lay President according to the provisions of Appendix 12. The Lay President assumes office on the 1st January after election and holds office for a term of three years but is eligible for re-election.

5.27 The Lay President has no executive power but shall represent the Church on ceremonial occasions either on behalf of or in addition to the Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop may delegate certain duties and tasks to the Lay President.

5.28 The Lay President shall visit Districts and Circuits to encourage the people and, in consultation with the Presiding Bishop and with the endorsement of the Connexional Executive, may nominate a mission project to pilot while in office.

5.29 Should the Lay President die, resign or become unfit to continue in office the Connexional Executive shall elect a successor for the remainder of the term who is not eligible for immediate re-election.

5.30 The Lay President is a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

The Presiding Bishop-Elect:

5.31 The official designation of the Minister elected by Conference for the next term of office is the ‘Presiding Bishop-elect’, who on election becomes a member of all Connexional Committees upon which the Presiding Bishop serves ex officio.
5.32 Should the Presiding Bishop-elect die or become unfit to assume office, the incumbent Presiding Bishop shall continue in office until another Presiding Bishop is elected. This shall be done by the Synods of the following year, operating in terms of Appendix 10. The person so elected by the Synods shall immediately assume the office of Presiding Bishop.

The Secretary:

5.33 The Secretary of Conference, known and referred to as the Executive Secretary, shall be a Minister and be elected by the Conference according to the provisions of Appendix 13.

5.34 The Secretary shall assume office on the 1st January after election and continue in the office for a three-year term, but is eligible for re-election.

5.35 Should the Secretary die or become unfit to hold the office, the Connexional Executive shall appoint a substitute.

5.36 The Secretary’s duties are inter alia:

5.36.1 to be a member of Conference, the Connexional Executive and all Connexional Committees;
5.36.2 under the direction of the Presiding Bishop, to prepare, organise and conduct the business of Conference and of the Connexional Executive;
5.36.3 to be the Official Correspondent of the Connexion;
5.36.4 to obtain and submit to the Connexional Executive all Reports, Statistical Returns, Recommendations, Accounts and other documents;
5.36.5 to receive from each District Secretary the Minutes of the Synod and the Draft of Stations in the District;
5.36.6 to remit the resolutions of Synods to the Connexional Executive or to the appropriate Departments or Committees;
5.36.7 to prepare the obituaries of deceased Ministers for inclusion in the Connexional Year Book;
5.36.8 to transmit the Resolutions of Conference and of the Connexional Executive and replies to memorials to the persons or bodies concerned;
5.36.9 to notify the Bishops of the business to be brought forward at the Synods;
5.36.10 to send notification of all matters referred to Quarterly Meetings to every Superintendent as soon as possible after Conference or the meeting of the Connexional Executive;
5.36.11 to give official notification to any person appointed by Conference or the Connexional Executive to any position, duty or committee;
5.36.12 to prepare for publication the Year Book of the Church containing inter alia the resolutions of Conference and of the Connexional Executive;
5.36.13 to compile the Draft of Stations for presentation to the Connexional Executive;
5.36.14 to be associated with the Presiding Bishop and the former Presiding Bishop in the imposition of hands at the Ordination of Ministers;
5.36.15 in conjunction with the Presiding Bishop to represent the Church in all legal proceedings instituted for or against it unless a Registrar has been appointed by the Connexional Executive;
5.36.16 should the Presiding Bishop-Elect die or become unfit to assume office, to call on the Synods to elect the new Presiding Bishop-Elect;

5.36.17 to receive and deal with any accusation made against the Presiding Bishop;

5.36.18 to act on behalf of and instead of the Presiding Bishop in executing any power of attorney, declaration, consent, agreement or other document necessary for the purchase, lease, letting, sale or mortgage of any Church property, subject to due compliance with the relevant regulations and requirements;

5.36.19 to make such textual amendments to the Laws and Discipline as are rendered necessary by the resolutions of Conference or of the Connexional Executive.

5.36.20 to be the Official Correspondent of the Church.

5.36.21 to be the Custodian of Connexional Documents.

5.36.22 to prepare an index of all Connexional documents lodged in the Connexional Strong Room.

5.36.23 to be the Connexional Registrar of Marriages.

5.36.24 to discharge such other duties as Conference, the Connexional Executive or the Presiding Bishop may direct.

5.36.25 Conference may elect such Assistant Secretary or Secretaries as it deems necessary. Such person or persons become members of that Conference.

**CONNEXIONAL EXECUTIVE**

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

5.37.1 The Presiding Bishop;

5.37.2 The Presiding Bishop-elect once elected;

5.37.3 The Bishops;

5.37.4 The Lay President;

5.37.5 The Executive Secretary;

5.37.6 The past-Presiding Bishop, for two years immediately after leaving office.

5.37.7 The Lay General Treasurer and The Director of the MCO.

5.37.8 One Lay Representative of each District, elected by the Synod for a term of three years.

5.37.9 A Representative each of Women’s work and Men’s work in rotation, to be decided in consultation between the various Organisations.

5.37.10 A Youth Representative elected by the Connexional Youth Consultation;

5.37.11 The Director of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit;

5.37.12 The Director of the Mission Unit.

5.37.13 The Director of the Ecumenical Affairs Unit.

5.38 The powers and duties of the Connexional Executive include:

5.38.1 such functions as are delegated to it by Conference;

5.38.2 general oversight of the administration and management of the Connexion acting on behalf of Conference, especially implementing the lead and direction set by Conference for the Connexion;
5.38.3 appointing annually a Revision Committee, which shall include the Executive Secretary, to maintain and ensure the integrity of Laws and Discipline, and to publish revised editions from time to time. The Revision Committee shall report to The Conference through The Connexional Executive. The Revision Committee shall only be an advisory committee.

5.38.4 processing amendments to Laws and Discipline on behalf of Conference.

5.38.5 referring matters to Districts, Circuits, Units, Organisations, Committees or individuals for consideration and, if necessary, action;

5.38.6 accepting Candidates for the Ministry;

5.38.7 progress of Ministers on Probation;

5.38.8 approving Candidates for Ordination;

5.38.9 matters related to Supernumeraries;

5.38.10 acting as the Connexional Stationing Committee and finalising the stations of ministers and appointment of Superintendents of each Circuit for the following year;

5.38.11 receiving and considering such reports as may be required from Districts, Circuits, Organisations and Institutions in the Connexion;

5.38.12 receiving reports on matters dealt with by the Connexional Disciplinary Committee;

5.38.13 serving as a Court of Appeal in respect of a charge laid against the Presiding Bishop;

5.38.14 dealing with memorials from the Circuits and passing on those which need to be referred to Conference;

5.38.15 appointing the Connexional Registrar;

5.38.16 appointing the Connexional Marriage Registrar and, when necessary, the Executive Secretary.

5.39 The Connexional Executive may co-opt or consult and may appoint ad hoc task forces.

**THE CONNEXIONAL REGISTRAR**

5.40 The Connexional Executive may from time to time appoint a Registrar who shall be a member in good standing and an attorney of the High Court and who shall:

5.40.1 represent the Church in all legal proceedings.

5.40.2 initiate or defend legal proceedings on behalf of the Church only with the agreement of the Presiding Bishop in conjunction with the Executive Secretary.

**Pastoral Commission:**

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

5.43 GENERAL REGULATIONS OF CONFERENCE AND/OR CONNEXIONAL EXECUTIVE

5.43.1 Review of Ministry

Conference 1995 endorsed the accountability interview process (Review of Ministry) for the bi-annual review of every Minister’s work and directed that it be implemented in every Circuit.

5.43.2 Continuing Ministerial Education in Districts

The onus for Continuing Ministerial Education lies on the Districts that are requested to take the initiative in setting up such training.

5.43.3 African Language Study

Conference urged all its Ministers to undertake the study of one African language, and suggested that each Minister invite a small group of persons from the Circuit to initiate and undertake the study as well, utilising the teaching resources available in the Circuit or in neighbouring Circuits.

5.43.4 Ascension Day

Conference draws the attention of the Methodist people to the value of using Ascension Day as a Holy Day.

5.43.5 Pentecost

Conference draws the attention of Circuits to the importance of the Pentecost period in the life of the Church, and urges Circuits to have special services at this time.

5.43.6 Transfer of Church Members

Conference urged all our Ministers to exercise the utmost care in transferring members from one Circuit to another, and called upon all Superintendents to carefully observe our long-established practice in this connection.

Conference resolved that where full members leave home Circuits to take up temporary domicile at University, Training College or School, or to undergo Military Training, their Church membership be retained at the
home Circuit and that Superintendents of those Circuits, where such members live temporarily, be sent advice of such domicile and not Removal Notes.

Notwithstanding para. 2, in the case of Methodist Hostels, Schools and Training hospitals, the membership of students may be held in the institution or local Circuit as decided by the home Circuit.

5.43.7 **Custody of Records**

Conference recommended that Circuit records which are more than fifty years old be placed in the custody of the Methodist Archives at the Cory Library for Historical Research at Rhodes University.

5.43.8 **Invitations to Visiting Speakers From Outside**

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

5.43.9 **Marrying Members of another Society**

Conference recommended that our Ministers, when asked to marry people whose membership is with another Methodist Society, ask them for a letter of approval from their own Minister.

Conference further recommended that when one of the partners is a member of another church, and chooses to remain a member of that church, that person either brings a letter of approval from the Minister, or if that is not possible, undertakes to advise the Minister.

5.43.10 **Bursaries for Tertiary Education for The Children of Ministers and Laity**

The Connexional Bursary Secretary and the Lay General Treasurer are authorised to disburse the Baumann and Mabel Smith Bursaries, according to the stipulations of the donors and among the applicants for bursaries who qualify for them.

An amount of set from time to time (see yearbook) is allocated for bursaries for Ministers’ children from the Circuit Assessment Account.

Bursaries awarded shall not total more than the amount voted plus the interest on the bequests and gifts, plus half the amount received from Circuit Bursary Fund levies to a maximum (see yearbook) in any one year.

Where applicants fail their examinations, the bursary lapses and re-application may be made after successful completion of a year’s work.
5.43.10.1 Application for Connexional Bursaries

Applications for bursaries shall be forwarded to the Connexional Bursary Secretary, from whom the prescribed forms are obtainable, by 30th September preceding the year for which the bursary is required.

Applications from children of Ministers should be approved by the Bishop.

Applications from children of lay persons must be accompanied by a testimonial from the applicant’s Minister.

Late applications cannot be considered.

5.43.10.2 Bursary Fund Levy

The Bursary Fund levy on Circuits per annum per Minister is recorded in the Yearbook. The Connexional Bursary Secretary is requested to process the receipt of these levies.

5.43.11 Safekeeping of Historical Objects

Societies and Circuits are invited to deposit objects of historical and cultural interest, such as clothing, vessels and paintings, in the care of the Albany Museum, Grahamstown. If such objects are retained locally, the Albany Museum offers advice about methods of conservation.

The Connexional Executive resolves to deposit the minutes of its meetings with the Cory Library.

5.43.12 Church Public Relations

The Presiding Bishop is the Chief Public Relations Officer of the Connexion. Statements on matters of national importance shall be issued by the Presiding Bishop. In matters of public concern s/he may consult the Bishops. Officers of Connexional Departments shall communicate with the Presiding Bishop if needs be on matters which may require consideration.

Bishops are the Public Relations Officers within their areas. Superintendents may communicate with them on matters that require their consideration. A Bishop may appoint liaison officers with the local Press and the SABC Regional News.

5.43.13 Grants to Extraneous Societies

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

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

5.43.14 **Affiliation with other Organisations**

No organisation within the Church shall affiliate with an outside organisation without the approval of the Superintendent, who may consult the Bishop if necessary.

5.43.15 **Loans**

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

5.43.16 **Matters Referred to Quarterly Meetings**

Certain circuits tend to believe that they maintain unity by not allowing the Quarterly Meeting to debate contentious Connexional resolutions issues. They thus prevent the Church from becoming involved in critical debates.

Superintendents and Circuit Stewards are reminded of their duty to ensure that all matters sent down for debate in Quarterly Meetings be so debated and that failure to do so is a breach of our discipline.

5.43.17 **Bishops and Superintendency**

Conference directs that District Bishops be appointed as Superintendents of Circuits in exceptional cases and where there is a strong motivation.

5.43.18 **Connexional and District Conveners**

5.43.18.1 No Connexional or District Conventions shall be held in a Circuit that is not financially viable, or that is in arrears with stipend assessments.

5.43.18.2 No Connexional or District Convention shall be held in any Circuit without the authority of the District Executive Committee.
CHAPTER 6

THE DISTRICTS

6.1 The area under the jurisdiction of Conference is divided into Districts that are associations of local Societies and that shall be determined by Conference or the Connexional Executive.

THE SYNOD

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

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

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

Membership:

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

6.4.1 all Ministers and Deacons, (including Supernumerary and Probationer Ministers and Deacons), except those who are resident in one of our Theological Colleges. A dispensation may be granted by Synod in case of illness or other reasonable cause;

6.4.2 one Probationer Minister elected by the Probationer Ministers in our Theological College in the District;

6.4.3 one Representative of each Mission Group appointed by Synod;

6.4.4 one Circuit Steward from each Circuit;

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

6.4.5 three other Representatives of each Circuit;

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

6.4.7 one further Representative of each Circuit with more than 2,000 Full Members, or with 5 or more Ministers or Probationer Ministers (excluding Supernumerary and Phase 1 Probationer Ministers);

6.4.8 the Alternates for those Representatives and Circuit Stewards who cannot attend;

6.4.9 the Convener of the District Disciplinary Committee;

6.4.10 the District Treasurer;

6.4.11 the District Statistical Secretary;

6.4.12 the District Treasurers of Connexional Funds;

6.4.13 any Ministerial or Lay Connexional Official;

6.4.14 the General President of the Men’s League, Women’s Association, Women’s Auxiliary, Women’s Manyano, Young Women’s Manyano or Young Men’s Guild, where they reside in the District, if the registered membership of the Organisation in the Connexion exceeds 2,000;

6.4.15 the District President and the District Secretary, or their authorised Alternates, of the Men’s League, Namibia Women’s Fellowship, Women’s Association, Women’s Auxiliary, Women’s Manyano, Young Women’s Manyano, Young Men’s Guild and Unzondelelelo, if the registered membership of the Organisation in the District exceeds 400. If the membership is below 400, the District President or alternate may attend;

6.4.16 one Local Preacher elected by the Mission Group appointed by Synod to oversee Local Preachers’ work in the District;

6.4.17 five Representatives elected by the District Youth Synod;

6.4.18 an Evangelist and a Bible Woman appointed by the District Evangelist’s and Bible Women’s Committee;

6.4.19 the Manager of any Methodist Book Shop in the District, if a member of the Methodist Church.

6.4.20 the District Trust Properties Secretary and one other member of the District Trust Properties Committee.

6.4.21 two representatives of the District Music Association.
POWERS OF SYNOD

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

6.5.1 to provide spiritual leadership for the District, applying the lead provided by Conference;

6.5.2 to determine mission priorities and activities in the District;

6.5.3 to allocate resources and provide material and other assistance to the Circuits;

6.5.4 to consider and deal with the matters contained in the Order of Business for Synods (Appendix 5), subject always to the decisions of the Connexional Executive;

6.5.5 to enquire into the disciplinary behaviour of all Ministers in the District;

6.5.6 generally to administer the District and consider and implement matters referred to it by Conference or the Connexional Executive;

6.5.7 subject to the final authority of the Connexional Executive, to determine Circuit boundaries, divide or unite Circuits, and establish new Circuits.

6.6 Any change in Circuit boundaries shall be detailed in the Minutes of Synod and the District Secretary shall send a copy of the record to each Circuit affected.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

6.7 Synod may establish such Mission Groups and other Committees as it considers necessary, and shall appoint their members and officers. The Bishop, the Vice-Chairperson, the District Secretary and the Statistical Secretary are ex officio members of each Committee.

6.8 The purpose of Mission Groups and other Committees is to promote the mission of the Church at Circuit and Society level.

6.9 Each Mission Group or Committee may co-opt members who do not thereby become members of Synod.

6.10 The Secretary of each Mission Group or Committee shall report on its behalf to Synod on the work for the year and may require from the Circuits and Societies such Accounts, Schedules and Reports as are necessary for this purpose.

6.11 The Secretary of each Mission Group or Committee shall keep its records and documents.
6.12 Obituaries of deceased Ministers shall be forwarded by Synod to the Executive Secretary.

6.13 The expenses of Supernumeraries attending Synod shall be charged to Connexional Funds.

6.14 Persons appointed by Synod to any office, Group or Committee shall be advised accordingly by the District Secretary.

**THE DISTRICT EXECUTIVE**

6.15 Synod shall elect a District Executive from among its members. Such members hold office for one year from the rising of Synod and are eligible for re-election. The Executive may co-opt further members who do not, thereby, become members of Synod. The following are ex officio members:

6.15.1 the Bishop, Vice-Chairperson, District Secretary, Statistical Secretary and Treasurer of the District;

6.15.2 any lay Member who is a member of the Connexional Executive.

6.16 The District Executive shall include adequate lay representation.

6.17 The powers and duties of the District Executive are:

6.17.1 general administration of the District between meetings of Synod, including providing spiritual direction, establishing policy and plans, implementing the decisions of Synod, and referring tasks to the Mission Groups, Committees, Circuits and Societies;

6.17.2 preparation of a draft of the stations of Ministers in the District, for presentation to Synod;

6.17.3 deciding who may attend Synods as visitors without the power to vote

6.17.4 such other functions as are delegated to it by Synod.

**THE BISHOP**

6.18 The Bishop is the official head of the District and is subject to the directions of Conference and the Laws and usages of the Church.

6.18.1 a Bishop is the principal pastor and official head of a District and is to exercise his/her duties in the spirit of servant-leadership that was taught and modelled by our Lord Jesus Christ.

6.18.2 a Bishop is inducted to the ministry of oversight at the commencement of his/her term of office.
6.18.3 the Bishop shall be in the full-time service of the MCSA and may be fully or partially separated from Circuit work according to the circumstances of the District.

6.19 The Bishop is subject to the directions of Conference and the Laws and usages of the Church and should exercise the ministry of oversight in a consultative and democratic spirit. He/she is accountable to the Conference through the Presiding Bishop and the Connexional Executive, and to the District through the Synod and the District Executive.

6.20 The term of office of the Bishop shall be three years from the 1st January of the year in which the term begins, but he/she may assume office earlier by mutual agreement with the incumbent Bishop. There is no limit to the number of terms. However, for a fourth term and onwards he/she must receive a 75% majority vote in the first ballot to continue in office. (See Appendix 11).

6.21 The functions of a Bishop are inter alia:

6.21.1 to be the spiritual leader of the District and to provide for the spiritual nurture of both laity and clergy;
6.21.2 to be the mission-leader of the District and to promote and provide for the mission and growth of the Church.
6.21.3 to be the principal pastor of the District and provide for the pastoral care of the clergy and their families, as well as the laity.
6.21.4 to strive for and be the custodian and focus of unity in the District.
6.21.5 to teach and safeguard the doctrines of the Christian faith as they have been received by the MCSA.
6.21.6 to oversee the ongoing training of clergy and laity for the work of the Church.
6.21.7 to oversee the liturgical practice and worship in the District and ensure that the directions of Conference in this regard are observed.
6.21.8 to participate in the ordination of presbyters and deacons stationed in the District or preside if deputed by the Presiding Bishop.
6.21.9 to represent the Church ecumenically and in the wider society.
6.21.10 to facilitate the prophetic function of the church in society.
6.21.11 to have general oversight of the work in all Circuits, Organisations and institutions in the District.
6.21.12 to enter any Circuit in the District and/or preside at any Circuit meeting if satisfied, after consultation with the Superintendent, that such intervention is necessary.
6.21.13 to convene and preside at the annual District Synod.
6.21.14 to convene and preside at the District Executive
6.21.15 to ensure that proper minutes and records are kept of the District Synod and District Executive and to sign, secure and safeguard such records.
6.21.16 to oversee the stationing of ministers in the District through the District Stationing Committee, the Synod and the Connexional Stationing Committee and, wherever necessary, to apply to the Presiding Bishop to fill any vacancy or make any necessary change in stations during the course of the year.
6.21.17 to recommend to the Connexional Executive Committee and the Presiding
Bishop the appointment of Superintendents of Circuits, or any necessary changes in or withdrawal of Superintendency.

6.21.18 to ensure that the directions, decisions and requirements of the Conference, the Connexional Executive and the Synod are carried out by the Circuits, Societies, ministers, officials, organisations and institutions in the District.

6.21.19 to participate in Connexional leadership and attend Conference, the Connexional Executive and other Connexional meetings.

6.21.20 to be the chief channel of communication between the District and Conference or the Connexional Executive.

6.21.21 to deal with any administrative matters which are required from time to time by the District, the Presiding Bishop’s Office or the Methodist Connexional Office.

6.21.22 to delegate any of these duties to the Vice-Chairperson.

6.22 The following regulations and procedures shall govern the election and appointment of Bishops.

The procedure for electing a Bishop is detailed in Appendix 11.

Candidates for election as Bishops shall be ministers in full Connexion. Supernumerary ministers are not eligible.

The election shall take place in the last year but one of the Bishop’s term of office, unless there are special circumstances in which case the Presiding Bishop or the Connexional Executive shall make a ruling.

The Conference is the final authority for the appointment of Bishops and has the right to veto the nomination of a Synod. In such a case Conference shall institute a new election process.

THE VICE-CHAIRPERSON

6.23 The Vice-Chairperson is elected by the Synod immediately prior to taking office. The Synod shall vote by ballot without previous nomination but only for a Minister in full Connexion and who is in the service of a Circuit in the District. The person elected shall have a simple majority of the votes cast.

6.24 The Vice-Chairperson shall act at all times subject to direction of the Bishop.

6.25 Should the Bishop die, become incapable of the work of a Bishop, be impeached, or be absent for a prolonged period, the duties shall devolve upon the Vice-Chairperson until the end of the condition mentioned, or until the successor elected by the next Synod assumes office, as the case may be. This provision does not derogate from the powers of Conference to appoint a new Bishop with immediate effect.

6.26 The Vice-Chairperson is ex officio a member of all District Committees.

6.27 The Vice-Chairperson shall hold office for a term of 3 years from the 1st January and may be reappointed.
THE DISTRICT SECRETARY

6.28 The District Secretary shall be appointed by Synod after nomination from the floor. The District Secretary holds office for 3 years from the 1st January and may be reappointed. The District Secretary may be a lay-person or a minister.

6.29 The duties of the District Secretary are inter alia:

6.29.1 to keep proper records of all proceedings of Synod;
6.29.2 to prepare one unbound copy of the records for immediate forwarding to the Executive Secretary, and three bound copies for signature by the Bishop, the Vice-Chairperson and the Secretary;
6.29.3 to forward all documents, reports, resolutions and schedules as required;
6.29.4 to discharge such other duties as the Bishop or Synod may require.

6.30 The District Secretary is ex officio a member of all District committees.
6.31 Synod may appoint an Assistant Secretary.

THE STATISTICAL SECRETARY

6.32 The District Statistical Secretary shall be appointed annually by Synod, holds office for one year from the 1st January after appointment and may be reappointed.

6.33 The Statistical Secretary is ex officio a member of Synod and of all District Mission Groups and Committees and shall gather the required statistics of the District, interpret them, and forward them as required.

DISTRICT FINANCES

6.34 Synod shall elect a District Finance Committee comprising the Ex-officio members (as designated in Laws and Discipline para 6.7) and not less than four other persons with appropriate skills and competencies. Members of the Committee are elected for a period of three years and may be re-elected. Synod shall designate the Chairperson of the Committee.

6.34.1 The powers and duties of the District Finance Committee are inter alia:

6.34.1.1 to prepare a District Budget for submission to the District Executive and Synod for consideration and approval.
6.34.1.2 to give oversight of all financial matters pertaining to the District and ensure that all expenditure incurred is in accordance with approved budgets.
6.34.1.3 to ensure that audited Annual Financial Statements pertaining to District finances are prepared and submitted to the District Executive and Synod.
6.34.1.4 to scrutinise the data sent to the District in respect of Circuits who are in arrears, and to ensure that General Regulations, paras 11.11.4.1 to 11.12.2 are implemented within the District.
6.34.1.5 to have oversight regarding the implementation of the Connexional Policy on Financial Management and the Institution Competency Assessment
within the District, to give assistance to the Bishop, Superintendents and other persons within the District in respect thereof, and to ensure that the required reports are submitted to Synod.

6.34.1.6 to advise the District of any financial concerns or irregularities regarding finances within the District and propose any investigations or remedial steps that may be required.

6.34.1.7 to ensure that Trust Funds, Bequests and other Funds designated for specific purposes are used for their intended purpose and/or mandate.

6.34.1.8 whom do we appoint as members of the District Finance Committee?

THE DISTRICT TREASURER

6.35 The District Treasurer shall be appointed by Synod, holds office for three years from the 1st January after appointment and may be reappointed.

6.35.1 The powers and duties of the District Treasurer are inter alia:

6.35.1.1 to assist the Bishop and District Executive in the effective financial management and administration of the District.

6.35.1.2 to ensure that banking accounts for the District are correctly opened and maintained and that any deposits or withdrawals into or from the District accounts are procedural and properly recorded.

6.35.1.3 to ensure that all payments on behalf of the District are drawn by cheque or debit order and that all payments are signed by two duly authorised persons. No credit card transactions are permitted. Electronic payments are only permitted where dual control of authorisation of payment instructions is a requirement of the bank concerned and separate confidential passwords are utilised.

6.35.1.4 to nominate to Synod for appointment a bookkeeper, if required, and an auditor.

6.35.1.5 to submit annually to Synod the audited District Annual Financial Statements and Budget for the forthcoming year and a verbal and written report. The written report shall be included in the Synod Blue Book.

6.35.1.6 to submit to the General Treasurers before 31 March a District Finance Report. A pro-forma Report form for this purpose shall be provided by the General Treasurers and sent annually to all District Treasurers before 31st January.
CHAPTER 7

THE CIRCUIT AND THE SOCIETIES

7.1 The Districts previously referred to are divided into Circuits that consist of Societies that are referred to later in this Chapter.

THE CIRCUIT

7.2 Circuit Management

7.2.1 Circuit Quarterly Meeting:

A Quarterly Meeting shall administer the affairs of the Church within the Circuit. The Quarterly Meeting is responsible especially for planning, promoting and monitoring the spiritual life and the mission of the Church in the Circuit and shall follow the order in Appendix 8.

7.2.2 Sections:

Circuits may, if the Circuit Quarterly Meeting so decides, be sub-divided into Sections for purposes of improved management, consultation and communication. In every instance where a Circuit Quarterly Meeting establishes Sections for such purposes, the authority of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting to make decisions and oversee the work of the Circuit as described below, shall not thereby be diminished or undermined.

7.3 The Quarterly Meeting (The Meeting) shall establish such Mission Groups as it deems necessary with responsibility for specific areas of the work of the Church, and shall appoint the members of the Groups and someone to preside over each Group. The Meeting may give each Group power to appoint further members. Mission Group members may be drawn from beyond the membership of the Meeting but they do not thereby become members of the Meeting.

7.4 The Meeting may appoint ad hoc committees to initiate and implement special projects. Mission Groups and committees receive their authority from, and are accountable to the Meeting.

7.1 The Meeting may appoint a Circuit Executive Committee consisting of the Ministers, the Circuit Stewards, the Circuit Treasurer and others elected from the Meeting so that there are at least as many lay-persons as Ministers. The Superintendent shall preside over the Executive.

7.5 The Quarterly Meeting shall be held once a quarter in the Circuit, usually in January, April, July and October, the October Meeting being devoted to planning the Circuit’s work for the coming year.
Members:

7.6 The following are members of the Quarterly Meeting, provided that they are members of the Methodist Church for at least the past year:

7.6.1 the Ministers, Probationers, Supernumerary Ministers, Deacons and Evangelists stationed in the Circuit, any other Ministers who are members in the Circuit, and the Biblewomen and Lay Agents in the Circuit;
7.6.2 the Circuit Stewards and the Society Stewards in the Circuit;
7.6.3 the Circuit Secretary;
7.6.4 the Circuit Treasurer;
7.6.5 all who preside over the Mission Groups in the Societies;
7.6.6 one Steward of the Poor Fund from each Society;
7.6.7 the duly appointed Leaders of all Classes, Junior Classes, Home Bible Study and Fellowship Groups, and of Ministries established by the Societies;
7.6.8 five Local Preachers elected annually by the Local Preachers’ Quarterly Meeting.
7.6.9 the Circuit President and one duly appointed representative of the Circuit Women’s Manyano, Young Women’s Manyano and Young Men’s Guild;
7.6.10 the President or duly appointed representative of every branch of the Women’s Association, Women’s Auxiliary, Namibia Women’s Fellowship and Men’s League;
7.6.11 any office-bearer of the General Executive or the District Executive of the Women’s Association, Women’s Auxiliary, Women’s Manyano, Young Women’s Manyano, Namibia Women’s Fellowship, Young Men’s Guild, or Men’s League being a member of a Society in the Circuit;
7.6.12 every person appointed to preside over a Trust Properties Committee in the Circuit;
7.6.13 a representative of every branch of the Wesley Guild, who shall be not less than eighteen years of age;
7.6.14 the Secretary of the Wesley Guild Circuit Council;
7.6.15 the Senior Superintendent or representative of each Sunday School in the Circuit;
7.6.16 the Secretary of the Circuit Sunday School Council;
7.6.17 a member of the Connexional Executive who is a member of a Society in the Circuit.

7.7. A united congregation forming part of a Circuit shall be represented on the same basis as a Methodist Society, its members being eligible for election to office or as representatives to Synod, the Connexional Executive, or Conference as though members of the Methodist Church.

Powers and Duties:

7.8 The powers and duties of the Quarterly Meeting are inter alia:

7.8.1 to spread the Gospel and extend the work of the Church especially by planning, promoting and monitoring the spiritual life and the mission of the Church in the Circuit;
7.8.2 to control and administer the affairs of the Circuit;
7.8.3 to appoint Circuit Mission Groups and monitor their activities;
7.8.4 to receive, consider and act upon spiritual, numerical and financial reports of the Societies in the Circuit, and of Women’s, Men’s and Youth work in the Circuit, and of such Departments of the Church as are required to operate within the Circuit, as well as any other societies and organisations in connection with the Societies;
7.8.5 to elect by majority vote, after nomination by the meeting, up to four Circuit Stewards and to give them authority jointly to operate upon the banking account of the Circuit;
7.8.6 to appoint a Secretary to the Meeting;
7.8.7 to appoint a Circuit Auditor and, if considered necessary by the Meeting, a Circuit Treasurer;
7.8.8 to appoint, if considered necessary, a Circuit Finance Committee to assist in the management of Circuit finances. Such a Committee should represent the Societies in the Circuit;
7.8.9 to make provision for Circuit expenses and to pay, through the Circuit Stewards, all claims on Circuit funds including travelling expenses within the Circuit, the amounts due to Connexional Funds and the stipends and other allowances of the Ministers;
7.8.10 to consider paying an allowance in lieu of rent to Ministers who provide their own accommodation;
7.8.11 to receive reports of contributions of the Circuit to Connexional Funds;
7.8.12 to approve or otherwise Candidates for the Ministry nominated by the Superintendent;
7.8.13 to invite, upon the nomination of the Circuit Stewards, Ministers to labour in the Circuit;
7.8.14 to appoint lay ministry and pastoral staff to work in the Societies;
7.8.15 to make recommendations to Synod;
7.8.16 to consider and act upon such matters as may be referred to it by Conference, the Connexional Executive or Synod;
7.8.17 to elect representatives to Conference and to Synod and to elect an alternate should a Circuit Steward not be able to attend Synod;
7.8.18 to approve the necessary reports and schedules for submission to Synod;
7.8.19 to appoint a Treasurer to the Ministerial Students’ Fund, who shall promote the interests of the Fund and solicit subscriptions on its behalf;
7.8.20 to perform and discharge the functions and duties of a Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting where there is no such Meeting;
7.8.21 to perform and discharge the functions and duties of a Local Trust Properties Committee where there is no such Committee;
7.8.22 to consider necessary changes in times of services on the Lord’s Day in consultation with the Local Preachers’ Meeting.

General Regulations:

7.9 The Agenda of business to be transacted at each Quarterly Meeting is laid down in Appendix 8.

7.10 If a Quarterly Meeting invites Conference or Synod to meet in a town where there is more than one Circuit, it shall collaborate with the other Quarterly
Meeting or Meetings in extending such an invitation, unless it is prepared to meet all the local expenses involved.

**Invitation of Ministers:**

7.11 The Quarterly Meeting may invite a Minister to labour in the Circuit in a duly recognised appointment. The following regulations must be observed but nothing shall derogate from the authority of the Connexional Executive to decide the annual appointments of all Ministers.

7.11.1 when an invitation is to be extended, whether for an initial or a subsequent period, the Circuit Stewards shall convene a Circuit Stationing Committee comprising the Superintendent and themselves. If the invitation relates to the Superintendent then the Circuit Stationing Committee shall comprise the Bishop and the Circuit Stewards. The Committee shall consult the Society Stewards of the Society or Societies concerned, who shall not vote at any stage other than at the Quarterly Meeting, and may not proceed with any enquiry without the agreement of the Bishop.

7.11.2 the Circuit Stewards shall all sign a letter enquiring whether the Minister selected by the Committee would accept the appointment concerned. A copy of this letter shall be forwarded to the local Bishop as well as the Bishop of the District in which the Minister is currently stationed.

7.11.3 a Minister shall not consider such an enquiry before advising the local Circuit Stewards and Bishop. Before taking any steps to replace a Minister the Circuit Stewards shall advise that Minister.

7.11.4 the Minister shall reply in writing within two weeks of receiving the letter of enquiry. If the reply is affirmative neither the Minister nor the Circuit Stewards may consider other enquiries.

7.11.5 after an affirmative reply has been received, the matter shall be introduced at the next Quarterly Meeting. The Circuit Stewards shall propose and second the invitation. There shall be no debate but questions for clarification shall be allowed. No amendment may be proposed by the Meeting, which shall vote for or against.

7.11.6 should the Meeting resolve to make the invitation, the Circuit Stewards shall convey this information to the Minister and the local Bishop within 7 days. The Minister and the Circuit are then committed to each other in terms of the invitation but always subject to the authority of the Connexional Executive.

7.11.7 should the Meeting resolve not to make the invitation, the Circuit Stewards shall convey this information to the Minister and the local Bishop within 7 days. If time permits for the procedure to be repeated in respect of another Minister in accordance with para. 7.11.8, the Circuit Stewards may begin again as in para. 7.11.1. Otherwise the matter shall be referred through the Synod to the Connexional Executive.

7.11.8 an invitation may not be extended later than the April Quarterly Meeting or earlier than 2 years before the beginning of the period to which the invitation relates.

7.11.9 an invitation is for an initial period of 5 years. It may be extended by the Quarterly Meeting for a further period of up to 5 years, whereafter further extensions shall be for 1 or 2 years at a time as the Quarterly Meeting may decide.
7.11.10 under exceptional circumstances where it appears that the current period cannot be sustained, the Circuit Stationing Committee and the Minister concerned shall meet to discuss the matter. The Circuit Stewards shall submit a report to the Bishop who shall place the matter before Synod.

7.11.11 a Minister stationed without invitation to the Circuit shall remain in the appointment for at least 2 years. In the first or second year the Circuit may invite the Minister to complete the remainder of an initial period of 5 years. Such a Minister may, alternatively, accept an invitation to serve (after 2 years) in another Circuit. Failing either such invitation, the Connexional Executive shall decide where to station the Minister.

7.11.12 no Minister shall entertain an enquiry concerning an invitation, neither shall Circuit Stewards extend such an enquiry, where the Minister concerned has served for less than 3 years in the present appointment (except as provided for in para. 7.11.11). An Ordinand, however, may receive and accept an invitation for the year following ordination regardless of the period of service in the present Circuit. Probationers are not eligible for invitation.

The Superintendent Minister:

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

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

Powers and Duties:

7.14 The powers and duties of the Superintendent are inter alia:

7.14.1 to lead the Circuit in spiritual matters and to be pastor to the Ministers in the Circuit and their families;
7.14.2 to arrange the regular meeting of Ministers and to oversee their work;
7.14.3 to oversee especially the character and effectiveness of the Leaders in leading the Classes;
7.14.4 to preside at all official meetings of the Circuit and, when unable to attend, to depute another Minister so to preside;
7.14.5 to submit to the Leaders’ Meeting persons to be considered for acceptance as Members of the Church, or to depute a colleague to do so;
7.14.6 to nominate Candidates for the Ministry;
7.14.7 to decide whether to permit any appeal for funds made by or on behalf of organisations from elsewhere in the Connexion, or made by external organisations. Such permission must be in writing;
7.14.8 to hold in safe custody and to keep with accuracy the Circuit records and registers of people and property and, on moving from the Superintendency, to submit these to the new Superintendent;
7.14.9 to ensure that an exact inventory of the furniture, belonging to the Church, in each Minister’s house is prepared and periodically corrected by the Circuit Stewards and the Minister in residence;
7.14.10 to prepare and forward, after being approved by the Quarterly Meeting, the Reports and Schedules required by Synod or the Committees or officers appointed by the Connexional Executive;
7.14.11 to furnish the Bishop immediately after their election with the names and addresses of the Circuit Steward and other members elected by the Quarterly Meeting as Representatives to Synod, and with the names and addresses of their alternates;
7.14.12 to ensure that all monies held by organisations or departments in the Circuit are reported to the Quarterly Meeting, and the accounts audited before being presented to Synod;
7.14.13 to ensure that all collections and assessments for Connexional Funds are made and remitted according to the directions of the Connexional Executive.
7.14.14 to report all Bequests to Synod;
7.14.15 to be responsible for preparing the Circuit preaching Plan;
7.14.16 to observe and carry out all official directions and regulations.

The Circuit Stewards:

7.15 There shall be not less than two and not more than four Circuit Stewards who are the Executive Officers of the Quarterly Meeting. They shall be members of the Church and be elected by the October Quarterly Meeting, after nomination by the meeting, and elected by a majority vote for a term of 3 years. If a vacancy arises it may be filled at the next Quarterly Meeting.
7.16 A Circuit Steward shall not serve for more than 3 consecutive three-year terms.
7.17 The Circuit Stewards are the officers through whom all communications affecting the appointment of Ministers are addressed to the Connexional Executive.
7.18 The duties of the Circuit Stewards are inter alia:
7.18.1 to provide for the effective operation of the Circuit subject to the directions of the Quarterly Meeting;
7.18.2 to manage all Circuit funds on behalf of the Quarterly Meeting and in conjunction with the Circuit Finance Committee where this exists. No other person shall perform this duty and the Circuit Treasurer, where appointed, shall operate under the direction of the Circuit Stewards;
7.18.3 to open a Banking Account in the name of 'The Methodist Church of
Southern Africa, ....... Circuit' and jointly to operate thereon. The signatories on the Banking Account may include the Superintendent or a duly appointed deputy;

7.18.4 to pay to the Connexional Office the amounts due to the Connexional Funds and the stipends and other allowances of the Ministers, and all other claims on the Circuit funds;
7.18.5 to keep proper accounts of income and expenditure, and to submit them to each Quarterly Meeting;
7.18.6 to have the annual financial schedules audited and to submit them to Synod;
7.18.7 to consult the Ministers and Society Stewards so as to know the needs and wishes of the Societies and the Ministers in connection with the stationing of Ministers in the Circuit;
7.18.8 to convene and form part of the Circuit Stationing Committee and to correspond with Ministers concerning invitations to labour in the Circuit;
7.18.9 to nominate to the Quarterly Meeting any Minister for invitation to labour in the Circuit, and to advise the Bishop of the decisions of the Circuit Stationing Committee and of the Quarterly Meeting in connection with invitations to Ministers;
7.18.10 to correspond with the newly-appointed Minister immediately after the Connexional Executive has made the appointment, to meet the Minister on arrival in the Circuit and to facilitate the removal;
7.18.11 to ensure that, if the Minister is to occupy a Circuit house, it is ready and fit for occupation and adequately furnished;
7.18.12 to take turns in attending Synod as a representative;
7.18.13 to be ex officio members of all Mission Groups in the Circuit and the Societies;
7.18.14 to be available for appointment to the Circuit Sunday School Council.

Memorials from Circuits to the Conference or the Connexional Executive:

7.19 The Quarterly Meeting may memorialise the Conference or Connexional Executive. At least fourteen days' notice of the proposed memorial shall be given by the proposer to the Superintendent and the members of the Meeting. The Meeting may amend the proposal.

7.19.1 any such Memorial, once approved, shall be signed by the Circuit Stewards on behalf of the Meeting and forwarded by the Superintendent to the Executive Secretary.
7.19.2 no Memorial may be adopted by the Quarterly Meeting which is manifestly of a seditious character, or is in conflict with the Doctrines or Discipline of the Methodist Church, or involves direct interference in the affairs of another Circuit.

Circuit Finances:

7.20 The chief sources of Circuit Income are: Assessments levied by the Quarterly Meeting on the Societies, Donations, and the Offerings of the
people whether in pledged giving, weekly collections, or contributions in the Classes.

7.21 The funds of the Church shall be operated only through a Bank Account in the name of ‘The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, ........... Circuit’, and shall be managed by the Circuit Stewards under the direction of the Quarterly Meeting and, where it exists, in conjunction with the Circuit Finance Committee. In no circumstance shall any monies of the Church be placed in the account of a Minister or anyone else.

7.22 No Circuit, Society or organisation shall overdraw any account of the Church or enter into a hire-purchase agreement in the name of the Church without the permission of the Connexional Office.

7.23 All accounts of the Circuit shall be audited by a qualified person, whose qualifications shall be stated.

7.24 A Circuit which does not meet its assessment or any other financial commitment for three consecutive months shall, until it meets its obligations, lose control of its finances, the choice of ministerial assistance, and the right to have a Minister within the Circuit as its Superintendent. The Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Bishop, is empowered to appoint a Commission to supervise the finances of such a Circuit, and to institute an investigation to examine the viability of the Circuit with a view to amalgamation with or incorporation into another Circuit, or disbanding if necessary.

7.25 No financial Appeal by or on behalf of any other Circuit or Methodist Institution shall be made to the Circuit without the consent of the Connexional Executive. Any appeal from outside the Church shall be made only through the Superintendent and with the Superintendent’s written approval.

7.26 All organisations within the Circuit making any donation to, or conducting business with an outside organisation shall do so only with the written approval of the Superintendent.

THE SOCIETY

7.27 The Circuits previously referred to are divided into Societies which are as determined by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and set forth in the records of the Circuit.

**Annual Society Meeting:**

7.28 The Society shall hold an Annual Meeting which is open to all Members.

7.29 The person who presides over the Society Leaders’ Meeting shall also preside over the Annual Society Meeting.
Functions:

7.30 The following are inter alia the functions of the Annual Society Meeting:

7.30.1 to decide the mission objectives of the Society;

7.30.2 to elect not less than two and not more than ten Society Stewards for a term of three years. Society Stewards may serve two consecutive terms and are eligible for re-election after an interval of three years;

7.30.3 to appoint a Secretary and a Treasurer of the Leaders’ Meeting;

7.30.4 to appoint a Society Auditor;

7.30.5 to appoint such Society Mission Groups as it deems necessary;

7.30.6 to elect members to preside over the Mission Groups, where possible using the Society Stewards;

7.30.7 to establish ministries in the Society and to appoint a leader for each such ministry;

7.30.8 to receive and consider the reports on the activities and expenditure as well as the plans and estimated expenditure of the Mission Groups;

7.30.9 to elect annually, after nomination from the floor, the Stewards of the Poor Fund, the Class Leaders and Assistant Class Leaders and two representatives to the Sunday School Committee. The Meeting shall appoint one of the Poor Fund Stewards as a member of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting;

7.30.10 to elect annually three members of the local Branch of the Women’s Manyano to be members of the local Committee of the Manyano;

7.30.11 to elect annually two members of the local Branch of the Young Men’s Guild to be members of the local Committee of the Young Men’s Guild;

7.30.12 to receive and consider the financial statement of the Society and to approve the budget for the following year;

7.30.13 to appoint annually the members of the Trust Properties Committee;

7.30.14 to allocate funds needed by the Trust Committee and to receive an account of the use of the funds.

7.30.15 to elect two Local Preachers, being members of that Society, to be members of the Society Leaders Meeting'.
Mission Groups:

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

Spiritual formation; Mission and extension; Youth; Justice, service and reconciliation; Property; Finance

7.32 The Annual Society Meeting may permit any activity in the Society to operate without being included under a Mission Group.

7.33 The Organisations in the Church, such as the Women’s and the Men’s Organisations and the Wesley Guild, are part of the mission of the Society and should therefore be regarded as Mission Groups.

7.34 The Superintendent and Minister(s) of the Society are members of all Mission Groups and shall receive the Minutes of all their meetings.

7.35 No Mission Group shall incur expenditure or a liability thereto without the authority of the annual Society Meeting, but in an emergency special authority for expenditure which falls outside the approved budget may be granted by the Leaders’ Meeting. Such authority shall be reported to the next Annual Society Meeting.

Society Leaders’ Meeting:

7.36 A Leaders’ Meeting shall be held as and when occasion may demand, to oversee the life and mission of the Society and to administer the affairs of the Society. It shall be presided over by the Superintendent, or by a Minister in the Circuit deputed thereto by the Superintendent. The powers and duties of a Society Leaders’ Meeting are inter alia:

Powers and Duties:

7.36.1 to propose mission and other objectives to the Annual Society Meeting. (The Meeting is referred to Question 4 in the Order of Business for Circuit Quarterly Meetings in Appendix 8);
7.36.2 to consider the spiritual state of the Classes;
7.36.3 to appoint leaders of Home Bible Study and Fellowship Groups;
7.36.4 to appoint an Organist and a Choir Leader where necessary and to define their duties and remuneration;
7.36.5 to appoint annually an appropriate number of Door Stewards and to define their duties;
7.36.6 to decide on applications for membership by persons on Trial submitted by the Superintendent or a Minister deputed by the Superintendent;
7.36.7 to decide on the removal of members to and from the Society;
7.36.8 to recommend to the Quarterly Meeting the appointment of lay ministry and pastoral staff to work in the Society;
7.36.9 to receive and consider at each Meeting a report of Sunday School work in the Society;
7.36.10 to administer the Fund for the Poor;
7.36.11 to administer Society funds, where the Quarterly Meeting permits the Society to administer part of the funds it receives;
7.37 Where there is no Society Leaders’ Meeting its functions shall be performed by the Leaders’ Meeting of a neighbouring Society or by the Quarterly Meeting, as decided by the Superintendent.
7.38 The Leaders’ Meeting may delegate any of its functions, to an Executive Committee which it shall appoint from among its members and which shall include the Society Stewards.

Members:

7.39 The following are members of the Leaders’ Meeting. (Elected members and ex officio members remain members of the Meeting only while members of the Society):
7.39.1 the Ministers and Probationers who are appointed to work in the Circuit and any other Ministers who are members of the Society;
7.39.2 the duly appointed Deacons, Evangelists, Lay Agents and Biblewomen serving the Society;
7.39.3 the Circuit Stewards;
7.39.4 the Society Stewards;
7.39.5 the Stewards of the Poor Fund;
7.39.6 the Leaders of all Classes, Junior Classes, Home Bible Study and Fellowship Groups, and Ministries;
7.39.7 the President and a duly appointed representative of each branch of the Women’s Manyano, Young Women’s Manyano and Young Men’s Guild in the Society;
7.39.8 the President or duly appointed representative of each branch of the Women’s Association, Women’s Auxiliary, Namibia Women’s Fellowship and Men’s League in the Society;
7.39.9 any office-bearer of the General Executive or the District Executive of the Women’s Association, Women’s Auxiliary, Women’s Manyano, Young Women’s Manyano, Namibia Women’s Fellowship, Young Men’s Guild or Men’s League if a member of the Society;
7.39.10 the Senior Superintendent of each Sunday School in the Society;
7.39.11 a representative of every branch of the Wesley Guild in the Society, being not less than eighteen years of age;
7.39.12 two Local Preachers being members of that Society;
7.39.13 any member of the Society appointed to preside over a Mission Group;
7.39.14 any member of the Society who is a member of the Connexional Executive.

Society Stewards:

7.40 Society Stewards are the executive Officers of the Leaders’ Meeting of the Society to which they belong, and are ex officio members of the Quarterly Meeting.
7.41 The duties of the Society Stewards are, inter alia:

7.41.1 to co-operate with the Ministers and Leaders of the Society to promote its spiritual and temporal welfare;
7.41.2 to attend the Leaders’ Meeting of which they are members;
7.41.3 to ensure that all appointed Collections are duly made at the proper time;
7.41.4 to take charge and keep an account of collections for Circuit and Connexional funds and to remit them without delay;
7.41.5 to pay to the Circuit Stewards all funds due to the Circuit;
7.41.6 to write or sign all Notices for the pulpit;
7.41.7 to make proper arrangements for Baptisms;
7.41.8 to be in attendance in the vestry to receive the Preacher;
7.41.9 to make the best arrangements for the service should the Preacher appointed fail to keep the appointment or send a supply.

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

7.42 A Class Leader is appointed to have spiritual oversight of a number of Members and should be trained for such work.

7.43 A Class Leader shall be a member of the Church in good standing and be appointed annually for the office by the annual Society Meeting.

7.44 The duties of the Class Leaders are, inter alia:

7.44.1 to assist the members of the Class in their spiritual life and growth, making this the primary aim of the Class meetings;
7.44.2 to visit the members of the Class as frequently as possible in order to watch over their spiritual life;
7.44.3 to keep Class Registers of the Class members.

7.45 No Class Leader shall be removed from office except by the annual Society Meeting, but those who have no members under their care cease to be Class Leaders. Class Leaders who remove from the Society thereby surrender their office.

7.46 Class Leaders are members of the Leaders’ Meeting of the Society to which they belong and are members of the Quarterly Meeting.

Stewards of the Poor Fund – Communion Stewards

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

7.48 The duties of the Stewards of the Poor Fund are:

7.48.1 to act as Communion Stewards by providing for the administration of the Lord’s Supper and Love Feasts;
7.48.2 to arrange for the collection of funds for the needy;
7.48.3 to inform the Minister of any who are ill or in distress and to collaborate with the Minister in caring for them and in making disbursements from the Poor Fund;

7.48.4 to keep proper accounts of all receipts and payments from the Poor Fund, certify these as correct, and report them to the Leaders’ Meeting;

7.48.5 to attend the Leaders’ Meeting;
CHAPTER 8

THE METHODIST CONNEXIONAL OFFICE

8.1 The 1936 Conference established the Methodist Connexional Office to administer Connexional Funds.

ADMINISTRATION

8.2 The affairs of the Office shall be administered by an Executive Committee appointed by the Connexional Executive that shall also appoint a Ministerial General Treasurer and a Lay General Treasurer who shall act under the direction of the Executive Committee.

8.3 The Office shall administer the Funds of the Church including the Mission and Extension Fund in accordance with the regulations relating to them and under the direction of Conference and of the Connexional Executive.

CONNEXIONAL OFFICE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

8.4 The Connexional Office Executive Committee consists of the Presiding Bishop, the Lay President, the Bishop of the District in which the Office is located, the Ministerial and the Lay General Treasurers, the Ministerial and the Lay General Officers of the Supernumerary Fund, the MCO Director and four Ministers and eight Lay Members elected annually by the Connexional Executive.

8.5 The Presiding Bishop shall preside over the meetings of the Committee but may appoint The Bishop of the District in which the Office is located as deputy.

8.6 The Committee shall meet as the business of the Office may require, to perform inter alia the following functions and duties:

8.6.1 to receive and consider the Annual Report of the General Treasurers, together with the duly audited Annual Accounts of the Funds administered by the Office, and to report thereon to the Connexional Executive;

8.6.2 to receive and consider any Resolutions, Recommendations, Memorials, suggestions etc., pertaining to Connexional Funds and to report to the Connexional Executive;

8.6.3 to administer the Regulations and decisions of the Connexional Executive relating to Connexional Funds, and generally to manage the affairs of the Office;

8.6.4 to empower, in its discretion, the General Treasurers to invest the monies of the Office or of Connexional Funds, as it may direct;
8.6.5 to invest and administer bequests;
8.6.6 to empower, in its discretion, the General Treasurers to raise or borrow money by way of mortgage, bank overdraft or in any other way, on the security of any property belonging to the Church provided that when borrowing on the security of property in any Circuit the authority of the relevant Quarterly Meeting is obtained, and the finances of the Circuit are not impaired thereby (para. 9.7);
8.6.7 to empower, in its discretion, the General Treasurers to grant Loans on the security of property, subject to the requirements of the Connexional Executive;
8.6.8 to permit, in its discretion, any Circuit, Institution or Department in the Connexion to overdraw a banking account;
8.6.9 to empower, in its discretion, the General Treasurers to advance money from day to day to any of the Funds administered by the Office;
8.6.10 to recommend to the Connexional Executive the rate of interest to be charged on Loans, or allowed on investments;

THE GENERAL TREASURERS

8.7 There shall be a Ministerial General Treasurer and a Lay General Treasurer of the Church. The Ministerial General Treasurer shall be the Executive Secretary of the Church and the Lay General Treasurer shall be the Chief Financial Officer of the Church. The Ministerial General Treasurer assumes the office and its duties on the 1st January after being elected and continues in office for a period of three years and is eligible for re-election. The Lay General Treasurer is appointed by the Connexional Executive after a proper search and interview process has taken place, for a 5 year contract period, which contract may be renewed for an additional period.

8.8 The duties of the General Treasurers are inter alia:

8.8.1 to be executive officers of the Committee;
8.8.2 to conduct the business of the Office, subject to the directions of the Executive Committee;
8.8.3 to open and maintain banking accounts and to deposit in such accounts all monies received for the Office or any of the Funds associated with it;
8.8.4 to make all payments on behalf of the Office by cheque or electronic payment drawn on the accounts and signed/authorised by them or their duly authorised alternates and generally to operate such accounts;
8.8.5 to overdraw any account, if necessary;
8.8.6 to ensure that all Assessments are paid to the Office by the Circuits concerned;
8.8.7 to represent the Office and the Funds associated with it in Conference and the Connexional Executive, and particularly in the presentation of the Annual Report and Accounts of the Executive Committee.

8.9. All Mortgage Bonds or other Deeds or Documents of security for monies
lent or invested by the Office or for any other cause of debt to it shall be passed in favour of 'the General Treasurers for the time being of the Methodist Connexional Office', who also have authority to cancel, release, transfer or transpose any security or any portion thereof, and to sign any Consent, Certificate, or other Document required in connection therewith.

8.10 The General Treasurers shall carry out the directions of the Connexional Executive in respect of the Funds the Office administers, but decisions in discretion shall be with the Executive Committee and shall be reported to the following Connexional Executive.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

8.11 If any refund is due or accruing from Connexional Funds to any Minister retiring from the Church on any grounds whatsoever, all liabilities, costs and charges due to and incurred by the Church in respect of and chargeable to such a Minister shall first be deducted from the above-mentioned refund.

8.12 The Office is the Custodian of Deeds (para. 9.12) and has charge and custody of all Title Deeds, Leases, Certificates of Title, Certificates of Occupation or other documents of title of Church Properties, and all Mortgage Bonds or other Deeds or Documents of security whatsoever belonging to the Church, and in connection with such custodianship its duties are inter alia:

8.12.1 to ensure that all Title Deeds and Diagrams in respect of landed property, all Mortgage Bonds and all other similar Documents are in safe custody;
8.12.2 to keep a record of such Deeds and Documents;
8.12.3 to provide the Superintendent on request with a complete extract of the Register of property in that Circuit;
8.12.4 to furnish the Superintendent with a receipt for any Deed or other Document received;
8.12.5 to release any Deed or similar Document only to the Superintendent or the Bishop concerned and to obtain a receipt.

THE CONNEXIONAL ASSESSMENT FUND

8.13 The Connexional Assessment Fund is maintained generally by a levy upon the Circuits determined by the Connexional Executive.

8.14 Expenditure from this Fund includes:

8.14.1 the expenses of the office of the Presiding Bishop and the Secretary of Conference;
8.14.2 the expenses of authorised travelling to Conference, the Connexional Executive, and by Ministers’ Widows or Widowers attending the Synod Memorial Service. All such travelling expenses shall be met on the basis
of the most direct route and the most reasonable cost.

8.14.3 the expenses of other Executive Committees except those in charge of their own funds;
8.14.4 expenses of Circuit Supply where authorised by the Presiding Bishop;
8.14.5 grants for Extraordinary Affliction;
8.14.6 travelling expenses of Supernumeraries to Synod;
8.14.7 expenses relating to Connexional Disciplinary Committees;
8.14.8 long Leave Grants for Ministers;
8.14.9 the costs of Ministerial education;
8.14.10 the costs of the removal of Ministers (including Supernumeraries and Probationers) and Deacons;
8.14.11 such other grants whether made within or outside the Church as the Connexional Executive may decide.

8.15 Extraordinary Affliction Grants may be made to:
8.15.1 Ministers, Supernumeraries, Probationers and Deacons and their surviving spouses and dependent children;
8.15.2 members of the Order of Evangelism, their surviving spouses and dependent children, and retired Evangelists and Bible Women, under such conditions and subject to such limits as are determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time.
8.15.3 the Connexional Executive shall decide the conditions for making grants which are for cases of extraordinary affliction, the cost of which applicants would have difficulty meeting from their ordinary resources.
8.15.4 Ministers permitted to take official positions outside the Church shall receive Grants for themselves and their families, if an amount is paid in lieu of the Circuit Assessment (para. 8.13).

MINISTERS’ CHILDREN

8.16 Ministers shall advise the Office immediately of the birth of a child, providing a copy of the Birth Certificate.

8.17 In addition to Ministers’ children who are under eighteen years of age, except for those attending a recognised educational institution in which case the limit may be extended to twenty-four years, the following children qualify for benefits from Church funds:

8.17.1 children of annuitants of the Supernumerary Fund who are otherwise eligible;
8.17.2 children previously born to a person later married to a Minister and who are otherwise eligible;
8.17.3 children born to a Minister who marries after becoming Supernumerary;
8.17.4 legally adopted children and other dependent children recognised by the Executive Committee subject to a maximum of two such children in respect of one Minister.
8.18 Ministers permitted to take official positions outside the Church continue to qualify for grants for their children, provided an amount is paid in lieu of the Circuit Assessment mentioned in para. 8.13.
If any Minister’s child dies before completing the eighteenth year, all allowances cease but a grant is made towards funeral expenses as determined by the Connexional Executive.

CONNEEXIONAL REMOVALS

The Office shall meet the claims of Ministers (including Supernumeraries and Probationers) and Deacons, and their families, for expenses incurred in moving to new appointments, subject to the conditions determined by the Connexional Executive.

One grant is made for the removal expenses of a Minister who becomes a Supernumerary, or of the surviving spouse of a deceased Minister, provided the removal is within the Connexion.

Removal expenses of Probationers sent to Theological College, or from Theological College to a Circuit appointment are a charge on the Removals Account.

Removal expenses incurred by a Supernumerary sent by the Presiding Bishop as a Supply to a Circuit are a charge on the Removals Account.

The Office shall not pay removals costs of Ministers taking official positions outside the Church.

If any item is disallowed by the Bishop or by the General Treasurers the claimant may appeal to the Executive Committee.

LONG LEAVE ALLOWANCES

Long Leave allowances are made for Ministers and ordained Deacons in full-time Circuit work. Supernumeraries are not eligible for Long Leave.

The scale of Long Leave allowances shall be determined annually by the Connexional Executive which shall also authorise the payment of allowances when Long Leave is taken.

If a Minister becomes a Supernumerary, ceases to be recognised, or dies, whatever grant has accrued since Long Leave was last taken becomes payable.

The usual period of Long Leave is two months; Long Leave may be postponed but for not more than three years. The Circuit is responsible to provide a supply for no more than two months.

Ministers permitted to take official positions outside the Church qualify for Long Leave benefits if an amount is paid in lieu of the Circuit Assessment (para. 8.13).
8.31 No grant, donation or loan shall be made from any Connexional Fund to assist a Minister to take Long Leave except as provided for in these regulations.

8.32 Long Leave may not be taken unless suitable arrangements for supply have been approved by the Quarterly Meeting and endorsed in writing by the Bishop.

**MINISTERIAL STUDENTS’ FUND**

8.33 The object of the Ministerial Students’ Fund is to provide education for ministry for accepted Candidates for the Ministry and Probationer Ministers, and to provide for the post-ordination education of Ministers. The costs of the Department of Education for Ministry shall also be met from the Fund.

8.34 The income of the Fund is derived from Connexional Assessments, from collections and contributions from the Circuits and any other source, from Legacies, and other methods decided by the Connexional Executive.

8.35 Claims may be made on this Fund for personal and family allowances for Students at College. Students should apply to the College Committee which shall make its recommendations to the Office.

**INSURANCE**

8.36 All Circuits shall arrange through the Office for the insurance of all Church property, movable or immovable, including the contents of buildings, against loss or damage.

8.37 Household effects of Ministers shall be insured by the Circuit against loss as decided by the Connexional Executive.

8.38 The Office is authorised to charge to the Circuits the relevant premiums. The insurance is not in force until the premium is paid.

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

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

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

8.42 Where insurance has been arranged by the Office, the terms and
conditions imposed by the insuring Company are binding on the Trustees or administrators of the property.

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

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

PENSION AND PROVIDENT FUNDS

8.45 Conference may establish Pension and Provident Funds.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

8.46 Without Agency

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

8.47 Assessments of Ministers with Permission to Labour, on Leave of Absence or Seconded

Ministers and Deacons who are granted permission to labour or who are on Leave of Absence, appointed to Chaplaincies or Seconded, shall contribute each year the assessed cost of Supernumerary Fund contributions, Extraordinary Affliction grants, Furlough allowances, Removal reimbursements, and any other grants, if such benefits apply to them. Where a Minister or Deacon has contributed the assessed cost to the Extraordinary Affliction Fund for less than 10 years, that Minister or Deacon may, from retirement date, apply for grants from the Extraordinary Affliction Fund, limited to the same number of years for which such assessed cost was made.

8.48 Assessments for Non-Stipendiary Personnel

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

8.49 Assessments of Ministers Stationed in United Churches

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

8.50  
*Ministers’ Stipend Allowances*

The Connexional Executive resolved that from 2000 Circuits be encouraged to voluntarily close the stipend gap by granting inflation-linked increases to Ministers receiving higher stipends:

8.50.1  
from 2000 there will be one minimum stipend allowance for all Ordained Ministers.

8.51  
*Grant-Aided Circuits and Departments*

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

8.52  
*Superintendent’s Allowance*

A Superintendent’s allowance as, determined from time to time by the Connexional Executive (see Yearbook), per annum shall be paid by the Connexional Office to Superintendents of Circuits employing two or more Ministers or to Superintendents of more than one Circuit.

8.53  
*Stipend and Allowances for Supplies, Suspended Ministers and Probationers.*

The stipend paid by Circuits requiring a Minister for Supply shall be negotiable. As a guide it should not be less than one-half of the stipend payable to a newly-Ordained Minister.

Ministers or Probationers under suspension who qualify to receive a stipend shall receive not less than the minimum applicable stipend.

8.54  
*Stipends and Allowances Committee*

The Connexional Office shall establish a Standing Committee to which all matters relating to Ministers’, Evangelists’, Biblewomen and Deacons’ stipends and allowances shall be referred;

Stipends and allowances shall be reviewed annually;

A sub-committee of the Connexional Office comprising the lay members thereof (with power to co-opt) shall investigate and make recommendations to the Connexional Office whenever necessary in the above connection.

8.55  
*Remuneration for Part-Time Chaplaincy Services*

Part-time Chaplaincies and Ministries may not be undertaken without the permission of the Quarterly Meeting and the Bishop but any remuneration for such services should accrue direct to the Minister.
8.56 Combining and Payment of Circuit and Stipend Assessments and Circuit Pension Contributions

Circuit Assessments, Sundry Assessments and Charges, Loan Instalments, Insurance, Circuit Pension contributions and Stipend Assessments due, shall be reflected on a monthly statement sent to Circuits. The Circuit shall make a single combined payment to the Methodist Connexional Office on or before the 15th of each month.

The Methodist Connexional Office shall maintain accounts only with Circuits and not Societies or Sections. The Superintendent Minister must ensure that accurate financial statements are kept for each Society/Section which does its own banking. The Circuit must have a system of levying and collecting assessments or obtaining income from its Societies/Sections in good time so that the Circuit can make the required combined payment to the Methodist Connexional Office by the 15th of each month.

8.57 Late Payment of Assessments and Priority

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

- current month’s circuit assessment, medical assessment, loan instalments and insurance instalments;
- the arrear circuit assessment, medical assessment, loan instalment and insurance instalment;
- arrear stipends and Supernumerary Fund contributions;
- current month’s stipend and Supernumerary Fund contributions;

8.58 Consequences for Circuits which do not pay assessments

8.58.1 The Methodist Connexional Office will remind Circuits and advise Bishops which Circuits have not paid their assessments and expect Circuits and Bishops to respond accordingly.

8.58.2 Where a Circuit falls more than two months in arrears with assessments, and does not make arrangements with the MCO to bring such arrears up to date, the Presiding Bishop will instruct the Bishop to:

- initiate an investigation into the Circuit, check its viability and take action to either re-organise the Circuit, offer training, improve the level of giving, amalgamate or disband the Circuit
- provide a written report to the Presiding Bishop and General Treasurers, within 60 days of being advised by the Presiding Bishop,
on the outcome of such investigations and what constructive action has or will be taken to eliminate the arrears by a realistic target date • follow up with the Circuit to ensure the actions agreed on have been achieved by the target date • provide, as at the target date, a written report to the Presiding Bishop and General Treasurers, confirming specifically what action was taken and how the arrears are being eliminated. • The Presiding Bishop be authorised, after consultation with the Bishop/s, General Treasurers and any other persons, to either institute training or other measures to improve the spiritual well being or financial giving of the members, re-organise, amalgamate or disband the Circuit and station the Minister elsewhere if:

The Bishop or Circuit Officials fail to adhere to the above instructions, or no action is taken, or Circuit arrears owing to the MCO are not significantly reduced within 90 days of the Presiding Bishop first having advised the Bishop or by the target date

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

8.59 Arrears in Stipends, Circuit Pension Contribution, Assessments and Loan Instalments

8.59.1 A Circuit that does not meet its assessment or other financial commitment for three consecutive months shall lose the following privileges until it meets its obligations:
• control of its finances;
• choice of ministerial assistance;
• right to have a Minister within the Circuit as its superintendent;

8.59.2 The Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Bishop, is empowered to appoint a Commission to supervise the finances of such Circuit and to investigate its viability, with a view to amalgamation with or incorporation into another Circuit, or disbanding if necessary.

8.60 Travelling

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

8.60.2 Where Circuit travelling is by means other than a private or Circuit car, all approved expenses shall be paid by the Quarterly Meeting.
8.61 *Depreciation Allowance*

The depreciation allowance will no longer be paid as a separate allowance.

8.62 *Travelling Allowance*

The travelling and depreciation allowances were combined with effect from 2007 in order to conform to the South African Revenue Service (SARS) Travelling Allowance Table. The travelling allowance is based on the value of the vehicle set from time to time by the CE. (See yearbook). This amount includes all maintenance insurance and running costs. If the distance travelled exceeds the monthly limit as set from time to time by the Connexional Executive (see yearbook) the excess mileage may be claimed at the rate per kilometre as set from time to time by the CE (see yearbook).

8.63 *Loan – Reducing Term Insurance*

Car loans with the Connexional Office shall be insured with the Connexional Office against the death of a Minister. The premium is set from time to time by the Methodist Connexional Office and recorded in the Yearbook.

8.64 *Holiday Travelling for Ministers in Namibia*

The Connexional Office shall assist Ministers who are stationed in Namibia but whose family is resident in South Africa to travel once a year on holiday to their family in the Republic of South Africa.

8.65 *Annual Leave*

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

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

A record of Leave shall be maintained by the Circuit;

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

30 Calendar days’ Annual Leave shall be granted.

8.66 *Long Leave*

The first Long Leave for a Minister is granted after 9 years of service. Thereafter Long Leave is granted after every 6 years of service.
Years on Secondment, Leave of Absence or Study Leave do not count as service for Long Leave.

The alphabetical List of Ministers indicates when each Minister qualifies for Long Leave.

Long Leave may be deferred but for not more than 3 years and only with the agreement of the Bishop.

Long Leave is 60 calendar days. Annual Leave may be taken consecutively with Long Leave.

The Long Leave Grant is 10% of the annual Stipend Assessment for Ordained Ministers.

8.67 Sick Leave

When a Minister is off duty due to illness, the Bishop and Superintendent (if applicable) must be advised.

8.68 Compassionate Leave

Such Leave will be given in consultation with the Bishop and the Superintendent.

8.69 Examination Leave

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

Such leave consists of:

1 day study leave per paper
1 day for the examination (per paper)

8.70 Other Absences from the Circuit

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

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

8.71 Weekends Off

Ministers shall, where possible, be given one weekend off every quarter (as defined by the Preaching Plan). The weekend shall commence on Friday morning and end on Monday evening and shall not be accumulated.
There shall be no weekend off in the quarter (as defined by the Preaching Plan) in which the Minister takes annual Leave.

8.72  
**Days Off**

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

8.73  
**Accommodation for Ministers**

In addition to the payment of minimum stipends, Circuits shall provide Ordained Ministers and Probationers with suitable free furnished accommodation. (See also Laws and Discipline).

8.74  
**Manse Furnishing**

Circuits shall continue to provide furniture, cutlery, linen, crockery and other equipment, which remains the property of the Circuit. The quality of the furniture and equipment must be good. As far as possible only new furniture and equipment should be provided. Ministers shall be allowed to provide their own furniture and circuits shall provide a reasonable furniture allowance to the Minister for depreciation of such furniture.

8.75  
**Medical Plan**

8.75.1 Claims must be lodged with the Medical Plan within five months of the date of service. Claims older than five months will not be considered.

8.75.2 No claim may be made for non-prescription medicines. Health care providers must be registered with their respective professional bodies, i.e. The Health Professions Council of SA; SA Nursing Council and the Pharmaceutical Council.

8.75.3 Claims will be paid only for the member, spouse or eligible children. (Children’s ages must be specified on the claim form).

8.75.4 Benefits are payable for treatment within the Connexion only. Medical cover for treatment elsewhere must be specially arranged by the member prior to departure. (This cover is not available from the Connexional Office).

8.75.5 Specific limits apply to certain specialist and primary care benefits such as nursing services, surgical appliances, hearing-aids, physiotherapy, pastoral and clinical psychologist (registered with the Health Professions Council of South Africa), speech therapist, audiologist, occupational therapist, podiatrist, orthoepist, specialised dental services. Applicants must contact the Medical Plan prior to treatment for details.

Where major medical expenses, caused by severe illness or accident, are necessary applicants must contact the Medical Plan for pre-authorisation.
8.75.6 Invoices will be retained by the Medical Plan. Please photocopy invoices prior to submission if necessary.

8.75.7 All medical expenses shall be refunded at the rate of 80%. The member’s maximum personal liability for hospital expenses will be limited to an amount set from time to time (see Yearbook) for any single treatment or incident. Gross limits may be set from time to time (see Yearbook).

8.75.8 No member shall be eligible for benefits from the Fund if such person is entitled to benefits from any other medical scheme.

8.75.9 Where a Minister or Deacon has served in a Circuit or Connexional appointment for less than ten years, such person may, from retirement date, apply for grants from the Medical Plan, limited to the number of years served in such appointment.

8.75.10 When a Minister has left the service of the church and has subsequently been reinstated, he or she may on retirement apply for grants limited to the number of years served since reinstatement.

8.75.11 The above two paragraphs shall apply only in respect of Ministers retiring on 31 December 2001 and thereafter.

8.75.12 Ministers who retired prior to 31 December 2001 who require additional assistance with medical expenses may approach the MCO in this respect.

8.76 Allowances for Ministers without Appointment

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

8.77 Children

8.77.1 Age Limit

Unless there are special circumstances no claim will be recognised under the Supernumerary Fund, Extraordinary Affliction Grants, Children’s Funeral Grants or Removals, for children over eighteen years of age, except for those still attending a recognised educational institution, in which case the limit may be extended to twenty-four years of age.

8.77.2 Dependent Children

Children legally adopted by a Minister, or children who are blood-relatives
of a Minister and whose parents are proved incapable of sustaining them, may be recognised by the Connexional Office as dependent children.

Not more than two such children shall be recognised in respect of one Minister.

8.78 **Funeral Grants**

The grant payable on the death of a child shall be two-thirds of the cost of funeral expenses, but shall not exceed the amount set from time to time (see Yearbook).

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

8.79 **Children’s Education**

8.79.1 **Grants for Ministers’ Children**

Children’s Education Grants were discontinued from 1997, being included in the substantial increase in minimum stipends in 1997 and 1998. The MCO may make grants to dependants of Supernumerary Ministers and Ministers stationed in Moçambique with dependent children.

8.79.2 **School Uniforms**

A school uniform allowance of per school-going child as recorded in the Yearbook shall be paid to Ministers and Probationers who are moved to another Circuit.

8.80 **Supernumerary Fund**

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

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

8.81 **Lay Staff Pension Fund and Provident Fund**

8.81.1 All eligible lay employees be encouraged to become members of the one of the Funds.

8.81.2 The Trustees issue guidelines defining part-time employees.
8.81.3 Employers provide pension and death benefits for all permanent “eligible employees”.

8.81.4 The 50-year age limit for membership of the Lay Staff Pension Fund be removed.

8.81.5 The Provident Fund be opened to all lay-employees so that they may choose to belong to the Lay Staff Pension Fund or the Provident Fund.

8.81.6 Employers are required to pay all contributions in respect of the funds to the Methodist Connexional Office by the 7th of the following month.

In the case of persistent default the Trustees have the right, on giving written notice to the “employers”, to cancel that “employer’s” participation in the Fund.

Before the Trustees consider the cancellation of an “employer’s” participation in the Fund:

i the Methodist Connexional Office will advise defaulting “employers”, Circuits, Superintendents and Bishops in writing in an effort to persuade “employers” to fulfil their obligations and pay contributions on time each month.

ii every effort be made by the Church to protect the interests of employees in such cases

8.82 Lay Staff Pension Fund and Provident Fund Trustees

The names of the Trustees are recorded in the Yearbook.

8.83 Connexional Office Capital Fund

8.83.1 The interest of this Fund shall be used to provide grants for limited periods for such purposes as may be desirable. The maximum period of any grant shall be 4 years and such grant shall be phased as follows:

100% of grant for 1st and 2nd year; 66% of grant for 3rd year; 33% of grant for 4th year.

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

8.84 Property Protection Fund

8.84.1 Conference directs those in charge of its properties to exercise proper care to avoid loss, damage or fire.

8.84.2 All buildings and contents belonging to the Church shall be insured
through the Connexional Office for fire, theft, storm damage and political riot.

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

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

8.84.5 The minimum Sum Insured on any manse is recorded in the Yearbook. The General Treasurers are authorised to vary the levies by not more than 20%.

8.84.6 Other insurance cover is available from this Fund. Detailed information is circulated to Circuits and can be obtained from the General Treasurers.

8.84.7 Superintendents should ensure that all properties in their Circuits are insured for reinstatement value.

8.84.8 The valuation of new or renovated buildings should be referred to the District Trust Properties Committee for report to the Connexional Office.

8.85 Connexional Bequests Fund

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

8.86 Ministerial Students’ Fund

Refer Laws and Discipline.

8.87 Contributions to the Ministerial Students’ Fund

8.87.1 Districts should organise Annual Appeals for the Ministerial Students’ Fund and send a printed letter of appeal to each member making printed envelopes available. Good Friday should be the day on which every Methodist is asked to make a specific gift to the Ministerial Students’ Fund over and above any other giving to the work of God. The District shall set targets for the Circuits to achieve. Circuits may send a donation in lieu of a retiring collection. The Ministerial Students’ Fund shall bear the costs of the scheme.

8.87.2 A scheme entitled “Leave A Living Legacy” shall be launched inviting members to make bequests in favour of the Fund.
8.87.3 Circuits should be invited to endow scholarships or provide sponsorship for specific students. Ordained Ministers should be invited to contribute a minimum of amount as set from time to time (see Yearbook) per month to the Ministerial Students’ Fund for deduction from their stipend payment by the Connexional Office.

8.88 Books for Probationers

The Book Room is authorised to pay an amount to be determined by the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit for each Probationer Minister for books for study purposes. Such books must be approved by the Director of the Unit.

A special grant is made per student per annum for the purchase of extra copies of important but expensive books for the library at John Wesley College. The amount is recorded in the Yearbook.

8.89 Allowance to Probationers Leaving College

An allowance equal to one month’s minimum stipend payable to a Probationer shall be paid to each student leaving College to take up a Circuit appointment.

8.90 Family Allowances of Students at College

Financial allowances for students shall be determined by the Theological College Committee and the John Wesley College Committee in consultation with the Connexional Office.

8.91 Ministerial Students’ Fund Cost of Ministerial Training

8.91.1 In terms of Laws and Discipline the cost of College Training to be met by any Minister who does not complete 5 years of ordained service to the Church, is determined as the cost of Tuition, Residence, Registration and Amenities, Sanatorium Costs, Personal Allowance and Book-token paid for a student at College, plus 10% for other overheads, rounded off to the nearest R50. The amount for each year is recorded in the Yearbook.

8.91.2 The cost of other forms of training shall be the actual total cost incurred by the Connexion.

8.92 Financial Aspects of the Training of Ministers

8.92.1 Students attending College or In-Service training are responsible for the payment of their fees. Such fees shall be determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time. Students who need financial assistance may apply through the Department of Education for Ministry in consultation with the Principals of the Colleges for scholarships before arriving at the College.
8.92.2 Travelling expenses of students sent to Theological College, or from Theological College to Circuit appointment at the completion of their College Course, are a charge on the Removals Account. The travelling expenses of students doing Vacation Supply work approved by the Principal of the College shall be negotiated by the Principal and Circuit. Travelling between College and home during the holidays is the responsibility of the student.

8.92.3 A book grant is provided for each student the value of which shall be determined from time to time.

8.92.4 Married students at college who are accompanied by their families are entitled to free accommodation and the cost of electricity, water and gas. There will be no cash allowances for student families, whether or not they are in residence at college and cases of need will be dealt with in terms of Laws and Discipline.

8.92.5 Single Probationers wishing to marry whilst at College must apply to the Presiding Bishop through the Principal for permission.

8.92.6 When a minister who is a citizen of the Republic of South Africa is sent to serve in another country within our Connexion or a minister from another country within our Connexion is stationed within the Republic of South Africa, the cost of the required work permit and its renewal shall be borne by the Methodist Connexional Office.

8.93 Removals

8.93.1 Removals of Ministers shall normally be arranged by the Joint Removal Scheme; where this does not apply, the arrangements and quotation for the removal must be approved by the Bishop of the District to which the Minister is moving, and this approval must be obtained before the removal takes place, failing which any excess costs shall be borne by the Minister.

8.93.2 When a Circuit invites a Minister for a period of 5 years and the Minister removes prematurely, due to a subsequent invitation, the Circuit making such invitation is responsible for the removal cost.

8.93.3 The costs of All Risks in Transit Insurance cover shall not be included in the claim but the General Treasurers shall arrange a Group Removals Policy. In the event of any breakages claims should be submitted to the Connexional Office.

8.93.4 Removal claims must be submitted not later than one month after the removal.

8.93.5 Where travel is by private transport, the reimbursement for each year is recorded in the Yearbook.
8.94 **Loans**

8.94.1 **Building Loan Interest Rate**

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

8.94.2 **Property Loan Instalment**

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

8.94.3 **Outside Loans**

8.94.3.1 The General Treasurers are authorised to borrow in terms of Laws & Discipline, paras 8.6.6. and 9.7 as necessary and on terms and conditions to be approved by them.

8.94.3.2 The General Treasurers are also authorised to enter into an agreement with the First National Bank of SA Ltd to make property housing loans available to Ministers and full-time employees of the Church. The preferential interest rates and options will be supplied by the General Treasurers.

8.95 **Investment of Funds**

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

8.96 **Banking Accounts**

8.96.1 The following banking accounts of the Connexional Office shall be at First National Bank Limited (Durban Commercial Branch) and the Standard Bank of SA Limited (Durban Branch) and the signatories be any two of:

8.96.2 The Director and the Administrative Officer of the Connexional Office or Deputy. The name of the account is: “The Methodist Church of Southern Africa Connexional Office”.

8.96.3 The account in the name: Connexional Office – Secretary’s Account, be reaffirmed for which the signatories be any one of:

8.96.4 The Lay General Treasurer and The Director of the Connexional Officer.
8.97  *Cash Management Scheme*

Conference approved the Cash Management Scheme and directed Circuits, Societies, Institutions and Organisations to forward to the Connexional Office full details of their banking accounts.

8.98  *Proportional Giving*

Conference disapproves of a system of giving where all members contribute the same amount as “pledge” or “dues” each month or quarter. Conference therefore urges all Circuits to discontinue this practice in favour of proportional giving, according to their means, by all of our members.

8.99  *Circuit Auditors*

Only persons with accounting qualifications are permitted to audit Circuit and Society Accounts, and Districts should organise teams of such qualified persons willing to serve as auditors. In exceptional circumstances the Bishop may permit some other suitable person to do the audit. From the beginning of the following year the accounts of such Circuits and Societies where the services of qualified persons are not available shall be handled by the Centralised Accounting Organisation.

8.100  *Centralised Accounting Organisation*

The Centralised Accounting Organisation in Johannesburg is an advisory and accounting service to the Circuits:

8.101  *Northern Districts Finance Committee*

8.101.1 The names of the members of the Committee are recorded in the Yearbook.

8.101.2 The committee should submit annual reports and accounts to the Synods of the three Districts of the original Transvaal District.

8.102  *Financial Form 4c And 4s Schedules*

8.102.1 ‘In terms of the following paragraphs of Laws and Discipline the undermentioned officials have responsibility to ensure that audited Financial Statements for Circuit/Societies are approved by Quarterly Meetings, presented to Synod and submitted to the MCO, by District Treasurers within 2 weeks of Synod.

- Superintendent Minister (L&D 7.15.12)
- Circuit Stewards (L&D 7.19.5 & 7.19.6)
- District Finance Committees (See 23.1.4 para 6.36.2.3 above)
- Bishops and District Executives (Synod Questions 6.16 and 6.17)’
8.102.2 ‘Where Financial Statements, form 4C and 4S Schedules are not received by the MCO within 2 weeks of Synod the MCO will advise Bishops, District Treasurers and Superintendent Ministers accordingly.’

8.102.3 ‘Outstanding Schedules need to be received by the MCO within 30 days of such notice to Bishops, or Bishops need to submit a written request to the MCO with good reasons, failing which the Presiding Bishop will instruct the Bishop to:

8.102.3.1 appoint a Pastoral Commission to conduct an investigation into the Circuit

8.102.3.2 place the Circuit under the administration of the District that shall completed Form 4C Schedules, have them audited and submitted to the MCO

8.102.3.3 commence disciplinary action, if necessary, in terms of which:

· the Bishop shall initiate, in writing A Charge, in accordance with L&D para 4.110 to 4.144, against the Superintendent Minister and Circuit Stewards for non-compliance with Laws and Discipline.

· the Superintendent Minister will be relieved of her/his Superintendency until confirmation from the MCO that the Form 4C Schedules have been satisfactorily received, whereupon the Bishop, with the consent of the Presiding Bishop, shall decide whether to reinstate such Superintendency or not the disciplinary process must be allowed to run its full course including if necessary the suspension of Ministers and officials who do not comply with Rules and Usage’

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

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

· the District or Circuit Officials fail to adhere to the above instructions, or
· no action is taken, or the completed and audited Form 4C Schedule is not received by the MCO within one year from the year end.

8.105 Where Bishops fail to comply with the directives of the Connexional Executive Committee or the above processes, the Presiding Bishop, shall, in terms of para 4.107 of L&D, initiate a Pastoral Commission to investigate the non-compliance by the Bishop. If necessary thereafter a charge shall be laid.
CHAPTER 9

CHURCH PROPERTY

VESTING AND ADMINISTRATION

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

ACQUISITION AND ALIENATION

9.2 Conference alone may acquire for and on behalf of the Church by purchase, gift, exchange, lease, or in any other manner any property movable or immovable, and any rights and interests therein, and may sell, lease, or otherwise dispose of or alienate any property, movable or immovable, belonging to the Church and any of its rights and interests therein.

9.3 The Presiding Bishop for the time being, or the Secretary of Conference for the time being, acting instead of and on behalf of the Presiding Bishop, is alone authorised to execute on behalf of the Church any power of attorney, declaration, consent, agreement, or other document necessary to give effect to any transaction referred to in the preceding paragraph or which may be required in connection therewith or in connection with any Deed of transfer, Deed of servitude or other Deed relating thereto, and requiring registration in any Deeds Registry or otherwise.

9.4 Before signing any such document as aforesaid the Presiding Bishop, or the Executive Secretary acting instead of and on behalf of the Presiding Bishop (para. 9.8), shall be satisfied that all regulations and requirements of the Church relevant to the transaction concerned have been duly observed and carried out.

9.5 Any such power of attorney, declaration, consent, agreement or other document when signed by the Presiding Bishop or by the Secretary acting instead of and on behalf of the Presiding Bishop (para. 9.8), and witnessed in accordance with law, shall be deemed to be sufficient proof of due compliance having been made with all the relevant regulations and requirements of the Church and of the due authorisation by Conference of the transaction concerned, and every Registrar of Deeds, other official or person concerned shall be absolved from enquiry into such transaction or from requiring the lodgement or production in respect thereof of any certificate, consent, or resolution of Conference or any Committee or person acting under it.
REGISTRATION OF TITLES AND FORM OF TRANSFER

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

BORROWING OF MONIES

9.7 Conference represented by the General Treasurers may raise or borrow money by way of mortgage, bank overdraft, or in any other way, upon the security of any property belonging to the Church or otherwise (para. 8.6.6).

9.8 Except as otherwise provided in the Regulations of any Connexional Fund or Department, the Presiding Bishop for the time being, or the Executive Secretary for the time being, acting instead of and on behalf of the Presiding Bishop, shall execute any Power of Attorney or Mortgage, or any other document necessary to give effect to any transaction referred to in the immediately preceding paragraphs, or that may be required in connection therewith, and the provision of paras. 9.4 and 9.5 shall mutatis mutandis apply thereto.

INVESTMENT OF MONIES

9.9 Any monies belonging to the Church or to any of its Connexional, District or local Trust funds or to any of its Departments may be invested in recognised trust investments including equities quoted upon the Stock Exchange and approved by the Presiding Bishop. Notwithstanding, the monies of the Methodist Supernumerary Fund, the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Lay Staff Pension Fund, and the Methodist Church of Southern Africa Provident Fund shall be invested in accordance with the rules of the respective Fund as lodged with the Registrar of Pension Funds in terms of the Pension Funds Act as amended from time to time.

9.10 The investment of funds from Bequests or any other Trust Funds shall be confined to the investments permitted in para. 9.9.

9.11 Except as otherwise provided in the Regulations of any Connexional Fund or Department, the consent in writing of the Presiding Bishop shall be obtained to any investment referred to in the preceding paragraphs, and every Mortgage Bond or other deed of security shall be passed and registered in the name of ‘The Presiding Bishop of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa for the time being, and the successor or successors in office, for the benefit of the Church’, and the Presiding Bishop shall have authority to cancel or transpose any security or any portion thereof and to sign any consent, certificate or other document required in connection therewith.
CUSTODY OF DEEDS

9.12 The Connexional Office is the Custodian of Deeds (para. 8.12) and has charge and custody of all Title Deeds, Leases, Certificates of Title or other documents of title or Church Properties and of all Mortgage Bonds or other documents of security belonging to the Church. The rules to be observed in connection with such custody are contained in Chapter 8.

CONNEXIONAL TRUST PROPERTIES COMMITTEE

Membership:

9.13 There shall be a Connexional Trust Properties Committee convened by the Presiding Bishop’s office.

Functions and Duties:

9.14 The functions and duties of the Connexional Committee are:

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

Secretary:

9.15 The Connexional Executive shall appoint a Ministerial member of the Connexional Trust Properties Committee as Secretary to assume office on the 1st January of the following year. The Secretary is appointed for three years but is eligible for reappointment.

9.16 The Secretary conducts the correspondence and business of the Committee subject to its directions.

DISTRICT TRUST PROPERTIES COMMITTEES

Membership:

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

9.18 The functions and duties of the District Trust Properties Committee are inter alia:

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

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

Secretary:

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

9.19.1 to conduct the correspondence and business of the Committee subject to its directions;
9.19.2 to receive all applications from local Trust Properties Committees concerning loans, proposed alterations, erections, purchases or other acquirements, sales, mortgages or encumbrances of properties;
9.19.3 to place all such applications before the District Committee;
9.19.4 to communicate to the local Trust Properties Committee the decision and recommendations of the District Committee on any applications;
9.19.5 to remit to the Connexional Office any application received, together with the decision and recommendations of the District Committee;
9.19.6 to receive all Circuit accounts, reports and schedules pertaining to properties, and to prepare them for consideration by the Committee;
9.19.7 to forward copies of Minutes of District Trust Property Committee meetings to the Connexional Office.

LOCAL TRUST PROPERTIES COMMITTEES

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

Membership:

9.22 The members of a local Trust Properties Committee shall not be fewer than five or more than fifteen, including the Official Trustee the Presiding Bishop, the Superintendent, the Minister(s) in charge of the Society, and the Circuit Stewards.

9.23 The members and officers are appointed by the Annual Society Meeting for one year at a time but are eligible for reappointment. Not more than 3 adherents of the Society may be appointed members; the others shall be members of the Society of not less than 2 years’ standing.

9.24 The Annual Society Meeting shall appoint a member of the local Trust Properties Committee to preside over its meetings.

9.25 The person who presides over the Committee is a member of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting (para. 7.6.12).

9.26 If any member or officer of the local Trust Properties Committee retires during the year, the Committee may elect a successor for the remainder of the year.

9.27 The functions and duties of the local Trust Properties Committee are inter alia:

9.27.1 to be responsible to the Official Trustee, the Presiding Bishop, for the property and generally to manage and administer the property on behalf of the Official Trustee;

9.27.2 to appoint annually from among its members a Secretary and a Steward or Stewards, and to assign their duties to them;

9.27.3 to ensure that all property of an insurable nature is adequately insured, and to safeguard the property, against risk of loss or damage;

9.27.4 to appoint a Caretaker where necessary and to define the duties and remuneration;

9.27.5 to administer funds allocated to it by the Annual Society Meeting and to present audited accounts to that Meeting;

9.27.6 to control the use and letting of Church buildings and to ensure that only those activities and entertainments are permitted which are consistent with the primary purpose for which the buildings exist;

9.27.7 to observe and carry out all regulations in regard to proposals for loans, alterations, erections, purchases or other acquirements, sales, mortgages or encumbrances of properties.

9.28 The Committee shall hold its annual meeting as soon as possible after the close of the Financial Year.

9.29 Trust Property Reports shall be presented to the Quarterly Meeting before being submitted to Synod.
The Secretary:

9.30 The duties of the Secretary are inter alia:

9.30.1 to convene meetings of the Committee in consultation with the Chairperson, giving adequate notice to each member and indicating the intended business of the meeting;
9.30.2 to record minutes of the meetings;
9.30.3 to conduct all necessary correspondence;
9.30.4 to ensure generally the carrying out of the resolutions and directions of the Committee.

The Trust Stewards:

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

9.31.1 to attend generally to the maintenance of all Trust property;
9.31.2 to ensure that all Church buildings and premises are properly cleaned, lighted and ventilated;
9.31.3 to attend to the furniture and fittings of any Church premises;

General Regulations

9.32 No member of a local Trust Properties Committee who has a financial interest in any property of the Church shall vote on any matter affecting such property.

9.33 The Superintendent is required:

9.33.1 to keep a Register of all immovable property in the Circuit, and to hand such Register and all relevant documents to the successor on leaving the Circuit;
9.33.2 to forward immediately to the Custodian of Deeds the original title deed and related documents where land has been acquired and registered in the name of the Church;
9.33.3 to be personally responsible for the due return to the Custodian of Deeds of any title deed and related document that has been temporarily released by the Custodian;
9.33.4 to ensure that no building is proceeded with until all regulations have been complied with and all necessary financial arrangements made.

9.34 Synods shall make enquiry through the Superintendent in every case where no reduction of Trust debt has been made during the year.

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

9.36 Trust property shall be used only for general Church or Sunday School meetings or functions related thereto, or for educational or philanthropic purposes. Any exception requires the prior approval of the local Trust Properties Committee.

9.37 The primary purpose for which Church buildings and Trust properties exist necessarily excludes every kind of function that is likely to bring reproach upon the Church. The following regulations apply to any meeting or function held on Trust premises, whether in the name of the Methodist Church or otherwise:

9.37.1 no entertainment shall be given unless the programme has been previously approved by the Superintendent or the Leaders’ Meeting;
9.37.2 dances or similar types of entertainment may take place on Trust premises only if they form an incidental and subsidiary item in the programme of a church organisation, and if the Leaders’ Meeting has approved. Such dancing shall take place only under the supervision of a person nominated by and responsible to the Leaders’ Meeting. No dancing shall take place in a Church;
9.37.3 gambling of any kind and raffles or other competitions that involve the principle of gambling are expressly forbidden;
9.37.4 no Trust property shall be let for any public religious meeting unless the Superintendent is able to and does accept responsibility for the teaching that may be given;
9.37.5 in granting temporary use or occupation of any Church hall, vestry or other Trust premises, it shall be specially stipulated that no alcoholic or intoxicating liquor or narcotic drugs shall be brought on to or be permitted to be on such premises; that the lessors by and through any officer, caretaker or other nominee shall have the right in the event of any breach of this stipulation to take immediate steps to terminate the occupation and to secure ejectment without compensation to the lessee or occupier, and without prejudice to the lessor’s right to recover the payment agreed upon for the use of the premises;
9.37.6 no racial restriction shall apply to the use of any Trust property.
9.37.7 no party political electioneering shall be held on Trust property. However, it may be used in the promotion of good governance such as polling stations, voter registration, political monitoring training, refugee shelter and similar activities that would foster neighbourliness, justice and mercy. Where Church buildings are used for such purposes, a contract or agreement regulating responsibility and liability for damages to Trust Property in consequence of such use must first be concluded.

9.38 The raising of funds for Church purposes by means of raffles, gaming or any other method which involves gambling shall not be permitted, and entertainments which are not allowed on Trust premises shall not be held elsewhere in the name of the Methodist Church.

9.39 Where possible Churches should be left open during the day.
REGULATIONS FOR PURCHASE, SALE, ENCUMBRANCE OR MORTGAGE OF LANDED PROPERTY

9.40 Any proposal by a local Trust Properties Committee:

9.40.1 to purchase or acquire by way of gift or otherwise any landed property, or rights and interests therein;
9.40.2 to sell or alienate any property or portion thereof, or any rights or interests therein;
9.40.3 to encumber any property by raising money either on Mortgage Bond or by loan from a Connexional Fund;
9.40.4 shall, after being approved by the local Trust Properties Committee, be submitted to the Quarterly Meeting for approval.

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

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

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

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

9.45 Final permission to purchase or otherwise acquire any landed property or rights and interests, or to sell or alienate any landed property or any rights and interests therein, shall lapse if no definite steps have been taken in furtherance thereof before the meeting of the next Synod.

9.46 Where land has been acquired, the original deed shall be deposited with the Custodian of Deeds.

9.47 Where it is proposed to encumber or mortgage Trust property, and the
District Trust Properties Committee has approved, the proposal shall be submitted to the Presiding Bishop or the Executive Secretary, either of whom may give written approval.

9.48 The following additional provisions shall apply in connection with a Loan sought from any Connexional Fund:

9.48.1 no loan shall be made upon any property or land or upon any erection on any land to which the Church has no clear or sufficient title or certificate of occupation, or upon land on which only permission to build has been given, unless in an interdenominational scheme a legal agreement approved by the Treasurers of the Connexional Office has been drawn up, defining the proportion of responsibility for upkeep and use, as well as debt reduction, and allocation of proceeds, in the event of possible future disposal of property, falling to The Methodist Church of Southern Africa as a shareholder;

9.48.2 no loan shall be made upon any property which is not considered adequate security for the repayment of the loan;

9.48.3 loans from Connexional Funds shall be repaid in monthly instalments which include repayments of capital, and interest at the rate determined by Conference;

9.48.4 in all cases where advances or loans are made from Connexional Funds against the security of Trust property, the Treasurers of the said Funds shall obtain an acknowledgement of debt duly executed by or on behalf of the Local Properties Committee concerned, together with the Title Deeds of the properties upon which the loan is to be advanced, and a duly executed memorandum to the effect that such Title Deeds are lodged as security for the repayment of the loan and that they are to remain in the custody of the said Treasurers until such time as the said loan has been repaid; and also embodying an undertaking that the property conveyed by such Title Deeds shall not be mortgaged as security for any further loan until the first mentioned loan has been repaid, or unless the consent of the Treasurers of the Fund concerned has first been obtained.

9.48.5 in all revenue-producing property, the servicing of all loans thereon and the cost of proper maintenance, rates, insurance, upkeep and necessary repairs are a first charge upon such revenue. Managers of such property shall not be entitled to divert any portion of the said revenue to other purposes until the above-mentioned charges have been met.

9.48.6 all applications for a loan or for permission to seek a loan shall be accompanied by a copy of the audited No. 4C Schedule for the previous year.

9.48.7 any loan application from any Organization (other than a Connexional Organization) to purchase property requires the permission of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and District Trust Property Committee.

REGULATIONS FOR THE ERECTION OR ALTERATION OF BUILDINGS

9.49 Any proposal by a local Trust Properties Committee to erect new buildings or to make alterations or additions to existing buildings on Trust property
must be submitted, together with the requisite plans and specifications, to the Quarterly Meeting and to the District Trust Properties Committee for approval. Where school buildings are involved the consent of the Board of Education must also be obtained.

9.50 No Superintendent or Circuit official shall enter into or sign any building contract, exceeding an amount to be determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time, until the permission of the District Trust Properties Committee has been obtained.

9.51 The District Committee shall satisfy itself that the Church has registered title to any land before approving any scheme to build thereon. Should the cost of the scheme be such that the permission of the Committee is not required, the Committee shall nevertheless ensure that the relevant plans have been approved by the appropriate secular authority.

9.52 Where the estimated cost exceeds an amount to be determined by Conference from time to time, the local Trust Properties Committee shall obtain the services of a registered Architect. Exceptions to this regulation may be allowed by the District Trust Properties Committee.

9.53 Where the estimated cost exceeds an amount to be determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time, the Trust Properties Committee shall call for at least two tenders for the building. Exceptions may be allowed by the District Trust Properties Committee.

9.54 The Trust Properties Committee shall have in hand not less than one-half of the estimated cost of any scheme before building operations are commenced, and shall satisfy the District Trust Properties Committee that not less than two-thirds of the estimated cost will have been obtained by the time the building is completed. The District Trust Properties Committee may relax this regulation in the following cases:

9.54.1 where the property yields a fixed income and is of permanent value to the local Trust Properties Committee;

9.54.2 where a Circuit is embarking on community self-help schemes, provided that plans are submitted in the usual manner, an estimate of the cost of the project is provided together with details of finance available, a time limit is set for the completion of the project, and progress reports are submitted as required by the District Trust Properties Committee.

9.55 Any material alterations to a scheme which has already been sanctioned shall require the approval of the District Trust Properties Committee which may call for proof of ability to carry out the conditions of the scheme. Any contravention of this regulation shall be reported by the Connexional Trust Properties Secretary to Synod and to the Connexional Executive.

9.56 A Superintendent who, upon entering a Circuit finds that building operations have been commenced without the necessary approval, shall
forthwith give all available information to the District Trust Properties Committee.

9.57 Any proposal by a local Trust Properties Committee to install an organ costing more than an amount to be determined by the Connexional Executive from time to time shall require the approval of the Quarterly Meeting and the District Trust Properties Committee. The conditions of para. 9.55 shall mutatis mutandis apply.

9.58 The Church may be a member of a Section 21 Company (associated not for gain) in those cases where the Church wishes to participate in a project together with other participants, and neither the immovable property involved nor the project itself may fall within the exclusive domain of the Church. Membership shall be permitted on the following terms:-

9.58.1 the Circuit or Society seeking permission to Register a Section 21 company or to become a member of such a company shall obtain prior approval for such actions from the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, the District Trust Property Committee and the Official Trustee (para 9.1)

9.58.2 in seeking such approval, the Circuit or Society shall provide all information and comply with all requirements set out as the guidelines issued from time to time by Conference or the Connexional Executive.

9.58.3 all company documents shall reflect the member as the Methodist Church of Southern Africa, but the Official Trustee (para 9.1) may decided that the voting rights in respect of such company may be exercised by a Circuit Steward duly appointed thereto by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

9.58.4 immovable property which is owned and controlled exclusively by the Church may not be registered in the name of a Section 21 Company without permission having been granted thereto by the Official Trustee (para 9.1).

9.59 Any loan application from an Organization to erect or alter any building requires the approval of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and the District Trust Property Committee.

9.60 GENERAL REGULATIONS

9.60.1 Deeds of Sale

All concerned with dealings in fixed property are asked to refer to the provisions of paras. 9.3 – 9.5 of Laws and Discipline. No valid binding Deed of Sale, whether for the sale or purchase of fixed property, can be entered into on behalf of the Church without the signature of the Presiding Bishop or the Secretary of Conference. Such documents should be sent through the Bishop to the Connexional Office for signature and, on completion of the transaction, the documents, or a copy thereof, should be sent to the Connexional Office.
9.60.2 **Permission to Occupy**

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

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

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

Conference resolved, that where it is difficult to obtain written permission to occupy a site, to accept a deed of agreement that may be used in such cases. Copies of this agreement are available from the Connexional Trust Properties Secretary.

9.60.3 **Defunct Circuits**

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

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

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

9.60.4 **Vacant Property**

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

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

9.60.5 **Freehold Mission and Church Sites**

Where our Church occupies land to which we have full title, we should not surrender our title in exchange for a Certificate of Permission to occupy such land;
Where freehold land is held for school and Church purposes, and subdivision of the land is required by the Department, the land on which the school is situated should be donated or sold to the Department, provided that the Department pays all costs involved.

9.60.6 **Joint Trust Deed**

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

Conference adopted a Model Trust Deed for the establishment of a Methodist-Anglican Trust, copies of which are available from the Secretary of the Department of Ecumenical Affairs.

The following essentials are to be embodied in any other Trust Deed:

- the body constituted by the Deed should be a Universitas, i.e. a corporate body with an existence independent of its individual members and capable of holding property in its name and of suing and being sued;
- the powers necessary for the proper functioning of the Trust should be set out;
- equitable representation by all contracting parties should be provided for;
- the rules governing meetings of Trustees should be laid down;
- provision should be made for division of assets among the contracting parties upon dissolution of the Trust.
- the Trust Deed so drafted shall be submitted to the Connexional Trust Properties Secretary who, together with the legal Advisors of the Church or the Secretary of Conference, shall approve it and forward it to the Presiding Bishop for signature.
- a copy of any Joint Trust Deed shall be lodged with the custodian of Deeds.

Conference endorsed the principle of acquiring full title to all property used for Church purposes.

9.60.7 **Property Expenditure Limits**

No Contract exceeding the limit set from time to time by the Connexional Executive as recorded in the Yearbook without District Trust Properties permission.

A Registered Architect, or an approved Building Design Consultant to be appointed where expenditure is between the limits set from time to time by the Connexional Executive as recorded in the Yearbook. A Registered Architect is to be appointed where expenditure exceeds this amount. When Societies wish to owner-build, the permission of the District Trust Properties Committee must be obtained.
At least two tenders are required for Schemes in excess of the amount determined from time to time by the Connexional Executive as recorded in the Yearbook.

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

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

9.60.8 **Connexional Trust Properties Committee**

The District Trust Properties Committee of the District in which the Presiding Bishop is located is the Connexional Trust Properties Committee. The Presiding Bishop and the local Bishop are also members of the Committee.

9.60.9 **Applications to District Committees**

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

Before granting approval for any building projects, the District Trust Properties Committee must ensure that adequate insurance cover has been arranged with the MCO's Insurance Brokers.

The District Trust Properties Committees is charged with the responsibility of examining the various Circuit General Schedules submitted to the Synods to verify that all Connexional property is adequately insured and, where deficiencies exist, to make appropriate action to secure suitable insurance through the MCO's Insurance Brokers.

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

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

9.60.10 **Buildings in Independent States**

Circuits in the neighbouring independent States who intend erecting buildings in the name of The Methodist Church of Southern Africa should ensure that they have satisfactory documentation of ownership, by the Church, of the property on which the buildings are to be erected.
CHAPTER 10

THE UNITS OF THE CHURCH’S MISSION

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

The Units are:

- The Mission Unit
- The Education for Ministry and Mission Unit
- The Youth Unit
- The Communication Unit
- The Ecumenical Affairs Unit
- The Methodist Connexional Office
- The Human Resource Unit

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

The Connexional Organisations are:

- The Young Men’s Guild
- The Men’s League
- The Women’s Manyano
- The Young Women’s Manyano
- The Women’s Auxiliary
- The Women’s Association

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

The Orders are:

- The Diaconal Order
- The Order of Evangelists
- The Order of Bible Women

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

- The Publishing and Bookshops Committee
- The Trust Properties Committee
- The Chaplaincy Committee
- The Church Choir Music Association
- The Doctrine Committee

10.5 Conference or the Connexional Executive may add, combine or discontinue Units or Organisations.

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

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

10.8 THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY AND MISSION UNIT

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

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

Connexional Committee

10.8.1 The following are the members of the Connexional Committee:

A Bishop (chair); Executive Secretary; Lay General Treasurer; Director of the Unit; Co-ordinators of Training for Lay Ministries and for Ordained Ministries; all District Supervisors of Studies; one representative for Lay Ministries from each District (elected by the EMMU District Committee); local Evangelists Orders, Conveners of the Phases 1 and 3 programmes; Convener of the Non-itinerant Training programme and a representative from the TEEC elected by the Connexional Committee in consultation with the College. The Connexional Committee is encouraged to ensure ecumenical participation in its work.

10.8.2 The functions and duties of the Connexional Committee are inter alia:

10.8.2.1 to plan and propose to Conference and the Connexional Executive an overall policy of education for ministry, ordained and lay;

10.8.2.2 to consider annually the record and situation of every Candidate and Probationer for report and recommendation to the Connexional Executive;
10.8.2.3 to apply the regulations of Conference and Connexional Executive with regard to Probationers and Candidates;

10.8.2.4 to provide for liaison and co-operation between the various agencies involved in education for ministry;

10.8.2.5 to aid and provide training for all who have responsibility for the supervision of Probationers;

10.8.2.6 to examine and review patterns of the Church’s ministry and to make recommendations thereon;

10.8.2.7 to implement the resolutions of Conference and the Connexional Executive on Education for Ministry and Mission.

10.8.3 The Connexional Executive shall appoint a Director to the Unit to hold office for three years who is eligible for reappointment. The Director is ex officio a member of Conference and of the Connexional Executive. The Connexional Executive shall also appoint Co-ordinators for the Training of Lay Ministries and the Training of Ordained Ministries, for three years. Both Co-ordinators are eligible for re-appointment.

10.8.3.1 the functions and duties of the Director are inter alia:

10.8.3.1.1 to be the executive officer of the Unit, to convene its meetings, to safeguard and maintain its records and to represent the Unit in Conference and the Connexional Executive;

10.8.3.1.2 to maintain contact with Connexional agencies engaged in education for ministry;

10.8.3.1.3 to be responsible for the implementation of the policy of the Unit as decided by Conference or the Connexional Executive;

10.8.3.1.4 to maintain contact with other denominational and ecumenical agencies engaged in education for ministry;

10.8.3.1.5 to undertake such other duties as the Conference, the Connexional Executive or Connexional Committee may from time to time determine.

10.8.3.1.6 Each District shall annually appoint an EMMU Committee comprising the following:

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

10.9 THE LOCAL PREACHERS’ DEPARTMENT

Connexional Committee

10.9.1 the Connexional Executive shall annually appoint a Connexional Committee, which shall include the Minister and the Local Preacher who are the General Secretaries.

10.9.2 the Committee shall supervise the operation and promote the interests of Local Preachers so as to maintain their numbers and improve their effectiveness, and shall receive the annual Report of each District Committee and report thereon to the Connexional Executive.

10.9.3 the Department is represented in Conference by one of the General Secretaries and by a Local Preacher elected by the Connexional Committee.

10.9.4 only a Local Preacher who has been on Full Plan for at least five years is eligible to represent the Department in Conference.

Board of Examiners

10.9.5 the Connexional Executive shall appoint a Board of Examiners to control the training and examination of all Local Preachers.

10.9.6 the Board shall act under the direction of the Connexional Co-ordinator of Training for Lay Ministries but may also be in direct communication with the Circuits and Local Preachers.

District Local Preachers’ Committee

10.9.7 Synod shall elect a Local Preachers’ Committee consisting of the Bishop, the Vice-Chairperson, the District Secretary, the Statistical Secretary, three other Ministers and five Local Preachers.

10.9.8 one Minister and one Local Preacher shall be appointed Secretaries of the Committee.

10.9.9 the Committee may co-opt other members.

The functions and duties of the Committee include:

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

10.9.9.3 to report to Synod on Local Preachers’ affairs;

10.9.9.4 to apply the directions of Conference and the Connexional Executive with regard to Local Preachers;

10.9.9.5 to undertake special Missions and Services where desired.

**Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting:**

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

**The functions and duties of the Meeting include:**

10.9.10.1 to meet every quarter, using the prescribed Order and Form for Local Preachers’ Meetings (Appendix 9);

10.9.10.2 to consider the work of God in the Circuit as far as Local Preachers are concerned;

10.9.10.3 to consider the character, fidelity to doctrine, and fitness of Local Preachers for their work;

10.9.10.4 to apply the discipline of the Church as it affects Local Preachers

10.9.10.5 to receive or otherwise as a Local Preacher on Trial any person so nominated by the Superintendent;

10.9.10.6 to receive as a Local Preacher on full plan any person who qualifies in terms of the regulations of the Unit;

10.9.10.7 to submit to the District Committee an annual report on the work of Local Preachers in the Circuit including statistics, the names of those who have died, the names of those who qualify for Long-service Certificates, and a full list of the names and addresses of Local Preachers;

10.9.10.8 to report to the District Committee the examination results of Local Preachers in the Circuit;

10.9.10.9 to appoint a Supervisor of Studies to direct and encourage the studies of all Local Preachers, especially those on Trial;

10.9.10.10 to elect annually five of their number to be members of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting;
10.9.10.11 to elect annually two Local Preachers from each Society to be members of the Local Church Council.

**General Regulations**

10.9.11 If there are too few Local Preachers in a Circuit to sustain a regular Local Preachers’ Meeting, the business of the Local Preachers shall be conducted by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

10.9.12 Local Preachers who remove to another Circuit shall present a Note of Removal from their former Superintendent, giving their status as Local Preachers. They shall be received with that status without further trial or examination.

10.9.13 No Local Preacher may preach in another Circuit without the permission of the Superintendent.

10.9.14 Local Preachers shall fulfil their preaching appointments; if unable to do so they are to provide duly accredited substitutes but only with the agreement of the Superintendent.

10.9.15 Local Preachers who have completed twenty-five or forty years’ unbroken service qualify for a Long-service Certificate.

10.9.16 One Sunday in the year shall be set aside as Local Preachers’ Sunday, to be used as Conference directs.

**Local Preachers on Trial**

10.9.17 A person received on Trial as a Local Preacher by the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting shall be given a syllabus of the examinations required by the Department and shall be examined therein as decided by the Meeting.

10.9.18 The probation period is at least two years but not, except in very special circumstances, more than three years.

10.9.19 Local Preachers on Trial who state their intention of offering for the Ministry may, at the discretion of the Meeting, be exempted from the requirements of the second year of probation. No exemption shall enable them to be received on Full Plan before completing twelve months on Trial.

10.9.20 Local Preachers on Trial who are 55 years of age or older and who are considered by the Meeting to have adequate experience of preaching and the conduct of worship may be exempted by the Meeting from the written examinations.

10.9.21 The examination requirements and conditions of probation are determined by Conference.
Throughout the probationary period one or more Local Preachers appointed by the Meeting shall attend and report to the Meeting on every Church service conducted by a Local Preacher on Trial.

At the end of the probationary period Local Preachers on Trial shall pass an oral examination which tests their knowledge of the Bible and of Christian Doctrine. They shall also give an account of their conversion, present spiritual condition and call to preach.

At the end of the probationary period a Local Preacher on Trial shall conduct a trial service attended by two Local Preachers and a Minister, or by three Local Preachers, who shall report on the service to the Meeting.

Local Preachers received on Full Plan shall be recognised at the Recognition Service and presented with a Bible by the Circuit.

**Local Preachers on Note**

A candidate for the office of Local Preacher shall be a member of the Church and shall receive from the Superintendent a Note to Preach only after a conversation designed to ascertain the person’s spiritual condition, call to preach and abilities for the work. A Note to Preach is valid for one quarter but may be renewed.

A person receiving a Note to Preach shall assist an accredited Local Preacher in the conduct of services but may not conduct a service of worship without such supervision. The Local Preacher shall report to the Meeting on the services.

After at least one quarter the Superintendent may nominate to the Meeting such a person for reception on Trial as a Local Preacher; the Meeting shall decide whether or not to receive the person on Trial.

**Local Preachers’ Discipline**

Local Preachers are accountable to the Leaders’ Meeting for their Christian character and conduct, and to the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting for their fidelity to doctrine and their performance and fitness as preachers of the Gospel; they continue to hold their status as Local Preachers only so long as they accept this discipline.

The Meeting shall examine every Local Preacher each quarter concerning the matters of ability and acceptability as a preacher, and faithfulness in fulfilling preaching appointments.

The Meeting may censure, silence, or suspend Local Preachers or discontinue them as fully accredited Local Preachers.

No Minister who has been suspended or expelled from the Ministry may
be employed as a Local Preacher without the authority of the Connexional Executive.

10.9.33 Local Preachers who are aggrieved by the action of the Meeting affecting their status as Local Preachers have the right of appeal through the Bishop to a District Local Preachers’ Court of Appeal that shall be appointed and convened by the Bishop to hear the appeal.

10.9.34 The Court of Appeal is presided over by the Bishop or a Minister in the District deputed thereto, and shall in addition consist of six Local Preachers from the District who have been on Full Plan for not less than three years.

10.9.35 The appeal shall be considered on the record of the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting and no further evidence shall be permitted except that the Court of Appeal may refer the case back to the Circuit to be reheard. The verdict of the Court of Appeal is final.

10.9.36 The Circuit Local Preachers' Meeting shall not have jurisdiction over the Local Preacher's Church Membership that is decided by the Local Church Council.

10.9.37 Any complaint lodged against a Local Preacher which might affect their status as a member of the Church, must be dealt with in terms of Chapter 11.

**Local Preachers and Divorce**

10.9.38 A Local Preacher on Trial or on Full Plan if involved in divorce proceedings shall be suspended forthwith by the Superintendent from all activities as a Local Preacher. The matter shall be referred, by the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting, to the Bishop who shall appoint a Pastoral Committee comprising two Ministers and three Local Preachers, to consider the case. The Superintendent or local Minister shall be invited to address the Committee. The Committee shall recommend to the Bishop whether the person should be discontinued as a Local Preacher or suspended and if so for what minimum period. The Bishop shall then decide the person’s continuance or discontinuance as a Local Preacher, or suspension for a period. An appeal shall lie from the decision of the Bishop to the Presiding Bishop, whose decision is final.

10.9.39 A divorced person offering as a Local Preacher shall have the case referred by the Circuit Local Preachers’ Meeting to the Bishop and to the Pastoral Committee described above.

10.9.40 A person discontinued as a Local Preacher on grounds of divorce may apply later for readmission; a Local Preacher suspended may apply for the lifting of the suspension after the lapse of the period decided by the Bishop. The application shall be dealt with as above. Should the Bishop agree to readmission, but not otherwise, the Circuit Local Preachers’
Meeting shall decide whether the person should be readmitted immediately or placed on probation for readmission at a later time.

10.10 GENERAL REGULATIONS

10.10.1 Long Service Certificate

Long Service Certificates are given to all Local Preachers of forty years’ service since first coming on to Full Plan. Certificates will also be given to Local Preachers of 25 years’ standing. Superintendents are requested to give the full names and surnames of all Preachers who claim forty years’ service, together with the actual date of coming on to full plan. Full information on the Local Preachers’ Schedule will constitute an application.

10.10.2 Local Preachers’ Sunday

One Sunday a year shall be set apart as Local Preachers’ Sunday. In all Circuits the Preachers shall on that Sunday make a special appeal to young people to offer for the work of Local Preachers and the Ministry. Each District is to set the date.

A Retiring Collection shall be made in all Societies on Local Preachers’ Sunday and the monies collected in each District shall be sent to the Secretary of the Local Preachers’ District Committee. This money should be used for the work of Local Preachers within the District.

10.10.3 Local Preachers on Trial

Superintendents should follow our regulations regarding Local Preachers On Trial in the interests of a higher standard of Local Preaching.

Superintendents are reminded that the length of probation of Local Preachers on Trial is not to exceed THREE years.

10.10.4 Mature Age Candidates

Mature Age Candidates, over the age of 55, may be exempted from the written examination ONLY if unable to enter any of the courses offered BECAUSE OF LOW EDUCATIONAL STANDARD.

Mature Age Candidates must be registered with the Unit, WITH PROOF OF AGE, and must be tutored using the same study guides as Special Course Candidates.

A Mature Age Candidate, who is exempted from the written examinations, must complete the FULL TWO YEARS ON TRIAL. They must preach a Trial Sermon and be orally examined by the Circuit Local Preachers’
Quarterly Meeting using the same questions as for the Special Course Examinations. THESE RESULTS MUST BE SUBMITTED TO THE UNIT.

Mature Age Candidates must be registered before 31<sup>st</sup> July each year to be examined during April of the following year.

An Administration Fee is payable for each candidate. Circuits can obtain the necessary Study Guides for each year from the Department.

10.10.5 Working Group and Special Course Board

A Working Group is established with these functions:

- to consult and advise the Connexional Co-ordinator with regard to the operations and direction of the Unit.
- to facilitate communication with Superintendents regarding syllabi and examinations.
- to assess credits from Educational Institutions and screen Local Preachers from other denominations.

A Special Course Committee is established to conduct the written examinations for all Special Course candidates, and to advise the Connexional Co-ordinator of the result of the candidates.

10.10.6 Appointment of Supervisors of Studies

Each Local Preachers’ Quarterly Meeting should appoint a Supervisor of Studies whose functions are:

- to pastor and tutor Preachers on Trial, or arrange for this to be done,
- to supervise and guide Preachers on Trial in their studies.
- to ensure timeous registration of Preachers on Trial for their courses,
- to collect and duly submit assignments to the Marking Co-ordinator,
- to encourage and assist upgrading and retraining of Full Preachers,
- to seek to establish a Local Preachers’ library in the Circuit,
- to be the liaison between the Preachers and both the Superintendent and the Unit,
- to establish a screening committee for candidates.

10.10.7 Recognition Service for Newly-accredited Preachers

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

Newly-accredited Local Preachers who complete the requirements for Full Plan status should receive the Letter from the Presiding Bishop and a Certificate issued by the Unit.

These documents are obtainable from the Unit on the request of the Circuit Superintendent.
10.10.7.2 Local Preachers may be robed when they have passed the Local Preachers’ Examinations and placed on Full Plan. If robing is to be done at the Annual District Convention, their names should be submitted to the Secretary of District Local Preacher’s Committee at least two weeks before the Convention and have the written consent of their Superintendent.

10.10.7.3 Local Preachers Candidating for the Ministry

First year Local Preachers who offer as Candidates for the Ministry, hoping to receive remission of the second year of Local Preacher training, shall not be received on Full Plan until Synod has recommended their candidature.

10.11 OTHER ORGANISATIONS

Special provisions apply to certain Organisations. These are included in their respective Constitutions.

10.12 FUNDS OF MISSION UNITS

In addition to assessments mentioned in Chapter 8, the Connexional Executive may receive contributions from, and may impose assessments on the Circuits and Societies for the mission work of the Units. This provision applies, inter alia, to the following funds:

- the Mission and Extension Fund;
- the Ministerial Students’ Fund;
- the Methodist Relief Fund;
- funds for Christian Citizenship work;
- funds for Youth work;
- funds for Local Preachers’ work.

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

10.13 MISSION UNIT – GENERAL REGULATIONS

10.13.1 Mission Policy

The Connexional Executive acknowledges that the Church has been constituted by Jesus Christ for mission. The Church exists for the missio Dei on behalf of the world.

The Connexional Executive declares it’s commitment to Christ’s commission to the Church to make disciple of all nations (Mtt 28:18-
19). This commission involves presenting Christ in the Power of the Holy Spirit so that all persons should put their trust in God, and nurture them so that they will grow into mature Christians who will serve God in the world and through the Church.

The Connexional Executive urgently calls the Methodist Church to its fundamental mission “to spread Scriptural Holiness throughout the land by the proclamation of the evangelical faith”.

The Connexional Executive affirms the importance of ministry to the whole person, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, setting free the captives, and the transformation of the socio-economic structures (Luke 4:18-19; Romans 8:21) as being integral to the mission task of the Church, and Methodism in particular.

The Connexional Executive acknowledges that God has spoken to us through the Journey to the New Land Process and has given us six calls to guide and direct our mission. These calls are:

• a deepened spirituality in the life of our Church
• an assurance that our life is guided by God’s mission
• a rediscovery of “every member ministry”
• an engagement with what it means “to be one so that the world may believe”
• a re-emphasis on servant-leadership and discernment as our model for ministry
• a redefinition and authentication of the role of the clergy in our Church

The Connexional Executive urges that all these be given full and constant attention in the implementing mission policy.

10.13.2 **Programmes and Strategies for Mission**

The Connexional Executive affirms the following structures and goals of the Mission Unit which give expression to an overall mission strategy:

10.13.3 **Connexional Executive Mandate**

Connexional Executive directs the Mission Unit within the Presiding Bishops office under the leadership of the Unit Director to:

• promote and encourage theological reflection and study in the area of mission.
• stimulate and encourage theological reflection and programmes of action on issues and proposals concerning evangelism and church growth, development and economic empowerment, spirituality, justice and service, renewal and inter-faith relations in contemporary society, and to advise the Connexional Executive and the Districts.
• be a channel of communication between the Districts and Connexional Executive on relevant mission matters.
promote research on moral and ethical issues which affect civil society and the church.

- amplify the prophetic voice of the church through advocacy, lobbying and monitoring organs of civil society.
- network with other churches, national and international agencies which promote mission.
- monitor and facilitate the work of the Connexional Mission Co-ordinators

10.13.4 Vanguard Mission Programme

10.13.4.1 Focus

The primary focus of the Vanguard Mission Programme is the establishment of new Churches in areas where the District, Circuit and Society resources are insufficient to meet the needs.

10.13.5 Vanguard Mission Policy

The following principles apply to the establishment and development of Vanguard Missions:

10.13.5.1 Preamble

Within the wide task of extending the work of the Church, Vanguard Missions are exceptional situations requiring exceptional treatment.

Vanguard Mission status should be assigned to work where there is no other feasible way to accomplish the work through Society, Circuit or District resources.

Vanguard Mission status shall be assigned for a period not exceeding five years, the first three years of which may attract a full grant (see paragraph 13), while in the final two years a reducing grant would be negotiated according to ongoing needs.

10.13.5.2 Basis for granting Vanguard Status

The General Mission Committee shall decide applications for Vanguard Mission from Districts, on the basis of:

- satisfactory evidence of the need for the proposed Vanguard Mission
- satisfactory District supervisory structures
- appropriate Stationing arrangements for Missioners
- satisfactory arrangements for Missioners’ Housing and travelling
- vanguard Mission applications shall be prioritized on the basis of the above criteria and on the basis of funds available. Should an application be rejected, the circuit and District need to reapply for vanguard Mission status.
10.13.5.3 **Applications**

Superintendents of Circuits wishing to apply for Vanguard Mission Status for new work shall consult the Bishop and District Mission Secretary. The District Mission Secretary shall instigate a feasibility study and report thereon to the Bishop, the Superintendent and the District Mission Committee. Should the Bishop and the District Mission Committee Secretary approve the application the Superintendent shall after obtaining the approval of the Quarterly meeting complete a Vanguard Mission application and submit this to the pre-Synod District Mission Committee which shall recommend to Synod,

If a prospective Vanguard Mission is not located within the circuit, the District Mission Secretary shall make a feasibility study and report thereon to the Bishop And the District Mission Committee. If the results are positive, the District Mission Secretary shall submit an application to the pre-Synod District Mission Committee, which shall recommend to Synod.

Applications for grants for new work in the Lesotho, Namibia, Botswana, Mocambique and Swaziland Missions are subject to the provisions and requirements for the granting of Vanguard Mission status, and shall be made in the same way.

10.13.5.4 **Renewals**

The District Mission Secretary in consultation with the Superintendent of the Circuit, should this apply shall report annually to the District Mission Committee on the progress of the Vanguard Mission, including the prospects of the new work’s increasingly being able to bear the costs of its work. The District Mission Committee shall recommend to the Synod whether the Vanguard Mission status is to be renewed.

10.13.6 **Stationing of Vanguard Missioners**

The Missioner appointed to a Vanguard Mission shall be stationed in the Circuit under the Superintendency of the Circuit superintendent and shall be accountable to the circuit for the work done in attempting to develop the work of the mission,

The stationing of Evangelists in Vanguard Missions shall be arranged between the order of evangelists and the Circuits in which the Evangelist is stationed and is to be stationed.

10.13.7 **Task of Vanguard Missioners**

The primary tasks of Vanguard Missioners are:

- Evangelisation, Church Planting, Discipleship, Training, Leadership Training, Stewardship
• Training and identifying the needs of the local community, and recruiting and training members to minister in that context.

Note:
Administration of a Vanguard Mission is primarily the task of the District Mission Secretary or whoever is appointed to this task by the Bishop in consultation with the District Mission Secretary.

10.13.8 Training
The Unit will arrange and budget for the training of Vanguard Mission workers.

10.13.9 Vanguard Mission’s and Missioner’s Relation to the Circuit
Missioners, Stewards and other Society officials when they are appointed, shall be members of the Quarterly meeting of the Circuit in which the Vanguard Mission is situated.

10.13.10 Missioner’s Accommodation and Transport
The Circuit and the District in which the Vanguard Mission is situated shall provide suitable furnished accommodation, in the area in which work is being established, as well as appropriate transport, for the Vanguard Missioner. The District Mission Secretary should be personally satisfied that the accommodation is adequate.

The District Mission Secretary, the Superintendent, the Circuit Stewards and the Society Stewards of the Vanguard Mission shall negotiate the contribution the Vanguard Mission should make to the Circuit in the provision of transport, accommodation and utilities for the Missioner.

If the District, Circuit and the New Vanguard Mission cannot provide furnished accommodation then paragraph 9.1 above shall not apply, and the Vanguard Mission Grant shall cover these expenses. This situation shall be reviewed annually by the District Mission Committee.

10.13.11 Income of Vanguard Missioner
The Vanguard Mission is expected to contribute towards the costs of the Vanguard Missioner.

10.13.12 Supervision of Vanguard Missions and Missioners
District Executive Committees in Districts where Vanguard Missions are established should appoint a Task Group to monitor the relationships and conditions within the mission. The Task Group should consist of the Circuit Superintendent, The Mission Secretary of the District, who should chair the meeting, the missioner and at least two others from the societies in the Circuit. Meetings of the Task Group shall be held no
less than quarterly. The task Group should submit reports to the Circuit Quarterly meeting, the Synod and the Mission Unit.

10.13.13 **Connexional Vanguard Mission Fund**

The Connexional Executive shall determine what percentage of the annual Connexional contributions to the Mission and Extension Fund shall be set aside in a Connexional Vanguard Mission Fund.

10.13.14 **Vanguard Mission Grants**

In the first three years of Vanguard Mission status the Grant may cover the full Stipend, Supernumerary Fund and other related Circuit Assessments for the Vanguard Missioner.

In the two subsequent years of Vanguard Mission status, the District Mission Committee shall negotiate a reducing Grant, so that the Vanguard Mission bears increasing responsibility for its costs. The Vanguard Mission status and Grants cease after a maximum period of five years.

Every effort should be made by the MCO to ensure that grants made towards the appointment of the Vanguard Missioners are not to be used to pay other Circuit debts and should be dedicated to the payment of the stipend of the Missioner.

10.13.15 **Methodist Relief And Development Fund**

Conference 1995 drew the attention of all our people to the Methodist Relief and Development Fund, which exists to assist those in need as a result of events over which they have no control, and to provide assistance for funeral expenses and legal costs for victims of unrest and to provide funds for development projects.

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

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

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

All Leaders Meetings and Quarterly Meetings should support the Methodist Relief and Development Fund by tithing their Poor Fund to this Fund. Where Societies or Circuits do not have Poor Funds, they should support the Fund through the Fund from Society or Circuit Funds.

In the event of a social crisis within the District, the Justice and Service Co-ordinator should consult the Bishop and the appropriate Superintendents and, if necessary, convene a District Crisis Task Group, in order that the Church might take timeous and appropriate action.
10.13.16  **Mission And Extension Fund**

The Mission and Extension Fund was established to enable the church to assist those struggling Circuits and Districts to meet the mission aims and goals.

30% of each District’s contribution to the Fund shall be refunded for Mission and Extension work, for the funding of Vanguard and Missions, Circuit Grants-In-Aid, and Special Mission projects within the District.

11% of the Fund shall be applied to the Lesotho, Mocambique, Namibia, Botswana and Swaziland Missions each year.

30% shall be applied to Mission Programmes, projects, strategies and administration of the Mission Unit.

18% shall be allocated to other Units.

1% shall be allocated to Special Grants (e.g. the Bible Societies).

10% shall be allocated to the Connexional Vanguard Mission Fund.

10.13.17  **CHILDREN’S HOMES**

10.13.17.1 The Mission Unit shall have general oversight of all Children’s Homes in the Connexion.

10.13.17.2 Synod shall appoint Committees of Management that shall report to Synod on their work.

10.13.17.3 The Connexional Executive may appoint a Connexional Committee to co-ordinate the work of Children’s Homes and to assist in establishing new Homes.

10.14  **HOMES FOR THE AGED**

10.14.1 The Mission Unit shall have general oversight of all Homes for the Aged, which shall report to Synod on their work.

10.14.2 Incorporated Associations Not for Gain shall be registered in terms of Section 21 of the Companies Act in Districts where Homes for the Aged are established.

10.14.3 Appointments to Local Committees shall be approved by Synod and shall include the Superintendent (or Deputy). A Local Committee shall report annually to the Quarterly Meeting.

10.14.4 Methodist Homes for the Aged shall present a consolidated report and
a copy of its audited annual financial statement to the Connexional Office, and shall report to each Synod where a Home is located.

10.14.5 The Connexional Executive may appoint a Connexional Committee to co-ordinate the work of Homes for the Aged in the Connexion and to assist in establishing new Homes.

10.15 **CHILDREN’S MINISTRIES – GENERAL RESOLUTIONS**

10.15.1 **Inter-racial Activities**

Sunday Schools should foster inter-racial contacts and activities. Reports of such activities should be made to Synods through District Youth Committees.

10.15.2 **South African National Sunday School Association**

Conference commends the work of the South African National Sunday School Association and encourages Sunday Schools to affiliate to this Association.

10.15.3 **Sunday School Teachers**

Service Certificates will be awarded for 5 and 10 years continuous service and Long Service for 15 years’ service.

A Sunday School Teacher should have the following qualities:

- a personal commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ
- regular attendance at Worship and participation in the Sacrament of Holy Communion.
- full membership of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.
- knowledge of the procedure, events and activities of the Church.
- active membership of the Wesley Guild and good acquaintance with children

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

10.15.4 **Religious Knowledge Examinations**

The examinations will be held in the first week of September. Answer sheets must be posted by 15 September to the respective District Co-ordinators, to enable marking by 15th October.

Registration closes on 15 June. A registration fee as recorded in the Yearbook per Sunday School, to be posted direct to the District Youth Co-ordinator.
10.15.5 **Sunday Schools: The Front Door to Evangelism**

Conference recognizes and affirms that our children are the CHURCH now, the LEADERS of today and tomorrow. We firmly believe that for the GROWTH and SURVIVAL of the church, Connexion, Districts, Circuits and Societies must be urged to pay serious and urgent attention to this ministry by:

10.15.5.1 **Action Plan**

Providing ongoing training for Sunday school teachers at all levels of the church. The training should include a process of evaluating and affirming the teachers.

 Recommending to the Connexional Youth Co-ordinator and Sunday School and Children’s Ministry Portfolio to develop a Sunday School Syllabus acceptable to all sectors of our church and relevant to the needs and situation in South Africa which will enable our children to face the challenges of being a Christian in a rapidly changing world.

10.15.5.2 **Encouraging:**

- Churches to develop forms of worship conducive to “All Age worship”
- Parents, congregations and ministers to be involved in ministry to children
- Members to consider ministry to children by teaching Sunday School

10.15.6 **Child Care Programs**

Because of the diminishing State subsidies for Children’s ministries Circuits and Societies should assess local needs and work towards local child-care programs.

Christmas Day Collections in each Society should be set aside for the funding of existing and future Children’s Ministries in the Church, In order to achieve this we should:

Establish a children’s Ministries fund Account in each District,

Encourage application to the fund, which shall be made on an annual basis. Guidelines for this purpose will be provided by the District Committee concerned,

Set aside up to 50% of each year’s income for a Trust through which future ministries could be established.

The Fund will be administered by the Bishop, the District Treasurer, and three members elected from the Synod for a future three year period. The Committee is responsible for the advertising, motivation and collection of such monies from the circuits each year. The Committee shall present a set of accounts to the Synod.
10.16 YOUTH MINISTRY – GENERAL REGULATIONS

Reaching Youth Culture Today: Your Church and the Next Generation

In the light of the Journey to the New Land, our commitment to being a One and undivided church and the integration of society at various levels, Conference is concerned about the slow pace of integration among youth in the church. Conference adopted a plan of action.

10.16.1 Action Plan

Circuits need to be intentional about integration. To achieve this Youth Synods are called to make integration their primary aim:

• a representative task team of people skilled in facilitating integration be appointed.
• the team develop a strategy for integration at District level.
• the Bishops hold the Youth and Superintendent accountable for this strategy.

Conference recognizes that cultural differences in the understanding of youth have given us reason not to work towards integration. In order to be effective in Youth Ministry, the Mission Unit is requested to provide focus for this ministry for the next three years to youth under the age of 25 years.

All Societies without an active Wesley Guild should revive or start such a Guild immediately so that there may be live Youth Fellowship in all our churches.

Each Wesley Guild should make an annual contribution to Youth Work in the District.

All Societies, Circuits and Districts should give greater priority to work amongst young people by raising and allocating additional funds to the Unit and placing young people in leadership positions.

Conference affirms our young people in their vision of a common identity and commends the 4C’s as a guide towards holistic programmes.

10.16.2 Youth Representatives to Conference

Representatives shall be elected by the Connexional Council when needed.

10.16.3 Age Limit for Wesley Guilds

There is no age limit for membership of Wesley Guilds.

10.16.4 Youth Synods

All Districts should hold annual Youth Synods prior to the District Synod and report from the Youth Synod to Synod.
10.16.5 **Youth Involvement**

Bishops, Superintendents and Ministers should ensure that the decisions concerning Youth Representation in all meetings of the Church, emanating from the Journey to a New Land Convocation, be monitored and implemented, so as to afford youth greater participation in decision-making and a more democratic electoral base in respect of their representation.

Conference commends our youth for their participation in pilgrimages of hope and pain, community development and social action programs. Conference urges our youth to continue struggling for a just and peaceful Southern Africa.

10.16.6 **Umzantsi Child and Youth Centre**

Conference approves the work of the Organization in providing capital grants for the erection of Day Care Centres and Creches in underprivileged areas linked with sponsorship of children to attend these institutions. The Mission Unit Director represents the church on this committee.

10.16.7 **YOUTH**

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

10.16.7.2 In each District an annual Youth Synod shall be held under the general direction of the District Synod. The Youth Synod shall elect five representatives to the District Synod, shall receive matters remitted to it by the Synod and may refer recommendations to the Synod.

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

10.16.7.4 In order to encourage and prepare our young people to devote themselves to definite religious study and intelligent Christian service, annual Religious Knowledge examinations shall be held. All young people connected with our Sunday Schools, congregations and families may enter.

10.17 **ECUMENICAL AFFAIRS – GENERAL REGULATIONS**

10.17.1 **United Congregations**

The Connexional Executive reaffirms its acceptance of United Congregations as an expression of the unity we seek and directs that this
resolution be conveyed to all united congregations in which Methodists participate.

The Connexional Executive requests Bishops and Superintendents to consult partner churches of the Church Unity Commission about the establishment of work in new areas and to ensure that programmes of church extension are co-ordinated and, whenever possible, undertaken jointly.

Bishops and Superintendents are asked to note the following resolution of the Connexional Trust Properties Committee:

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

Negotiations for United Congregations shall be conducted on the basis of the Memorandum of Association and the Model Constitution for United Congregations. (Obtainable from the Church Unity Commission)

The Connexional Executive approves in principle the establishment of joint committees representing the participating churches to consider and approve building schemes submitted by united congregations and authorises its representatives on the Church Unity Commission to negotiate the constitution of such committees.

United congregations in which the Methodist Church participates may qualify for loans on the same basis as Methodist societies.

The Connexional Executive accepts the principle of joint oversight of united congregations by the overseers of the participating denominations and authorises its representatives on the Church Unity Commission to negotiate the form of such oversight in consultation with the General Committee for Ecumenical Affairs.

The Presiding Bishop or the Executive Secretary is authorised to accept the constitutions or amendments to constitutions of united congregations.

10.17.2 National Councils of Churches

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

10.17.3 Relationships with Other Methodist Denominations in Southern Africa

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

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

10.18 EDUCATION – GENERAL REGULATIONS

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

10.18.1 The need shall be established;

10.18.2 A support scheme must be created to support the scheme with work if not with money;

10.18.3 An outline of the scheme must be prepared with estimates of costs. Capital costs of buildings, grounds, furnishing and teaching aids must be estimated separately. Running costs must be divided into salaries and other costs;

10.18.4 A feasibility study indicating how costs will be met and how the school is intended to develop must be submitted to the Methodist Connexional Office for approval;

10.18.5 If the Methodist Connexional Office approves, a Board of Trustees must be established, including people with strong Methodist, financial and educational qualities and representatives of the District. The Trustees must be approved by Synod and must draft a Constitution;

10.18.6 The school must be registered with the relevant education department as a Methodist private school. Any special consent needed from local authorities must be secured;

10.18.7 Detailed architectural drawings and a more detailed feasibility study must be prepared;

10.18.8 Donations may be sought for establishing the School and for expenses. Any deficit on the first year’s running costs must be more than covered by donations, and provision must be made for expansion. No undertakings, explicit or implied, should be given until the scheme is authorised. Where a donation is subject to conditions, these must be referred to the Presiding Bishop before the donation is accepted;

10.18.9 The proposal and plans must be submitted to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, the District Trust Properties Committee, and the Connexional Office for approval;
10.18.10 The Board of Trustees shall then submit the application to Conference or the Connexional Executive;

10.18.11 A Building Project Committee to manage the building and layout of the school, and a Management Committee to attend to its day-to-day running should be appointed;

10.18.12 Regular annual reports, including financial reports, must be submitted to Synod. In the early days of the school Synod may require more frequent reports.
CHAPTER 11

DISCIPLINE OF MEMBERS AND MINISTERS

11.1 The true spirit of Methodist discipline requires that it be exercised in harmony with the Grace of Christ, with tenderness, patience and fidelity, seeking rather to win Members (hereafter inclusive of Ministers unless the context indicates otherwise) back to Christ than to discontinue them.

11.2 Members who create or encourage dissension and strife in their own Circuit or any other part of the church, or who continuously rail against the Doctrine and Discipline of the Connexion and/or of the church’s appointments/representatives/office holders, or who lapse into sin, or who otherwise violate the law of God or of the church may have a complaint laid against them by another member with the District Discipline Registrar (DDR). This shall be in writing.

11.3 Ministers who have an accusation against them in respect of character, doctrinal beliefs, fitness for the work of the ministry, or observance of Methodist Laws and Discipline may have a complaint laid against them by another Member with the DDR. This shall be in writing.

11.4 The DDR shall decide whether a complaint demands the laying of a charge and a hearing. In reaching a decision the DDR shall consider, among other things, whether:

11.4.1 a breach of Laws and Discipline is alleged;
11.4.2 in the case of disputes between individuals or groups, all means of pastoral intervention and/or mediation and/or any other appropriate responses have been exhausted;
11.4.3 the alleged offence damages the integrity, witness, governance or good name of the Church.

11.5 If it does demand the laying of a charge and a hearing, the DDR shall formulate a charge and shall deliver the charge as stipulated in para 11.11.

11.6 If the DDR decides that the complaint does not demand a charge and hearing the DDR shall inform the accuser accordingly and may refer it to another appropriate forum of the Church. The accuser may appeal to the Connexional Disciplinary Committee (CDC) against this decision. Such appeal shall be in writing. The decision of the CDC shall be made in terms of 4 above and shall be final. If it decides the complaint warrants a charge and a hearing it shall refer the matter back to the DDR who shall then act in terms of 5 above.

11.7 If a charge is laid:

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

11.7.2 In the case of a Minister, the Bishop shall inform the Presiding Bishop of the charge. If, after consultation with the Bishop, it is deemed to be in the interests of the Church, the Presiding Bishop may direct that the Minister who is charged must cease to exercise any ministerial functions until the DDC has reached a verdict (see 11.25). Such direction of the Presiding Bishop shall be delivered to the accused in writing. The Presiding Bishop, after hearing the Minister, shall decide whether the accused shall continue to receive the same stipend and to benefit from the Connexional Funds designed to assist ministers, during the period of cessation of such ministerial functions. This decision shall be reviewed if the matter has not been concluded within a period of ninety days of the delivery of the charge. The accused may continue to occupy the Circuit house unless the Presiding Bishop decides otherwise.

**District Disciplinary Committee:**

11.8 Each Synod shall appoint a DDC of 7 persons of whom three shall be ordained Ministers and four Lay Members. The term of office for members serving on the DDC shall be three years. They are eligible for re-appointment. A member of the District Disciplinary Committee shall not serve more than three consecutive three-year terms. Synod shall appoint the Convener who shall be one of the above. A quorum shall comprise 3 members of which at least one shall be an ordained minister and at least one shall be a lay person. Furthermore, at least one of the quorum shall have the applicable qualifications referred to in paragraph 11.40.

11.9 The Committee shall meet within 21 days of receiving a charge. If it does not meet within 21 days of receiving the charge, the charge must be withdrawn. This will not preclude the DDR from forwarding the charge a second time to the DDC provided that the DDC must meet within ten days of such an event. If it does not meet within this period, the charge shall be withdrawn permanently unless the delay is caused by impossibility.

11.10 The power and duties of the DDC, inter alia, are:

11.10.1 to hear all charges referred to it by the DDR and, in the event of a conviction, to impose whatever sentence it deems appropriate, which shall include the suspension or termination of the membership of the accused.

11.10.2 to call any witness or evidence it might require to reach a decision

11.10.3 to maintain a written record of decided cases

11.10.4 to recommend, when it considers that an offence it has dealt with places a legal duty on the Church, that the Bishop reports accordingly through the Secretary of Conference to the Director of Prosecutions of the Province, or to any other relevant civil authority.
The Charge

11.11 Delivery of the Charge:

11.11.1 The DDR shall notify the accused in writing of the terms of the charge and of the date, place and time of the meeting of the District Disciplinary Committee that will hear the charge. The charge shall be sent by Registered Post to the last known address of the accused, in which case the accused shall be deemed to have received the charge 10 days after posting, or, in the presence of at least one competent witness, handed to the accused or delivered to the last-known residential address of the accused, leaving it in the letter box or affixing it to the front door or putting it under the front door or handing it to a person apparently over the age of 16 who resides at the said premises.

11.11.2 Unless the accused agrees to accept shorter notice, the hearing shall not be held less than 7 days after the accused has received the notice.

11.12 Should the accused refuse to accept service of the charge or be absent from the last known residential address, the charge shall be deemed to have been duly served if the terms of para. 11.11.1 have been fulfilled.

Trial Procedure:

11.13 All charges against accused persons shall be heard by the DDC of the District in which the accused resides. If the matter of complaint took place in another District, so as to make it difficult for witnesses to attend, or if some other good reason obtains, the Presiding Bishop may decide which DDC shall hear the charge. The DDR shall appoint a Member to present the case against the accused at the hearing.

11.14 If any member of the DDC is personally involved in or affected by the matter before the DDC, that member shall temporarily withdraw from the Committee. If the Convener withdraws from a hearing, the Committee shall appoint another of its number as Convener for that hearing.

11.15 The accused may appoint a Member as a representative during the trial proceedings, provided that the unavailability of a specific person shall not be grounds for the delay/postponement of a hearing. No legal representation shall be allowed in the Committee.

11.16.1 The Convener of the DDC shall control its proceedings which shall include, but not be limited to, ensuring that all relevant evidence, irrespective of who such evidence supports, is tested and presented to the DDC. Any member thereof who leaves it, excepting during an adjournment, shall not be allowed to return or to participate in the verdict or the sentence. The accused and the accused’s representative (if any) and the accuser have the right to be present throughout the proceedings but not while the Committee considers the verdict or the sentence. No other person shall be present except a witness while giving testimony.

11.16.2 The DDC, inclusive of the Convener of the DDC acting as the convener,
shall at its sole discretion be able to use any method of communication to facilitate its meetings, deliberations and any other duties and functions which it needs to perform.

11.17 No member of the Committee may divulge to anyone outside the Committee any of its deliberations or proceedings.

11.18 The Committee may proceed with the hearing if the accused neglects or refuses to attend.

11.19 In exceptional circumstances the Committee may take evidence on commission where, in the opinion of the Convener, good grounds exist. The accused and the accuser may be present. The accused may question the witness giving evidence on commission. Evidence so recorded forms part of the record of the proceedings.

11.20 A written record of the proceedings shall be kept by one of the members appointed thereto by the Convener. This person and no other may use electronic equipment to record the proceedings. The record vests in the Official Trustee (see 9.1), shall be lodged with the Connexional Office, and shall be accessible to no one but the CDC, unless the Presiding Bishop is of the opinion that it is required for reasons consistent with the Laws and Discipline of the church.

11.21 At the conclusion of the evidence, and after hearing argument by the accused and the person presenting the case against the accused, the Committee shall declare its verdict by majority vote as to the guilt or otherwise of the accused. If it finds the accused guilty it shall also decide the sentence. Only after the accused has been found guilty, may the Committee consider any previous disciplinary record relating to the accused to assist it in deciding the sentence.

11.22 The verdict and the sentence shall be in writing and the finding shall be delivered as soon as possible to the accused and the accuser as provided for in para. 11.11.1 or 11.12. At the same time the Convener of the DDC shall provide the accused with a copy of the regulations relating to an appeal. The full record of every hearing shall be sent to the CDC by the DDC within seven (7) days of the delivery of its finding. The Convener of the DDC shall advise the accused’s Bishop and Synod of the charge, the verdict and the sentence.

11.23 The person presenting the case against the accused, the accused or the accuser, on good grounds being shown to the Convener of the DDC, may obtain a copy of the record of the hearing, excluding discussion by the Committee while considering the verdict or the sentence. The applicant shall bear the costs.

**Commencement of Sentence:**

11.24 No sentence shall take effect until the CDC has reviewed the matter. The Executive Secretary shall ensure that the sentence is carried out.
Suspension of Ministers:

11.25 If found guilty by a DDC, a Minister may be suspended by the Presiding Bishop from exercising any ministerial functions, before the CDC has reviewed the matter if the Presiding Bishop is of the opinion that it is in the best interests of the church. The accused shall be informed of the suspension as provided for in para. 11.11.1 or 11.12.

11.26 Where a minister has been found guilty by a DDC, unless the Presiding Bishop decides to the contrary, all stipends and other emoluments from the Church and all payments due to Church funds shall continue to be paid and the accused may continue to occupy any Circuit house or Church property. Before making a final decision adverse to the accused in this regard, The Presiding Bishop shall give the accused the opportunity to make submissions to The Presiding Bishop. The Presiding Bishop may make an interim decision in this regard without giving the accused the opportunity to make submissions to The Presiding Bishop.

11.27 A suspended Minister shall not exercise any of the duties of a Minister or of a Local Preacher or occupy any other official position in the Church.

11.28 Suspended Ministers are under the pastoral charge of the Bishop of the District in which they reside.

11.29 If the CDC declares a Minister not guilty who has been suspended without emoluments and any other payments, the Church shall endeavour to make good the stipend, grants, and benefits from the Supernumerary and Furlough Funds the Minister lost as a result of the suspension.

Probationers at College:

11.30 The Presiding Bishop, in consultation with the Director of the Education for Ministry and Missions Unit, may suspend a Probationer pending the finding of the DDC and review of the CDC if it is in the best interests of the church. During the suspension the Probationer may continue in residence at the College unless the Presiding Bishop decides otherwise.

Connexional Disciplinary Committee:

11.31 The Conference shall appoint a CDC consisting of not fewer than seven persons of whom at least two shall be ordained Ministers and at least three Lay Members, all appointed for a term of three years. The Conference shall appoint one of the members to be the Convener.

11.32 No legal representation shall be allowed in the proceedings of the Committee. The Committee shall meet as the need arises. The Committee, inclusive of the Convener, acting as the convener, shall at its sole discretion be able to use any method of communication to facilitate its meetings, deliberations and any other duties and functions that it needs to perform.
11.33 If any member of the Committee is personally involved in or affected by the matter before the Committee, that member shall temporarily withdraw from the Committee. If the Convener withdraws from a hearing, the Committee shall appoint another of its number as Convener for that hearing. Three members form a quorum. Of these, at least one shall be an ordained Minister and at least one shall be a Lay Member. Furthermore at least one of the quorum shall have the applicable qualifications referred to in 11.40.

**Powers and Duties**

11.34 The CDC shall, inter alia:

11.34.1 hear all appeals against decisions of District Disciplinary Committees;
11.34.2 in the absence of an appeal, review every record of District Disciplinary Committees within 30 days of the DDC’s decision;
11.34.3 in consequence of 11.34.1 and 11.34.2 ratify, amend or reverse any decision, verdict or sentence imposed by a DDC, or refer the matter back to it for retrial or make any other decision or give any other directive which justice requires;
11.34.4 maintain a record of decided cases;
11.34.5 prepare and maintain manuals of procedure for disciplinary hearings;
11.34.6 ensure that all records of the Connexional and District Disciplinary Committees are forwarded to the Presiding Bishop’s Office which shall ensure that they are forwarded to the Methodist Connexional Office for safe keeping;
11.34.7 submit a report of its work to the Conference without breaching any confidences;
11.34.8 recommend, where it considers that an offence it has dealt with places a legal duty on the Church, that the Executive Secretary reports accordingly to the relevant prosecutorial authority, or to any other relevant civil authority;
11.34.9 to hear cases where The Presiding Bishop has been charged,

**Appeals:**

11.35 Any appeal must be lodged in writing with the Convener of the CDC within ten days of the date on which the decision appealed against is conveyed to the person entitled to appeal, and shall set out the grounds of appeal. The CDC must endeavour to finalise the appeal within 30 days of the appeal being lodged.

11.36 Either the accused or the person presenting the case against the accused may appeal against a decision of a DDC.

11.37 Such appeal may be made only on one or more of the following grounds:

11.37.1 that the procedures set out in Laws and Discipline were not adhered to;
11.37.2 that there was malice or prejudice on the part of those serving on the DDC;
11.37.3 that the sentence does not conform to previous sentences relating to similar matters;
11.37.4 that proper account was not taken of the circumstances of the accused or of any mitigating factors;
11.37.5 that the DDC misdirected itself in reaching its decision.

11.38 All appeals shall be decided on the written record of the proceedings before the DDC and on hearing such argument by the accused and the person presenting the case against the accused as the CDC shall permit. No evidence shall be heard on appeal unless the Committee decides to call for such evidence.

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

**Appointment and qualifications of the DDC, DDR and CDC**

11.40 The DDR and at least one member of a DDC and one member of the CDC shall be persons who have the equivalent of at least ten years High Court experience as an attorney or advocate or ten years of commensurate litigation experience.

11.41 Synod shall appoint a DDR. The term of office for the DDR shall be three years. The DDR is eligible for re-appointment. The same person can be appointed as the DDR for more than one District.

**EXPELLED MINISTERS**

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

**MINISTERS SEEKING REINSTATEMENT**

11.43 A Minister who has resigned or been expelled and seeks reinstatement shall apply to the Connexional Executive through Synod. Synod shall make its recommendation on the application having sought information as to the circumstances of the Minister’s leaving of the church. The District from which such a Minister left must be consulted. The Bishop shall appoint a Pastoral Commission to investigate the application. The application shall include a testimonial by the Superintendent. If necessary the Superintendent shall consult any previous Superintendent who knew the Minister well at the time of resignation or expulsion. A Probationer who
has been expelled or who has withdrawn from Probation shall be required to re-candidate.

11.44 An ordained Minister who is reinstated shall not be ordained again but may be required to serve a period on trial before being restored to Full Connexion.

PASTORAL OVERSIGHT IN THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS

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

BISHOPS

11.46 A complaint against a Bishop must be forwarded to the Presiding Bishop who shall forward it to the DDR of any District, other than the Bishop’s District, who shall act in terms of 11.4 above. In the event of the DDR deciding that a hearing must be held, The Presiding Bishop shall decide on which DDC shall conduct the hearing, provided that it shall not be the DDC of The Bishop who is the accused.

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

THE PRESIDING BISHOP

11.48 An accusation made against the Presiding Bishop shall be submitted to the Executive Secretary who shall forward it to the DDR of the District wherein the PB resides and two other District Disciplinary Registrars appointed by the Executive Secretary. The said District Disciplinary Registrars shall act in terms of 11.4 above. In the event that the said District Disciplinary Registrars cannot reach agreement on whether or not there should be a hearing, a decision shall be taken by majority vote.

11.49 In the event of the District Disciplinary Registrars deciding that a hearing must be held, the CDC shall be the trial court.

11.50 Either the accused or the person presenting the case against the accused may appeal against the decision of the trial court. Such appeal must be lodged with the Executive Secretary within thirty days of the decision of the court. The appeal shall be decided by the Connexional Executive or by a special court appointed by the Connexional Executive consisting of at least five members. The Connexional Executive shall at its sole discretion be able to use any method of communication to facilitate its meetings, deliberations and any other duties and functions which it need to perform in this regard.
11.51 The Presiding Bishop who most recently vacated that office, failing which the most recent Presiding Bishop who is available, shall preside over the Connexional Executive when it hears an appeal in a matter concerning the Presiding Bishop.

11.52 The record vests in the official trustee, shall be lodged with the Connexional Office, and shall be accessible to no-one but The Executive Secretary, unless The Connexional Executive is of the opinion that it is required for reasons consistent with the Laws and Discipline of the Church.

11.53 In all other respects the regulations for Disciplining Ministers/Members shall, mutatis mutandis, apply.
CHAPTER 12

SPECIAL ORGANISATIONS AND COMMITTEES

12.1 The Church recognises the following Organisations:

uNZONELELO
WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION
WOMEN'S AUXILIARY
WOMEN'S MANYANO
YOUNG WOMEN'S MANYANO
METHODIST MEN'S LEAGUE
YOUNG MEN'S GUILD
LOCAL PREACHER'S ASSOCIATION
WESLEY GUILD
CONNEXIONAL MUSIC ASSOCIATION

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

12.3 The constitutions of these Organisations or any amendments thereto shall not come into operation until ratified by Conference.
CHAPTER 13

METHODIST ORDER OF DEACONS

13.1 To share Christ’s love through service and to help the Church respond to the needs of the wider community.

13.1.1 Deacons belong to an ordained ministry of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa. Their ministry may include working in a pastoral context in a Society or Circuit, or, working in secular employment e.g. education, health care, welfare and social upliftment organizations. Deacons seek to be Christ’s servants in the world and encourage the Church community to a ministry of servanthood. Apart from local pastoral ministry or church planting projects some practical aspects of service that the Order of Deacons could engage in are: poverty alleviation; care for the sick and dying; care for the aged or youth; evangelism and mission outreach; para-church organisations.

13.2 Members of the Order are known as “Deacons” a term reserved in the Methodist Church of Southern Africa for members of the Order of Deacons.

CONNEXIONAL COMMITTEE

13.3 The Order is under the direction of a Connexional Committee consisting of the Presiding Bishop, the Executive Secretary, a Bishop, the Warden, and three Ministers, five lay members and two Deacons nominated by the Executive Committee.

13.4 The Connexional Committee shall report and make recommendations to the Connexional Executive on Candidates, Probationers, Candidates for Ordination, and the examinations.

13.5 An Executive Committee may be appointed consisting of the following members of the Connexional Committee: the Executive Secretary, the Warden, three Ministers and two Deacons. The Committee is also the Examining Committee and the Stationing Committee.

CONVOCATION

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

The Agenda for the Convocation is contained in Appendix 7.
13.7 The Convocation shall nominate a Warden to the Connexional Executive who shall make the appointment. The appointment shall be for three years. The Warden shall be the representative of the Order at Conference.

**CANDIDATES**

13.8 The primary qualifications for the Order are the sense of a divine call, spiritual and intellectual gifts, the graces of Christian character, and the fruits of Christian service. Candidates shall intend to give their life’s service to the Order.

13.9 The minimum educational standard of Candidates is the Senior Certificate, Matriculation, or an equivalent. Where the primary qualifications are clearly evident consideration may be given to those who have not yet reached this standard.

13.10 No age limit is laid down for candidates. Candidates must be willing and able to fulfil the conditions of probation that will include academic studies and internship training as laid down by the Order, under the general auspice of the Education for Mission and Ministry Unit.

13.11 A Candidate shall apply through the Superintendent to the Warden who shall supply an Application Form.

13.12 A Candidate shall also provide a recommendation from the Superintendent, and the name and address of the Minister of the Society and a Leader of that Society as referees.

13.13 Once the Candidature has been provisionally approved by the Examining Committee, the Superintendent may nominate the Candidate at the next Circuit Quarterly Meeting. The Superintendent shall forward the nature of the voting to the Warden.

13.14 If the Quarterly Meeting approves the candidature, the Warden shall provide the Superintendent with directions for the Candidate’s appearance before the Examining Committee.

13.15 Prior to appearing before the Examining Committee candidates shall write two assignments as directed by the Examining Committee. One assignment shall be on The Word and the other on Service. A pass mark is 50% in each assignment.

13.16 The recommendation of the Examining Committee and the results of the examinations shall be considered by the next Synod which shall make a recommendation to the Connexional Executive, which shall accept the Candidate or otherwise. Candidates shall give testimony regarding their Christian experience, call to the Order, belief in Methodist doctrine and adherence to Methodist discipline at Synod.
PROBATION AND ORDINATION

13.17 Probation is normally four years. Part of the Probation may be in collegiate training as decided by the Connexional Committee. The cost of training is borne by the Training Fund although the Probationer should bear as much of the cost as possible. Training shall be determined by the Order in consultation with the Education for Mission and Ministry Unit. A syllabus shall be published in the Yearbook.

13.18 Probationers who have successfully completed their probation shall appear before the Connexional Executive for admission into membership of the Order. They shall be ordained by the Presiding Bishop at a service arranged by the Warden.

APPOINTMENT OF DEACONS

13.19 The Stationing Committee, of which the Warden shall be a member, shall decide the appointment of Deacons after the recommendation of the General Committee. Deacons serve under the direction of the Quarterly Meeting and the Superintendent.

13.20 A Deacon may be invited to serve in a Circuit following the system applicable to Ministers, but the Warden shall be consulted at every stage of the negotiations.

13.21 If the Quarterly Meeting decides no longer to provide an opportunity for service by a Deacon the Superintendent shall immediately inform the Warden.

13.22 A Deacon is a member of the Leaders’ Meeting, the Quarterly Meeting and Synod.

STIPENDS AND ALLOWANCES

13.23 A Circuit providing an opportunity for service for a Deacon shall pay to the Connexional Office on or before the 15th of every month an assessment determined by Connexional Executive. The Connexional Office shall pay the stipend to the Deacon before the end of the month. The Connexional Executive shall determine the stipends and allowances.

13.24 Deacons are members of the Supernumerary Fund, and contributions shall be made to the Fund and benefits received in terms of the rules of the Fund.

13.25 Deacons shall be admitted to the Long Leave Roster, the conditions and benefits being decided by the Connexional Executive.

13.26 Deacon who are paid a stipend through the MCO participates in the Pharos Medical Plan and Extraordinary Affliction Fund on the same basis as Ministers.
13.27 A Circuit providing an opportunity for service for a Deacon shall provide suitable accommodation and shall make adequate provision for travelling.

**DISCIPLINE**

13.28 The disciplinary procedure provided for Ministers in Chapter 11 shall, mutatis mutandis, apply to Deacons.

13.29 **Rule of Life**

Devotional Life

*Deacons are called to:*

1. Attend worship regularly, especially Holy Communion.
2. Daily devotion that should include Scripture reading and prayer. Deacons are encouraged to pray for Members of the Order.
3. Set aside time for regular self-examination which should include a time to reflect upon failure to love God and neighbours, and to give thanks for blessings received.

Discipline

*Deacons commit to:*

1. Attending Convocation (Dispensation from the Warden for non-attendance is required)
2. Participate in the life of the area groups, by attending meetings, sharing in fellowship by letter and telephone.
3. Being sensitive to the needs of family, dependants and friends.
4. Involvement in the community in which they live.
5. Good stewardship of time, to accommodate reading, study and appropriate relaxation of a day off once a week and an annual holiday.
6. Good stewardship of money.

13.30 **ORDER OF DEACONS -- GENERAL REGULATIONS**

13.30.1 *Stipends and Allowances*

A Circuit employing an Ordained or Probationer Deacon shall pay to the Connexional Office a minimum stipend assessment which is 75% of the minimum stipend assessment for a Minister or Probationer Minister as the case may be. The Connexional Office will pay to Deacons an amount proportionate to their years of service. Circuits should work towards the target scale.

A Circuit employing a Deacon is encouraged to supplement the above minimum stipend.
13.30.2 **Allowances for Uniform**

An annual uniform allowance may be given. The amount as decided from time to time is recorded in the Yearbook.

13.30.3 **Book Allowances**

The Diaconal Order Fund is authorised to pay to the Bookroom an amount for each probationer to assist in purchasing books from an approved Book list in consultation with the Warden. Circuits employing Deacons are to be approached to cover this expense. The cost of books for Probationers’ studies will be refunded if they pass.

The Circuit shall provide suitable accommodation comparable with that provided for Ministers.

13.30.4 **Travelling**

Circuits employing a Deacon should pay a travelling allowance on the same basis as is paid to Ministers.

An Associate Membership subscription may be levied where possible in order to cover cost of printing and postage.

13.30.5 **Status of Deacons**

Deacons are recognised by the Church as called of God, and trained and Ordained for the service of the Church;

Their service is primarily evangelistic and pastoral, but they should not be denied opportunity to exercise gifts of preaching, initiative and leadership;

They are colleagues on the staff of the Circuit to which they are appointed, responsible to the Superintendent, and thus share in the work of the Circuit.

13.30.6 **Furlough**

Furlough is due to Deacons on the same basis as Ministers and is shown in the alphabetical list of Deacons.

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

Probationers who are authorised by the Presiding Bishop to administer the sacraments may invite ordained Deacons to assist in distributing the elements without obtaining the Superintendent’s approval, but shall obtain such approval in the case of probationer Deacons.

13.30.7 **Deacon**

The Connexional Executive resolves that the use of the term ‘Deacon’ in the MCSA be reserved for members of the Diaconal Order.
CHAPTER 14

ORDER OF EVANGELISM

EVANGELISTS

14.1 The Order of Evangelists exists to provide for more effective service by lay workers in the Church and the community.

14.2 The duties of an Evangelist are:

14.2.1 to preach regularly as planned, giving prayer, study and thought to the preparation of the services;

14.2.2 to convert unbelievers and bring them into active membership of the Society and the Class;

14.2.3 to seek backsliders and to try to bring them to repentance;

14.2.4 to visit those who are in any sort of need, especially those who are falling into sin;

14.2.5 to equip the people to resist false doctrine, and to promote fellowship among all Christians;

14.2.6 to inform the Minister of any who are in need;

14.2.7 to encourage Christian work among young people;

14.2.8 to be concerned primarily with pastoral work and preaching and not to be involved in the finances of the Church unless specifically requested by the Superintendent;

14.2.9 to teach the people to give to the Church as a means of sharing in the work of Christ.

14.3 The Evangelist should preferably be in the full-time employ of the Circuit.

CANDIDATURE AND PROBATION

14.4 The training for Evangelists shall be under the direction of the Training for Lay Ministries Section of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit.

14.5 The primary qualifications for an Evangelist are the evidence of a living experience of the saving power of Jesus Christ, the gifts of zeal and evangelistic appeal, and an eagerness for the winning of souls.

14.6 The Evangelist must have an adequate knowledge of the Bible and must have passed Standard 6.
14.7 The Evangelist must have passed the prescribed examinations for a Local Preacher and have been on Full Plan for at least 12 months.

14.8 The eligible age of candidature shall be the same as that applicable to candidates for the Ordained Ministry. They shall have served in the Circuit for at least six months before being nominated to and recommended by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

14.9 Candidates are nominated by the Superintendent in the Quarterly Meeting that shall decide whether or not to recommend them.

14.10 The District Evangelists’ Committee shall refer the recommendation of the Quarterly Meeting to Synod that shall refer its decision to the Connexional Evangelists and Biblewomen Committee for submission to the Connexional Executive.

14.11 The Connexional Executive shall decide whether to accept any Candidate.

14.12 Accepted Candidates shall be on probation for at least three years as decided by the Connexional Executive. During probation they shall follow the course of study prescribed by the Training for Lay Ministries Section of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit in consultation with the Connexional Evangelists and Biblewomen Committee.

GENERAL

14.13 The minimum stipends and other benefits of Evangelists are decided by the Connexional Executive.

14.14 The Quarterly Meeting shall pay the stipend assessment and Supernumerary Fund contribution to the Connexional Office that shall pay the stipend to the Evangelist. The Circuit shall also provide for the adequate housing of the Evangelist.

14.15 In their work as Evangelists they are subject to the discipline of the District Evangelists’ Committee. The discipline questions asked in the Local Preachers’ Meeting shall be asked also of Evangelists. Notwithstanding anything contained above or anywhere else in this Chapter, any disciplinary hearing against an Evangelist which affects his membership of the Church, must be conducted in terms of the provisions in Chapter 11 for Members.

14.16 The Quarterly Meeting shall refer all matters relating to the appointment and dismissal of Evangelists to the District Evangelists’ Committee that shall report to the Connexional Executive through the Warden. The Connexional Executive determines all appointments of Evangelists.

14.17 The Superintendent shall immediately report the resignation, dismissal, disability or death of an Evangelist to the Connexional Office, the Warden and the District Evangelists Committee.
14.18 The Quarterly Meeting shall review each year the suitability of an Evangelist for the work and for employment in the Circuit. Any change in the situation must be reported to the District Evangelists’ Committee. Such review may be undertaken at any other time if necessary.

DISTRICT EVANGELISTS’ COMMITTEE

14.19 The District Evangelists’ Committee consists of the Bishop, the Vice-Chairperson, the District Secretary, the Statistical Secretary and the District Mission Secretary, with two Evangelists, one Minister and two lay Members elected by Synod.

14.20 The functions and duties of the Committee are inter alia:

14.20.1 to care for Evangelists and Probationer Evangelists in the District;
14.20.2 to promote the general interests of the Order and to improve the effectiveness of Evangelists;
14.20.3 to co-operate with the Connexional Committee;
14.20.4 to consider the recommendations of Quarterly Meetings in respect of applications for admission to probation and transfers;
14.20.5 to supervise and guide the studies of Probationers;
14.20.6 to recommend to the Connexional Committee the admission of Probationers into full membership of the Order;
14.20.7 to report to Synod on Evangelists in the District;
14.20.8 to organise any Evangelists’ Convention in the District;
14.20.9 to monitor the observance of the directions of Conference affecting Evangelists;
14.20.10 when necessary to request a report from a Quarterly Meeting on the work of an Evangelist;
14.20.11 to report through Synod to the Connexional Committee any matter referred to it by the Quarterly Meeting relating to the suitability of an Evangelist for the work, the continuance of his employment, and questions of character.

BIBLEWOMEN

14.25 Biblewomen are auxiliary pastoral and evangelistic workers in the Circuits.

14.26 Job Description

The Biblewomen work under the direction of the local Minister and the Circuit Quarterly Meeting. As an auxiliary pastoral and evangelistic worker she assists in furthering mission and growth in the Circuit.

Her work includes the following:

teaching

caring, ie visiting the sick, elderly, bereaved etc
leading worship – preaching
sharing of faith (evangelising) eg bringing back of back-sliders, new
converts etc
organising prayer teams and bible study groups
counselling
She does not have to do all of the above. Depending on the needs of the
Circuit and in agreement with the Minister and the Circuit Quarterly Meeting,
the Biblewoman plans her work accordingly.

14.27 Minimum Requirements

• a personal and present experience of the saving power of Jesus;
• full membership in good standing, for at least the past twelve months,
of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa.
• a suitable standard of education (at least Std 5) and of Biblical
knowledge;
• evangelistic zeal and a love for people;
• an understanding of family life that will make her welcome in people’s
homes.

Biblewomen need not be Local Preachers on Full Plan. Where a
Biblewomen seeks to become a Local Preacher, the church’s normal
regulations pertaining to candidature and training in respect of Local
Preachers shall apply.

14.26 CANDIDATURE

Candidates are nominated by their Superintendent and approved by the
Circuit Quarterly Meeting. The recommendation must be sent to the District
Biblewomen’s Committee.

The District Biblewomen’s Committee shall refer the recommendation of
the Quarterly Meeting to the Connexional Evangelists and Biblewomen
Committee who shall forward the name to the Connexional Executive
with recommendations in each case.

The Connexional Executive shall decide whether to accept any Candidate.

If accepted, Candidates will serve a probationary period of two years
during which they will undergo training as laid down by the Education for
Ministry and Mission Unit. On the recommendation of the Co-ordinator of
the Training for Lay Ministries Section of the Education for Ministry and
Mission Unit and of their Quarterly Meeting, Candidates may be
commissioned as full Biblewomen.

The eligible age for candidature shall be the same as that applicable to
candidates for the Ordained Ministry. Candidates over the age of 50 years
shall require exceptional qualifications. A Medical Certificate of Fitness on
the Official Medical Form (available from the District Biblewomen’s
Secretary) shall be submitted.

In the case of an applicant who is divorced, the provisions of para 4.64 shall apply.

14.29 **GENERAL**

The affairs of the Order of Biblewomen shall be administered by the Connexional Evangelists’ and Biblewomen’s Committee.

The Connexional Committee may appoint an Executive Committee.

The duties of the Connexional Committee in respect of Biblewomen are inter alia:

- to watch over the interests of Biblewomen;
- to encourage recruitment and to oversee their work;
- to receive the annual Reports of the District Biblewomen Committees and to report to the Connexional Executive;
- to consider the recommendations of the Synods on Candidates and to make its own recommendations to the Connexional Executive;
- to recommend the studies to be followed by Probationers to the Training for Lay Ministries Section of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit;
- to consider the recommendations of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit and Synod on the admission of Probationers into Full Membership of the Order and to make its own recommendations to the Connexional Executive;
- to recommend to the Connexional Executive the length of Probation;
- to delegate any of its powers to the Executive Committee;
- to select candidates for residential training each year;
- to report to the Connexional Executive the resignation, disability or death of any Biblewomen;
- to report any matters referred to the Connexional Executive by the Synods;
- to provide the Connexional Executive with a list of Biblewomen and their appointments.

The minimum stipends and other benefits of Biblewomen are decided by the Connexional Executive. Biblewomen may only be paid less than the minimum stipend or be non-stipendiary with the written permission of the respective District Biblewomen Committee.

The Quarterly Meeting and the Superintendent must give their written approval of the appointment of a Biblewomen in the Circuit.

There shall be between each Circuit and appointed Biblewomen, a clear agreement about conditions of employment, including job description, emoluments and benefits.
Circuits employing Biblewomen are responsible for paying their emoluments and assessments through the Methodist Connexional Office.

Biblewomen serve under the exclusive direction of the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and the Superintendent.
Biblewomen appointed after 1 January 1996 serve in a full-time capacity and those appointed prior to that date may be given the option of becoming full-time workers or continuing in a part-time capacity.

Circuit Quarterly Meetings shall refer all matters relating to the appointment of Biblewomen to the District Biblewomen’s Committee that shall report to the Warden. The Connexional Executive is the final authority on all appointments of Biblewomen.

Notwithstanding anything contained in the Laws and Discipline, any complaint against a Biblewoman which may affect her membership of the Church, must be conducted in terms of Chapter 11 and the provisions therein relating to Members.

Superintendents shall immediately report the resignation, disability or death of a Biblewoman to the Methodist Connexional Office and the District Biblewomen’s Secretary, who will in turn inform the Warden.

The Quarterly Meeting shall review, each year, the suitability of a Biblewoman for the work and for employment in the Circuit. Any change in the situation must be reported to the District Biblewomen’s Committee, who will report to the Connexional Evangelists and Biblewomen’s Committee. Such review may be undertaken at any other time, if necessary, by the Circuit Quarterly Meeting.

Biblewomen are obliged to attend ongoing Training Courses as decided by the District Biblewomen’s Committee.

Circuits employing Biblewomen shall be responsible for, and shall bear the cost of:

- training
- retreats
- initial uniforms and badges

Probationer Biblewomen may wear the blue uniform with white collar and cuffs after the first training session. The badge is presented at the end of probation in the commissioning service.

Circuits employing Biblewomen shall provide suitable accommodation. Where possible, Biblewomen should live at home.

After every completed year of service, leave of 30 calendar days is granted to Biblewomen in full-time service and three weeks to Biblewomen in part-time service, in consultation with the Superintendent and District
Biblewomen’s Secretary. Annual leave may not be accumulated.

Sick leave is granted but, if longer than two weeks, a doctor’s certificate must be provided. The first three months shall be with full emoluments, after which the case shall be considered on merit. Pension contributions shall be made for a total of nine months. The situation shall be reviewed each month.

Newly appointed Biblewomen must join the Supernumerary Fund. A Biblewomen will be permitted to retire at the age of 60 years but may not continue over the age of 65 years unless requested to do so by the Quarterly Meeting. This arrangement must be approved by the District Biblewomen’s Committee.

A Biblewoman, no longer employed by a Circuit, may not exercise the functions and duties of a Biblewoman.

A retired Biblewoman may work in a Circuit, providing she is under the authority of the Quarterly Meeting of that Circuit.

14.30 DISTRICT BIBLEWOMEN’S COMMITTEE

The District Biblewomen’s Committee consists of the Bishop, the Vice-Chairperson, the District Synod Secretary, the District Secretary of the Order of Evangelists, two Superintendents of Circuits employing Biblewomen, two Biblewomen who shall be elected by the District Biblewomen’s Convention or retreat, and a Representative from the Women’s Auxiliary elected for her knowledge and experience in Biblewomen’s work.

The functions and duties of the District Committee are inter alia:

- to care for Biblewomen and Probationer Biblewomen in the District
- to co-operate with the Connexional Evangelists’ and Biblewomen’s Committee
- to promote the general interests of the Order and to improve the effectiveness of Biblewomen
- to consider the recommendations of Circuit Quarterly Meetings in respect of applications for Admission to probation and Transfers
- to organise the commissioning services of Biblewomen in co-operation with the Circuits concerned
- to report to Synod on Biblewomen in the District
- to organise, in co-operation with the Order of Evangelists, any Biblewomen’s Conventions in the District
- to monitor the observance of the directions of the Connexional Executive affecting Biblewomen
- when necessary, to request a report from Circuit Quarterly Meetings
- to report through Synod to the Connexional Evangelists’ Biblewomen’s Committee, any matter referred to it by the Quarterly Meeting relating to the suitability of a Biblewoman for the work, the continuance of her employment, and questions of character.
**14.31 CONNEXIONAL EVANGELISTS’ AND BIBLEWOMEN’S COMMITTEE**

The affairs of the Order of Evangelists and Biblewomen are administered by a joint Connexional Committee for Evangelists and Biblewomen consisting of a Chairperson, the Connexional Wardens of both Orders, the Director of the Mission Unit, two Evangelists, two Biblewomen, two Ministers and two Lay Persons (1 of each appointed by the Synods of the Natal Coastal and the Natal West Districts), the District Secretary of the Biblewomen’s Committee in the Natal Coastal and Natal West Districts, one representative from each of the Organisations (Women’s Association; Women’s Auxiliary; Women’s Manyano, Young Women’s Manyano and Young Men’s Guild)

The duties of the Connexional Committee in respect of Biblewomen are inter alia:

- to watch over the interests of all Biblewomen
- to encourage recruitment and to oversee their work
- to receive the annual Report of the District Biblewomen’s Committees
- to consider the recommendations of the Synods on Candidates
- to consider the recommendations of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit and Synod on the admission of Probationers into Full Membership of the Order
- to decide on the length of Probation
- to consider any matters referred to the Connexional Evangelists’ Biblewomen’s Committee by the Synods.
- to report to the Connexional Executive
- to nominate three names for appointment as Warden of the Order to the Connexional Executive who reserves the right to add other names. The appointment is for three years at a time.
- to arrange and conduct a Connexional Biblewomen’s Convention from time to time for the purpose of fellowship and training

**14.32 The Warden**

The Warden is an ex officio a member of Conference.

**14.33 ORDER OF EVANGELISM – GENERAL REGULATIONS**

The Orders of Evangelists and Biblewomen operate as one Order under one Warden with effect from 1 January 2007.

The affairs of the order are administered by a joint Connexional Committee. The Committee members are recorded in the Yearbook.

**14.33.1 Stipends for Evangelists and Biblewomen**

No Evangelist or Biblewoman may receive less than the minimum stipend without the written permission of the District Committee to the Circuit. In all such cases the Bishop shall be consulted. Payment of stipends is subject to the same terms and conditions as for payment of stipends for ministers.
Regulations for Evangelists

14.33.2 Travelling Allowances
All Circuits shall pay Evangelists a minimum travelling allowance per month as set from time to time (see Yearbook) and the District Evangelists’ Secretary shall enquire at Synod whether this has been done.

The allowance shall be a fixed monthly amount payable in advance and calculated by the Quarterly Meeting in consultation with the Evangelist, bearing in mind all his legitimate travelling commitments;

The allowance thus determined shall be reviewed annually at the October Quarterly Meeting in consultation with the Evangelist, such revised allowance to take effect from the following January;

Circuits shall report to the District Evangelists’ Committee after the October Quarterly Meeting each year, confirming that the allowance has been reviewed and indicating the amount to be paid during the ensuing year.

14.33.3 Training of Evangelists
Evangelists will be trained under the auspices of the Training for Lay Ministries Section of the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit as follows:

Evangelists remain in their circuits under the supervision of the Superintendents;

They will be enrolled for the TEEC Course and study at home. Study costs will be borne by the Order;

They will attend a one-week to one-month period of special training at John Wesley College. Travelling costs will be borne by the Circuits.

14.33.4 Removals and Appointments of Evangelists
No Evangelist may move from one appointment to another without the approval of the Connexional Committee;

14.33.5 Regulations for Biblewomen
Regulations relating to the appointment and employment of Biblewomen are contained in L & D and the Biblewomen’s Handbook as revised from time to time for Districts.

Each Circuit employing a Biblewoman must submit a report of the work annually to the District Committee.

Before any Biblewoman can be commissioned a report from the Circuit Quarterly Meeting and the Superintendent must be submitted to the Connexional Biblewomen and Evangelists Committee.
CHAPTER 15

15 CONNEXIONAL CHAPLAINCY COMMITTEE – GENERAL REGULATIONS

15.1 PURPOSE OF THE COMMITTEE

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

15.1.2 “Security Services” refers to the SANDF (SA National Defence Force), SAPS (SA Police Services) and DCS (Dept of Correctional Services)

15.2 COMPOSITION OF THE COMMITTEE

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

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

15.2.3 The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, the Secretary, the Principal Chaplain and the three Liaison Chaplains.

15.3 POWERS AND DUTIES

15.3.1 The CCC has responsibility for the pastoral oversight, discipline and general well-being of all chaplains in the Security Services.

15.3.2 The CCC will screen and recommend suitable candidates for chaplaincy to the Security Services.

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

15.4 PROCEDURE FOR THE APPOINTMENT OF CHAPLAINS

15.4.1 Any ordained minister who feels a call to serve as a chaplain must first apply in writing to the CCC for permission to explore the possibility of appointment with the Security Service concerned. The application should include a motivation and a CV.

15.4.2 The CCC must ask their District Bishop to appoint a Pastoral Committee to meet with the minister concerned and make a recommendation concerning
their overall character and work, and their suitability for chaplaincy. Ministers will normally only be recommended for chaplaincy after they have served three years in Circuit after ordination. The Security Services do not accept new chaplains over the age of 40.

15.4.3 The CCC will refer the names of ministers who have received a positive recommendation to the Security Service concerned. (NB. The CCC does not make chaplaincy appointments. Each Security Service is responsible for its own appointments in terms of current labour legislation. In the case of SAPS, once a minister has received approval from the CCC, they must themselves apply to the SAPS when posts are advertised).

15.4.4 When a minister receives an appointment as a chaplain it is his/her responsibility to notify the CCC.

15.5 CONDUCT AND OBLIGATIONS OF CHAPLAINS

15.5.1 Chaplains are representatives of the MCSA and must not conduct themselves in any way which will bring discredit on the good name of the Church.

15.5.2 Methodist Chaplains must remain faithful to our Methodist doctrines and values, especially in matters of conscience and are encouraged not to bear arms.

15.5.3 Chaplains are in a unique position as employees of the State. They are employed by, and are in a contractual relationship with the Security Service and are therefore responsible in the first instance to the authority and discipline of the Security Service concerned.

15.5.4 Nevertheless they continue to be in a covenantal relationship with the MCSA through their ordination and are also subject to the discipline and regulations of the MCSA in order to remain in good standing with the Church.

15.5.5 Their job description, conditions of service, remuneration, pension and service benefits will be determined and administered by the Security Service concerned.

15.5.6 Chaplains are required to serve people of all denominations and faiths as well as members of the MCSA.

15.5.7 Chaplains may not transfer to another Security Service or secondment without permission from the CCC or Presiding Bishop. Nor may they accept promotion to a position in the Security Service which has no relation to their primary calling as a chaplain without permission from the Presiding Bishop.

15.6 OBLIGATIONS TO THE MCSA

15.6.1 Whilst it is recognised that the Security Service has the primary call on the chaplain’s time and work, chaplains are also required to attend their annual
District synod and at least one District ministers’ retreat a year.

15.6.2 Chaplains are also required to involve themselves in and be members of their local Methodist Society and may be expected to attend Circuit and Society meetings, normally in their own time.

15.6.3 Chaplains must negotiate this with their Commanding Officer.

15.7 PRINCIPAL CHAPLAIN AND LIAISON CHAPLAINS

15.7.1 The CCC will nominate a Principal chaplain every three years who shall be appointed by the CE who will have pastoral oversight of all chaplains in the three Security Services.

15.7.2 The CCC will annually appoint a Liaison Chaplain in each Security Service who will be the liaison channel between the chaplains and the Security Service concerned.

15.8 SPECIAL PROVISION

15.8.1 The presence of Methodist Chaplains in the Security Services does not imply that the MCSA supports war, violence, militarism or the political ideology of the Government in power.
APPENDIX 1

THE METHODIST CHURCH OF SOUTHERN AFRICA

(PRIVATE) ACT, 111/1978

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

PREAMBLE

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And whereas the name of the ‘Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa’ was altered to that of ‘The Methodist Church of South Africa’ by the Methodist Church of South Africa (Private) Act, 1932 (Act No. 12 of 1932);

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

And whereas the religious doctrines and usage of the Primitive Methodist Connexion are in all substantial respects identical with those of the Methodist Church of South Africa, but the respective internal organizations of the two Churches differ in certain respects in relation to the constitution, procedure and powers of their respective Conferences and otherwise;

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

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

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

And whereas the work and activities of the said Methodist Church of South Africa extend beyond the borders of the Republic into certain neighbouring States;
And whereas the Conference of the said Church, at its Sessions during October
1975, resolved that it is desirable and expedient that the name of the said Church be
changed to ‘The Methodist Church of Southern Africa’;

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

And whereas it is expedient that provision be made also for incidental matters:

BE IT THEREFORE ENACTED by the State President, the Senate and the House of
Assembly of the Republic of South Africa, as follows:

REPEAL OF LAWS

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

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

2. (1) Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any law contained, from and
after the commencement of this Act the Church, Denomination or
Connexion now designated ‘The Methodist Church of South Africa’
(formerly the ‘Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa’) shall for all
purposes whatsoever become, and be designated by the name of, ‘The
Methodist Church of Southern Africa’ (hereinafter referred to as ‘The
Church’).

(2) Subject to the provisions of this Act, any appointment or regulation made
or action taken or done or deemed to have been made, taken or done
under or by virtue of any provision of any Law repealed by section 1 of this
Act, including all resolutions approved by the Conference of The Church,
shall be deemed to have been made, taken, done or approved under or
by virtue of the corresponding provision of this Act, and shall be as valid as
if this Act had not been passed.

(3) Any reference to the ‘Wesleyan Methodist Church of South Africa’ or ‘The
Methodist Church of South Africa’ in any fund, contract, deed, bond,
instrument, certificate, debenture, security, receipt, voucher, record, deposit,
or other book, document or writing of whatsoever nature established,
issued, executed, or made prior to the date of commencement of this Act,
shall for all purposes be construed as a reference to ‘The Methodist
Church of Southern Africa’.
INCORPORATION AND CONTINUED EXISTENCE OF ‘THE CHURCH’

3. (1) The Church as originally established and constituted under the laws referred to in the Preamble hereto shall, notwithstanding the repeal of the said laws, continue under the name of ‘The Methodist Church of Southern Africa’, and shall be a body corporate with perpetual succession.

(2) The Church shall be capable in law of suing and being sued, and of acquiring, holding and alienating movable and immovable property, and of doing and performing such other acts and things as bodies corporate may lawfully do and perform, subject to the provisions of this Act or any other law.

VESTING IN THE CHURCH OF EXISTING RIGHTS AND LIABILITIES

4 (1) All movable and immovable property of whatsoever kind or nature, including all interests and rights in and to movable and immovable property, and all mortgage bonds, debts, securities and obligations and the benefit of all existing contracts which immediately prior to the date of commencement of this Act were owned or were held by or vested in The Church as formerly constituted and designated, shall at the commencement of this Act continue to vest in and be owned by and be receivable, recoverable and enforceable by The Church as constituted by this Act without the necessity of any transfer, conveyance or other continuing or connecting title or separate investiture other than this Act, and nothing in this Act shall be deemed to alter or affect the continued corporate existence or the rights or liabilities of The Church.

(2) All causes and rights of action, suits, references, arbitrations or other proceedings which existed and were in any manner enforceable by or against The Church immediately prior to the commencement of this Act shall be and remain as good, valid and effectual by or for or against The Church as they might or would have been by or for or against The Church if this Act had not been passed.

(3) All debts, liabilities and obligations of whatsoever kind incurred or undertaken by The Church or by the officers thereof or by any other person in the name and on behalf of The Church and valid and subsisting against The Church immediately prior to the commencement of this Act, shall be and are hereby declared to be valid and subsisting against The Church as if the said debts, liabilities and obligations had been incurred or undertaken by The Church under this Act, and any person entitled to any right, claim, demand, or other relief against The Church immediately prior to the commencement of this Act shall continue to be so entitled.

OFFICERS AND EMPLOYEES TO CONTINUE IN OFFICE

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

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

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

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

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

VESTING OF CHURCH PROPERTY IN PRESIDENT OF SOUTH AFRICAN CONFERENCE

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

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

METHODIST DOCTRINES AND USAGES SAFEGUARDED

10. Notwithstanding anything in this Act contained, the South African Conference, as the governing authority within its area of jurisdiction of The Church shall at no time be entitled to do, perform, suffer or permit any act, matter or thing which is repugnant to the doctrines and religious usages of the people called Methodists.

POWER TO UNITE OR AMALGAMATE WITH ANOTHER CHURCH

11. Notwithstanding anything to the contrary in any law contained, The Church may from time to time, in pursuance of a resolution of the Conference, incorporate within itself, or unite or amalgamate with, any other church or religious body or association or organisation or branch thereof, whether the same shall be within or outside the borders of the Republic:

Provided that

(a) any such incorporation union or amalgamation shall be upon such terms and conditions as the said Conference of The Church may by resolution decide;

(b) nothing in this Act or in any other law contained shall be deemed to curtail or restrict the power and capacity of The Church (whether with or without making any such incorporation, union or amalgamation) to extend its organisation or to carry on work beyond the borders of the Republic;

(c) nothing in this Act contained shall be deemed in any manner whatsoever to alter, amend or vary, or to authorize or empower any provision contained in any deed or other document governing or relating to any place of worship or school vested in or administered or controlled by The Church, insofar as any such provision defines or relates to the doctrinal standards required by that deed or other document to be maintained or observed at, or in respect of, any such place of worship or school.

SHORT TITLE

12. This Act shall be called the Methodist Church of Southern Africa (Private) Act, 1978.
OUR FAMILIES AND OURSELVES

We, on this solemn occasion, devote ourselves afresh to God (1820, p. 147); and resolve, in humble dependence on His grace, to be more than ever attentive to personal religion, and to the Christian instruction and government of our families. And we further resolve (1848, p. 108) to cultivate more fully the spirit of Christian Pastors, so that all our intercourse with our people may be to edification; and as ‘overseers of the flock’, to give ourselves to the work of ‘warning everyone, and teaching everyone in all wisdom, that we may present everyone perfect in Christ Jesus’. And in order to do this (1820, p. 147), let us frequently read and carefully study Mr Wesley’s Twelve Rules of a Helper, and other parts of the Large Minutes that relate to the duties of a Preacher and Pastor.

Let us daily consecrate ourselves fully and entirely to our proper work as the servants of Christ and of His Church, giving ourselves wholly to it, both in public and private. Let us strictly guard against all occupations of our time and thoughts which have no direct relation to our great calling, and which would injuriously divert our attention from the momentous task of ‘saving them that hear us’, and ‘taking care of the Church of God’ (1820, p. 147).

Let us afresh, solemnly and heartily, recognise the original purpose of Methodism ‘to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land’, and ever regard this as the first and great calling of the Methodist people, and especially of the Preachers. And let us determine, in the name of God, that this idea shall rule our whole life, and that every pursuit and design shall be subordinated to this our high and special calling (1835, p. 551).

THE STUDY

Let us humbly and earnestly seek a more complete preparation for the great work of the ministry, and especially that richer ‘unction of the Holy One’ which is vouchsafed only to those who live near to God. This anointing for our office would yield what most of all we ourselves need and desire: a large increase of ardent piety and of vigorous faith, holy importunity in prayer, and irresistible persuasiveness in preaching (1848, p. 108).

Let us ‘covet earnestly the best gifts’ to qualify us for an effective and useful ministry, and let us seek them in fervent prayer to Him who is the Father of lights and the fountain of wisdom. Let us meanwhile ‘stir up the gift of God which is in us’, and improve our talents by close study and diligent cultivation; and especially let all of us ‘study to show’ ourselves ‘approved unto God, workers that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth’. Let us take care that, whatever other qualifications we may acquire and use, our ministry shall at least be always marked
by sound, evangelical doctrine, by plainness of speech, and by a spirit of tender affection and burning zeal (1820, p. 127).

THE PULPIT

Let us preach constantly the leading and vital doctrines of the Gospel: repentance toward God; a present, free and full salvation from sin (1820, p. 147) — a salvation flowing from the grace of God alone, ‘through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus’, and apprehended by the simple exercise of faith; a salvation which begins with the forgiveness of sins (this forgiveness being certified to the penitent believer by the Holy Spirit) and (by means of this witness, but by the power of that Divine Spirit who bears the witness) a change of heart; a salvation which is itself the only entrance to a course of practical holiness (1821, p. 250).

And let us preach these cardinal doctrines in our primitive method, evangelically and experimentally, with apostolical earnestness and zeal, and with great simplicity. Let us ‘labour in the word and doctrine’; applying our discourses closely and lovingly to the various classes of our hearers, and ‘by manifestation of the truth, commending ourselves to everyone’s conscience in the sight of God’ (1820, p.147).

Remembering that the prominence which is properly given in the Methodist pulpit to the doctrine of present salvation is ever liable to antinomian abuses, let us diligently and evangelically preach the precepts as well as the privileges of the Gospel, expounding them carefully and applying them faithfully (1835, p.552).

Let us build up our people in knowledge and holiness; urging them to fidelity in family duties, and especially in the godly training up of their children; and in general to ‘follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another’ (1835, p. 552).

In every place let us speak plainly and pointedly on the duty and the advantage of Christian communion, and exhort all who are seeking salvation to avail themselves, without delay, of the help of our more private means of grace (1820, p. 148).

In particular, let us urge upon all our people a conscientious and frequent observance of the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper; expounding its nature, instructing the young and reasoning with the timid and the doubting, and setting forth the duty and blessedness of ‘showing the Lord’s death till He come’ (1820, p. 150).

SOCIETY MEETINGS

Being fully persuaded that the regular and frequent meeting of our Societies is of vital importance to the prosperity and perpetuation of the work of God amongst our people, let us meet the principal Societies regularly on the Lord’s Day, and frequently on the week evenings in country places (1836, p. 86). And let us make such meetings interesting and profitable to our Members by information as to the state of the work of God in the Circuit generally; by reference to the special circumstances of the Society then present; and by explaining our own rules and ‘putting the members in
remembrance’ of their specific duties, both personal and domestic (1820, p. 149).
And from time to time let us exhort our Members, in the event of their removing into
other Circuits, to secure a Note of Removal, and to seek immediate connexion with
the Society in the place whither they go to reside (1848, p. 108).

And inasmuch as religion in our Societies depends largely upon the cultivation
amongst us of family religion, let us earnestly press upon our people the regular
and devout observance of family worship, accompanied by the reading of Holy
Scripture. And in order to a due discharge of this most important domestic duty, a
suitable and sufficient portion of time should be conscientiously set apart in the
morning and evening of each day, when the attendance of all the members of the
household, servants included, should be arranged for and required (1821, p. 250).
Let us also at such Meetings earnestly exhort our Societies to make the best and
most religious use of the rest and leisure of the Lord’s Day (1820, p.150). Let us
urge upon our members to sanctify the Lord’s Day, not only personally, but in their
families, by ‘commanding their children and their households to keep the way of
worship of Almighty God, both morning and evening, and by arranging that, in their
families, as few persons as possible are kept at home’ (1821, p.250).

And let us show to our people the evil of wasting, in visits or in receiving company,
those hours of the holy Day which are not spent in public worship; and that such a
practice tends to a neglect of private prayer, of the study of the Scriptures, and of the
religious instruction of children, and also to the spiritual injury of domestic servants,
who are thereby needlessly kept at work on the day of rest, and deprived of the
public means of grace (1820, p.150).

And, lastly, let us guard our people against the danger of expending all their time
and energy on local and subordinate enterprises and works of charity, to the neglect
of the public preaching of the Gospel, the weekly meeting for prayer and intercession,
and the class meeting. Let us show them that, by a wise economy of time, they may
‘fulfil their course’ of benevolent activities without robbing God of the public worship
which He demands. And on this question let us, as occasion serves, remind our
members that, under the divine blessing, the prosperity of the spiritual work of God
depends upon the regular and conscientious use of His institutions, for it is through
the means that we reach the end; and our own history shows, in the success of the
spiritual work of God, all other good undertakings among us had their origin, and
have ever had their principal support. ‘These ought ye to have done, and not to
leave the other undone’ (1820, p. 151).

LEADERS’ MEETINGS

Let us regularly meet the class-leaders both in town and country (1820, p. 149);
and at each Leaders’ Meeting let us carefully examine the entries made in the
class-books relative to the attendance of the Members (1826, p. 168) in order that
prompt and practical measures may be taken in cases which, on enquiry, shall be
found to demand the exercise of discipline, ‘the word of exhortation’, or kindly
counsel and Christian sympathy.

From the beginning, Leaders’ Meetings have been found essential to the pastoral
care and spiritual prosperity of our Societies (1826, p. 168), and also to the orderly
transaction of their financial concerns. Where Leaders’ Meetings are frequently
held, the work of the Leaders is done more perfectly. And by a minute examination
of the class books, in the presence of the Leaders, we learn who are sick, the
careless, or the lukewarm (1820, p. 149); and then, in making pastoral visits, we
are prepared to go, ‘not only to those who want us, but to those who want us most’.
Let us therefore see to it that Leaders’ Meetings are held regularly, and as often as
practicable, not only in the towns in which Ministers reside, but also in the principal
country places (1820, p. 168).

As much depends, under the blessing of God, on the piety, zeal, and devotion,
the Scriptural knowledge and Christian temper of our Leaders, and also on
their intelligent and hearty approval of the Doctrines and Discipline of Methodism,
let us, before nominating a new Leader, satisfy ourselves, by previous enquiry
and personal examination, as to the character and qualifications of the person
proposed (1820, p. 149).

Whenever a new Leader, nominated by us and accepted by the Leaders’ Meeting,
is first introduced to the meeting, let us take that opportunity of stating the duties
that belong to the office (1820, p. 150). And in particular, let us urge upon our
Leaders the vital importance of seeing or communicating with each of their Members
once a week (1820, p.150).

Let us promote in every place the observance of those parts of our Discipline that
refer to watch-nights, private and public bands, and quarterly fast days (1820,
p. 149).

PASTORAL VISITATION

We recognise the absolute obligation which is laid upon us and which was solemnly
acknowledged at the time we received ordination to secure, by mutual consultation
and arrangement, such a general, stated, and efficient visitation of our people at
their own dwellings as is involved in the scriptural command to ‘feed the Church of
God’, and in the example of St Paul, who ‘taught’ the people ‘publicly, and from
house to house’; and also in those other Scriptures which, in varied language,
represent Christian Ministers as the under-shepherds of the flock of God _ Jesus
Christ Himself being the ‘chief shepherd’ (1847, p.548).

We are persuaded that the unity and edification of our Societies and the good
feeling of our people generally would be promoted by increased pastoral intercourse
with them at their own homes (1835, p.552). And, in the present day, the perilous
exposure of our Members to the manifold fascinations of worldliness demands
unremitting diligence on our part (1847, p.549); and especially that, in connection
with our pastoral visits, there should be, whenever practicable, the reading of a
suitable portion of holy Scripture and prayer (1847, p.550).

We do not forget that the cares and labours both spiritual and economical, which
devolve upon Ministers, and in particular upon Superintendents are steadily
increasing (1847, p. 549); but at the same time the proportion of Ministers to Members
is also increasing. And we are convinced that, by a wise economy of time, by energy and perseverance, and especially by system and method, much more pastoral visitation may be accomplished.

We therefore resolve to give ourselves afresh and more fully to this part of our work (1830, p. 612); and we agree to devote regularly certain portions of our time for the purpose of visiting the Members of our Societies 'from house to house'. And we will strive to make our visits profitable to the people by kindly enquiry into their Christian experience, by giving seasonable counsel, and by exhorting them to a faithful and loving observance of all the duties of personal and family religion (1821, p. 249).

In particular, let us care for the aged, the infirm, the sick, and the poor (1835, p. 552); let us keep watch over the lukewarm and the careless; and let us pay special attention to backsliders. 'In the Spirit of meekness', and in much patience, let us endeavour to 'restore' them that have been 'overtaken in a fault', and seek by private efforts, as well as by our public ministration, to recover the fallen 'out of the snare of the devil' (1820, p. 150). And lastly, when we go to our country appointments on week evenings, let us secure time, before the public service, for the pastoral visitation of village Methodists (1847, p. 557).

OVERSIGHT OF THE YOUNG

In order that the work of God may be perpetuated among us, let us, in public and in private, pay particular spiritual attention to the young people of our Societies and congregations (1820, p. 149). Let us frequently and affectionately speak to them on their peculiar dangers and duties, and seek to enlist their sympathy with our Doctrines and Discipline; and that they 'may be delivered from this present evil world, according to the will of God', let us strive to lead them to an earnest consecration of themselves to the service of Christ and His Church (1827, p. 281).

And to secure increased facilities for such ministrations, let us, wherever practicable, make arrangements for obtaining pastoral access, at stated times, to the young persons of Methodist families between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, with a view to promote their spiritual welfare by personal instruction, exhortation, appeal, and prayer (1845, p. 242).

CARE FOR THE CHILDREN

We are convinced of the obligation which rests on all Christian Pastors to feed and take oversight of the lambs, as well as of the sheep, of the flock of Christ (1847, p. 546); and we agree to hold, wherever practicable, weekly meetings with the children of our people (1875, p. 711).

SUNDAY SCHOOLS

Let us afford to our Sunday Schools all possible encouragement and aid; by
attending their Committee and Teachers’ Meetings; by visiting the principal schools at least once in every quarter; and by giving as occasion serves, advice and counsel to the officers and teachers (1826, p. 170).

**CATECHETICAL INSTRUCTION**

Let us recommend, both in Sunday Schools and in the families of our people, the practice of catechetical instruction, in order that ‘being rooted and grounded’ in ‘those things which are most surely believed among us’, our children may in after years ‘hold fast the form of sound words’. And let us commend everywhere our own Catechisms (1820, p. 150).

**COTTAGE PRAYER MEETINGS**

Let us encourage prayer-meetings in the houses of our friends at such times as will not interfere with attendance at our chapels and other preaching places; for when prudently conducted by persons of established piety and competent gifts, and duly superintended by the Ministers and the Leaders’ Meetings, such services are productive of much good among the poor, and have often proved the means of grace and salvation to many who could not, at first, have been reached in any other way (1820, p. 148).

**COTTAGE PREACHING**

In populous neighbourhoods where there is a general neglect of the means of grace already established, let us preach in private houses, especially in the cottages of the poor; that so we may gain access to ‘them that are without’, and, by the divine blessing, bring them under concern for salvation, and win them over to attendance on public worship in the house of God (1821, p. 249).

**FORMING NEW CLASSES**

In our old and large Societies especially, let us from time to time appoint new Leaders, active and zealous men and women, ‘of honest report, and full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom’, and encourage them to form new Classes in suitable neighbourhoods; and let us seek thus to gather into the fold of Christ those persons who, it may be, live at a distance from any chapel, yet are ‘not far from the kingdom of God’, but who need special invitation, and are not likely to ‘give themselves to the Lord, and unto us by the will of God’, without more than ordinary enterprise and spiritual attention (1820, p. 148).

**VISITATION OF VILLAGES**

In country places, where it is not possible at present to appoint Preachers regularly, let suitable persons attend, under the direction of the Superintendent, for the
purpose of public prayer and exhortation, and occasionally to read to the congregation a short and plain sermon, until such places can be supplied regularly with Local Preachers (1820, p. 148). And let us conscientiously care for and watch over the country places already on the Plan (1820, p. 147).

OPENING NEW PLACES

In every Circuit, let us try to open new places, and let us try again places that have not been recently visited; and let us not be satisfied until every town, village and hamlet shall be blessed, so far as we can accomplish it, with the means of grace and salvation. And with a view to a revival and extension of the work of God, let us have recourse, even in our old established Circuits, to the practice of preaching out of doors; seeking, in order to save, that which is lost (1820, p. 147).

EXTENSION OF METHODISM

In a word, let all of us consider ourselves called to be, in point of enterprise, zeal, and diligence, Home Missionaries; and to enlarge and extend, as well as keep, the Circuits to which we are appointed (1820, p. 148).

OFFICIAL MEETINGS

In conducting Quarterly Meetings and all other official meetings, let us steadily discourage the spirit of strife and debate, and firmly disallow the introduction of all topics of irritating discussion not legitimately arising out of the proper business of the meeting. Let us remember that the only way to live in peace is to walk by rule; and in the administration of all our affairs, in the Society and in the Circuit, let us cultivate the spirit and exhibit the manner of those who are acting for God in the Service of His Church (1820, p. 150).

PASTORAL RESPONSIBILITY

Whilst we readily and cheerfully protect our office-bearers and Members, in meetings over which we preside, in the exercise of such functions as belong to them, according to our Laws and Usage, let us not forget that we are under obligation to act on such occasions, not merely as those who preside at public meetings but also as the Pastors of Christian Societies; who, by the ordinance of God, and by their own voluntary association with us, are ‘put in trust with’ the Scriptural oversight of their spiritual affairs and are directly responsible to the great Head of the Church for the discreet and faithful discharge of the duties of that ‘trust’ (1820, p. 151).

CATHOLICITY

Let us ourselves remember, and from time to time impress upon our people, that we, as a Connexion, do not exist for the purpose of party (1820, p. 148). If at any
time we are tempted to ‘entangle ourselves with affairs’ which are foreign to the exclusive calling of Methodist Ministers, let us resolve, in dependence upon the grace of God, to keep aloof from all merely party purposes, and from party spirit (1835, p. 552). By the example of our Founder, by the original principle on which our Societies are formed, and by our professions before the world, we are bound to beware of a sectarian spirit, to avoid the appearance of bigotry, and to abstain from disputes on minor subjects of theological controversy (1820, p. 148). In our occasional intercourse with the Ministers and Members of other churches, ‘let all of us please our neighbours, for their good, to edification’; and towards all denominations of Christians ‘holding the Head’. Let us maintain the kind and catholic spirit of primitive Methodism, and ever show ourselves ‘the friends of all, the enemies of none’.

CONCLUSION

And being deeply sensible that, in order to the revival and extension of the work of God, the great thing to be desired is an abundant effusion of the Holy Spirit on ourselves and our families, our Societies and our congregations, we solemnly agree to seek that blessing by humble and earnest prayer (1820, p. 152), in our private supplications, in our family devotions, and in the pulpit; and we desire to ‘continue with one accord in prayer and supplication until the Spirit be poured on us from on high, and the wilderness become a fruitful field, and the fruitful field be counted for a forest’ (1822, p. 338).

QUARTERLY VISITATIONS

Believing that, next to the public ‘ministry of the word’, the Quarterly Visitation of the Classes is our most important official work; and remembering that to those of our Members who are not accessible for visitation at their own homes, the visitation of the Classes is probably their only opportunity of direct intercourse with their Ministers, let us be careful each quarter to meet personally every Class, never sending the tickets to the Leader (1847, p. 550).

And in making the ticket plan, let us so arrange the visitation as not to crowd too many Classes together; but rather, by beginning the work early in the quarter, allow sufficient time in meeting each Class for a careful examination of the Members as to their Christian religion, experience and practice, and for enquiry as to family religion; and also for suitable pastoral advice, encouragement or admonition, for ‘consolation in Christ’, for ‘comfort of love’, for ‘fellowship of the spirit’ (1821, p. 250).

And in connection with the visitation of the Classes, let us on the one hand enquire particularly into the experience and habits of those whom we find ‘On Trial’, and receive into Society those only who, after probation, may fairly be ‘counted worthy’. And on the other hand (1847, p. 550) let us not, upon slight grounds, return any person as having ‘ceased to meet’, but before writing off such a one, let us enquire particularly into the case; and, wherever practicable, let us ourselves visit the person; and thus, ‘by all means save some’ of the many who ‘forsake the assembling of themselves together’.

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APPENDIX 3

RULES OF A HELPER

1. Be diligent. Never be unemployed. Never be triflingly employed. Never while away time, or spend more time at any place than is strictly necessary.

2. Be serious. Let your motto be ‘Holiness to the Lord’. Avoid all lightness, jesting and foolish talking.

3. Be guarded in your conversation and friendships lest you be led into temptation.

4. Take no step towards marriage without solemn prayer to God, and consulting your colleagues.

5. Believe evil of no one unless fully proved; take heed how you credit it. Put the best construction you can on everything. You know the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner’s side.

6. Speak evil of no one else your word, especially, would eat as doth a canker. Keep your thoughts within your own breast till you come to the person concerned.

7. Tell everyone what you think wrong in them, lovingly and plainly and as soon as may be else it will fester in your own heart. Make all haste to cast the fire out of your bosom.

8. Do not pretend to be of high station. A Preacher of the Gospel is the servant of all.

9. Be ashamed of nothing but sin, no, not of cleaning your own shoes when necessary.

10. Be punctual. Do everything exactly at the time. And do not mend our Rules but keep them, and that for conscience’ sake.

11. You have nothing to do but to save souls. Therefore spend and be spent in this work. And go always not only to those who want you but to those who want you most.

12. Act in all things not according to your own will but as a child in the Gospel and in union with your colleagues.

As such it is your part to employ your time as our Rules direct, partly in preaching and visiting from house to house, partly in reading, meditation and prayer. Above all, if you labour with us in our Lord’s vineyard it is needful that you should do that part of the work which the Conference shall advise at those times and places which they shall judge most for His glory.
Observe: it is not your business to preach so many times and to take care merely of this or that Society but to save as many souls as you can, to bring as many sinners as you possibly can to repentance and with all your power to build them up in that holiness without which they cannot see the Lord.

And remember, a Methodist Preacher is to mind every point, great and small, in the Methodist Discipline. Therefore you will need all the grace and all the sense you have and to have all your wits about you.
APPENDIX 4

RULES OF DEBATE

Much of the business in the courts of the Church is conducted in the form of Conversation. Therefore the Rules of Debate should be applied only when necessary, and then in such a way as not to impair the spirit of the meeting. The following Rules of Debate, while primarily of application to Conference, may be applied to all formal Church meetings.

1. Any Member wishing to address Conference shall rise and address the Presiding Bishop, and shall not proceed until called on.

2. All speeches shall be directed to the Presiding Bishop.

3. No Member shall remain standing during a discussion except the Member recognised by the Presiding Bishop.

4. No Member shall speak more than once on the same matter without the leave of Conference, except that the proposer of a resolution has the right to speak last in reply to the debate. The seconder of a motion may either speak in support when seconding or reserve the right to speak later. The proposer and seconder of an amendment have no right of reply.

5. The Presiding Bishop shall rule out of order any Member who violates the rules of debate or the regulations of Conference.

6. Where the formal business is not conducted by answer to Questions, it proceeds by way of proposing or moving a resolution which is then seconded, debated and voted upon. Only one motion shall be before Conference at a time.

7. No major matter may be brought before a Church meeting unless due notice has been given to the Members by including it in the notice of the meeting. In Synod or Conference notice of motion shall be given at the commencement of the meeting or, if the meeting agrees, one day’s notice shall be required. Notice is not required for matters introduced by any Department or Committee when dealing with its business. Where there are several notices of motion dealing with the same subject, Synod or Conference may draw them together in a single motion which seeks to capture the spirit of all the notices of motion.

8. No proposal shall be considered which is in conflict with an existing regulation or previous decision unless the existing regulation or previous decision is first considered and amended or rescinded.

9. Once a resolution has been moved and seconded it shall not be withdrawn without the consent of Conference.

10. The report of a Committee is received without motion but its adoption shall be moved and seconded.
11 During the debate, any Member may move an amendment to the motion. The amendment should not simply be a negative of the motion. When an amendment has been proposed and seconded, debate on the substantive motion ceases in favour of debate on the amended motion. The Presiding Bishop should ensure that Conference understands the entire motion, as amended, before debate on the amended motion begins.

12 The Presiding Bishop should not allow more than one amendment to be before Conference at a time.

13 If the amended motion is not agreed to by Conference, debate resumes on the original motion. If the amended motion is agreed to by Conference it becomes the substantive motion and may be further amended. If there is no further amendment or debate the amended motion, which is now the substantive motion, is voted on (again).

14 A Member may ask a question at the conclusion of any speech, thereby interrupting the proceedings.

15 A Member may interrupt the proceedings at any time by raising a Point of Order, which means that the Member believes that the rules of debate or the regulations of Conference have been violated. The Member who was addressing Conference shall be seated until the Presiding Bishop has decided the Point of Order.

16 At any time between speeches, a Member may propose closure of the debate. This shall be put to Conference without debate and if it is carried by a majority of two-thirds the Presiding Bishop shall allow the Member to speak who has the right of reply and shall then immediately put the motion to Conference.

17 At any point between speeches, a Member may propose that ‘the motion be not put’. If this is carried by Conference, with or without debate, the motion or amendment before Conference cannot be put and Conference proceeds to the next item of business.

18 The Presiding Bishop may decide when to close the debate, and unless Conference decides otherwise the vote shall then be taken. At the close of the debate (and after the proposer has had the right of reply) the motion or the motion as amended shall be read to Conference and the vote taken. No one should thereafter speak on the motion.

19 Voting may be by voice, show of hands, or ballot. If, after a vote by voice, the Presiding Bishop declares the result and no one challenges the decision then the result becomes final.

20 Members may abstain from voting but should do so only for good reason and not simply to avoid the duty to make a decision.

21 Reports submitted to Conference may be adopted if Conference approves them, or received if Conference wishes to include them in its records without
approving or rejecting them, or merely noted when no further action is taken.

22 The proposer of a resolution or, where it is amended, the proposer of an amendment, should reduce the resolution to writing and submit it to the Secretary.

23 Conference may appoint Committees to deal with matters brought before it. Conference should decide the members of the Committee, its convener, powers of co-option if any, terms of reference and power to act. Committees shall report as required by Conference.

24 When an election is made, except where otherwise provided, each nominee should be nominated and seconded before the next nomination is taken. Before voting takes place the Presiding Bishop should announce the position to be filled, the names of the persons nominated and the number of votes each Member has (when more than one position has to be filled from the same list of nominations). After the vote the Presiding Bishop shall announce the result.

25 Unless otherwise specified, a quorum for any meeting is one more than half the Members. Decisions taken at a meeting when no quorum is present could be set aside if challenged in a court of law.

26 Conference may resolve ‘to meet in Committee’ whereupon only members of Conference may be present. Conference shall resume after adoption of the motion that ‘Conference now resumes, and the acts and decisions of Conference in committee be the acts and decisions of Conference’.
APPENDIX 5

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR SYNODS

ORDER OF OPENING

Devotions
Calling of the Roll
Appointment of Assistant Secretary
Appointment of Precentor
Appointment of Scrutineers
Appointment of Letter Writer
Appointment of Reporters
Presentation of all Necessary Papers
Resolution of the Hours of Session
Notices of Motion

1 MISSION

1.1 What measures can we adopt for the increase of Spiritual religion in our Circuits and Societies with special reference to:

1.1.1 deepening the spirituality of our members;
1.1.2 planning for mission and growth;
1.1.3 involvement of our lay people;
1.1.4 empowerment of the laity in church leadership;
1.1.5 effective expression of our life as a Church which is one and undivided?

1.2 What is the report of the year’s work in each Circuit?

1.3 What are the returns of Church membership from the Circuits?

1.4 Whom do we appoint Representatives to the Bible Society of Southern Africa?

1.5 What is the report and what are the recommendations of the District Executive?

1.6 What recommendations do we make and what mandate do we give to the District Executive for the extension of our work in the District?

1.7 Whom do we appoint to be members of the District Executive and of the other Committee(s) of the District?

1.8 What is the report on Youth work in the District?

1.8.1 What recommendations do we receive from or remit to the Youth Synod?

1.9 What is the report on Women’s work in the District?
1.10 What is the report on Men’s work in the District?

1.11 What is the report of the Church Choir Music Association?

1.12 What is the audited financial report of each organisation of this Unit?

1.13 What Assessment on the Circuits do we propose for the Units for the ensuing year?

1.14 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?

1.15 What is the judgement of Synod on the state of the work of God in this District?

2 EDUCATION FOR MINISTRY AND MISSION UNIT

2.1 What is the report of the Training for Ordained Ministries Section of this Unit?

2.2 What is the report of the Training for Lay Ministries Section of this Unit?

2.3 What is the audited financial statement of each organisation and department of this Unit?

2.4 What recommendations do we make to this Unit for the extension of our work in the District?

2.5 Whom do we appoint Supervisor of Studies in the District?

2.6 What is the report of any Theological College in the District?

2.7 What is the report of Synod concerning each Candidate for Ordination?

2.7.1 Report on Written Examinations
2.7.2 Report on Oral Examinations
2.7.3 Report on Trial Services
2.7.4 Report on District Supervisor of Studies
2.7.5 Report and recommendation of Superintendent

2.8 What Ministers do we recommend for admission into Full Connexion with Conference?

2.9 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?

2.10 What is the report of Synod concerning the examination of Probationers in the District?

2.10.1 Report on Written Examinations
2.10.2 Report on Oral Examinations
2.10.3 Report on Trial Services
2.10.4 Report on District Supervisor of Studies
2.10.5 Report and recommendation of Superintendent
2.11 Whom do we recommend to be continued on Probation for our Ministry?
2.12 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?
2.13 What Candidates for our Ministry do we recommend to the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit?

3 ORDERS

3.1 Order of Deacons

3.1.1 What Candidates for the Order of Deacons do we recommend to the Education for Ministry and Mission Unit?

3.2 Order of Evangelism

Evangelists

3.2.1 Has the question on Discipline been satisfactorily answered in the Local Preacher's Meeting by all Evangelists?
3.2.2 What Evangelists have retired since last Synod?
3.2.3 What Evangelists have died since last Synod?
3.2.4 Whom do we recommend as Candidates on Probation?
3.2.5 Are there special applications for the training of Evangelists in the ensuing year?

Biblewomen

3.2.6 Whom do we recommend as Candidates?
3.2.7 Whom do we accept as full members?
3.2.8 What Biblewomen have retired since the last Synod?
3.2.9 What Biblewomen have died since the last Synod?

4 LOCAL PREACHERS

4.1 What is the report on the state of Local Preaching in this District?
4.2 Has any Local Preacher in this District died?
4.3 Does any Local Preacher qualify for a Long-service Certificate?
4.4 What Assessment on the Circuits do we propose for this Unit for the ensuing year?
4.5 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?
4.6 Whom do we appoint to the Committee(s) of this Unit?
4.7 What is the report of the branch of the Book Room in the District?

5 THE ORDAINED MINISTRY

5.1 How can we care for our Ministers and their families?
5.2 How can we free our Ministers to exercise their calling to preach, teach and give spiritual guidance?
5.3 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?

5.4 Is there any objection to any Minister or Probationer?

5.4.1 Is there any objection to their moral and religious character?
5.4.2 Do you believe and teach sound Christian Doctrine as held by the Methodist Church?
5.4.3 Do you duly observe and enforce our discipline?
5.4.4 Have they competent abilities for our work?
5.4.5 Before any objection may be raised against the name of a minister in terms of para 5.4 the following shall apply:

a the objector has informed the minister before hand in the presence of a witness of the nature of the objection
b the objector has appraised the Bishop before hand of the intention and nature of the objection
c At no stage may these questions be used to humiliate any minister of the Church. Any person who misuses this procedure in a manner which vilifies any other person may be charged

5.4.6 Does Synod recommend that any Minister or Probationer Minister ceases to be recognised by the Connexional Executive?

Publication, Communication and Public Relations:

5.4.7 What is the report on Publication, Communication and Public Relations in the District?

5.4.7.1 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive?

6 GENERAL

The questions under this heading should, where possible, be dealt with by the District Executive for report to Synod.

Circuit and District Boundaries and Stationing Ministers:

6.1 Do we recommend any alteration in the District boundaries?

6.2 Do we authorise and record any alteration in the boundaries of existing Circuits?

6.3 Do we authorise the division of any Circuit or the amalgamation of any Circuits?

6.4 Do we approve and record any new stations?

6.5 Do we recommend to the Stationing Committee the appointment of an additional Minister or Probationer to any Circuit?
6.6 Do we recommend reducing the number of Ministers or Probationers in any Circuit?

6.7 What is the Draft of Stations of the Ministers of this District which we recommend to the Stationing Committee?

Special Institutions:

6.8 What are the reports relating to:

6.8.1 Children’s Homes in the District?
6.8.2 Homes for the Aged in the District?
6.8.3 Other caring Institutions?

Ministers:

6.9 What are the names and dates-of-birth of Ministers’ children born during the year?

6.10 What Supernumeraries and Ministers’ surviving spouses reside in the District? Have any removed, married, or died during the year?

6.11 Does Synod recommend that any Minister now becomes a Supernumerary?

6.12 What Ministers have married since the previous Synod?

6.13 Has any Minister died since the previous Synod?

6.14 What Ministers without Circuit appointment are resident in this District?

6.15 What are the reports on the work of seconded Ministers?

Finance:

6.16 What is the audited financial report of each organisation and department of this Unit?

6.17 What is the audited financial report of the respective Circuits and Institutions for the past year?

6.18 What is the amount of the contribution from each Circuit to the Mission and Extension Fund?

6.19 What grants from the Mission and Extension Fund does Synod make to the Circuits and Institutions?

6.20 Whom do we appoint the District Treasurer of the Mission and Extension Fund for the ensuing year?

6.21 What are the amounts contributed by the Circuits to the Ministerial Students’ Fund for the past year?
6.22 Whom do we appoint the District Treasurer of the Ministerial Students’ Fund for the ensuing year?

6.23 What bequests have been received?

6.24 What special Funds are administered by Synod and what is the report concerning them?

6.25 Whom do we appoint District Treasurer?

**Trust Property:**

6.26 What is the report and what are the suggestions of the Trust Properties Committee as to the condition of Connexional Property in the District?

6.27 What defects are there in title to or tenure of Connexional Property?

6.28 What Connexional Property has been acquired by purchase, grant or donation, and what property has been leased during the year?

6.29 What Connexional Property has been sold, mortgaged or let during the year?

6.30 What erection, enlargement, renovation, purchase, lease, sale or mortgage of Connexional Property has been approved during the year? What are the main points of each scheme?

6.31 What Churches, school-rooms, dwelling houses or other buildings have been erected or renovated during the year?

6.32 What renewals of permission have been granted during the year?

6.33 Is all Connexional Property adequately insured through the Connexional Office?

6.34 What joint trusts have been established or dissolved during the year and were our regulations observed in each case?

6.35 What is the Report on Glebes in this District?

6.36 What residences for Supernumerary Ministers are in the District?

6.37 What recommendations do we make to the Connexional Executive in regard to Connexional Property?

6.38 Whom do we appoint Secretary and members of the District Trust Properties Committee?

**ELECTIONS**

7.1 What Minister do we elect Bishop, to take office after the end of next year?

7.2 What Minister do we elect Vice-Chairperson for a term of three years?
7.3 What Minister do we appoint District Secretary for a term of three years?

7.4 Whom do we appoint Statistical Secretary of the District?

7.5 Whom do we appoint as District Discipline Registrar and as members and Convener of the District Disciplinary Committee?

7.6 Whom do we elect Representatives, and Alternates for Representatives of this District, to the Connexional Executive?

7.7 Whom do we elect Representatives, and Alternates for Representatives of this District, to the ensuing Conference?

8 MISCELLANEOUS

8.1 What reports does the Connexional Executive require from Synod?

8.2 What matters are referred by the Connexional Executive or Conference to Synod? What is our judgement thereon?

8.3 What is our report concerning the suggestions and recommendations of the Quarterly Meetings on the subjects remitted to them by the Connexional Executive or Conference?

8.4 What New Legislation, adopted by the Connexional Executive, is now submitted to Synod? What is our judgement thereon?

8.5 What other miscellaneous resolutions do we adopt?

8.6 When and where shall the next Synod be held?

9 CLOSING CEREMONIES

9.1 What are our resolutions arising from the customary reading of the 'Resolutions on Pastoral Work' and the 'Twelve Rules of a Helper' (Appendices 2 & 3)

ORDER OF CLOSING

Thanks
Confirmation of Minutes
Hymn
Prayer
Benediction
APPENDIX 6

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR YOUTH SYNODS

Devotions
Calling of the Roll
Appointment of Recording Secretary,
Precentor, Scrutineers and Letter Writer
Notices of Motion

1 MISSION

1.1 What is the report on Sunday School work?
1.2 What resolutions do we adopt on Sunday School work?
1.3 What is the report on Wesley Guilds?
1.4 What resolutions do we adopt on Wesley Guilds?
1.5 What other reports do we receive on youth work?
1.6 What other resolutions do we adopt on mission work among youth?

2 MATTERS REFERRED BY AND TO THE YOUTH SYNOD

2.1 What resolutions do we refer to the Synod of this District?
2.2 What matters are referred by Synod to the Youth Synod?
2.3 What matters are referred by the Connexional Executive or Conference to the Youth Synod?

3 ELECTIONS

3.1 Whom do we elect as representatives to Synod?
3.2 Whom do we elect as representatives to the Connexional Youth Consultation?
3.3 Whom do we elect as representatives to Conference?
3.4 Whom do we recommend to Synod for election to the District Youth Committee?
3.5 Whom do we nominate to the Synod as District Co-ordinator?

4 ADMINISTRATION

4.1 What audited financial reports do we receive?
4.2 What other reports do we receive?
4.3 What other administrative matters do we attend to?
4.4 When and where will the next Youth Synod be held?

ORDER OF CLOSING

Thanks
Confirmation of Minutes
Bible Reading and Prayer
Benediction
APPENDIX 7

ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR THE CONVOCATION
OF THE DIACONAL ORDER

ORDER OF OPENING

Devotions
Calling of the Roll
Appointment of Secretary, Scrutineers, Letter Writer, Reporter
Presentation of all Necessary Papers
Resolution of the Hours of Session
Notices of Motion

The Minutes of the previous Convocation shall be considered for adoption.

QUESTIONS

1  Is there an objection to any Deacon or Probationer?

1.1  Is there an objection to their moral and religious character?
1.2  Do they believe and preach our doctrines?
1.3  Have they duly observed and enforced our discipline?
1.4  Have they competent abilities for our work?

2  Have the directions of the Connexional Executive as to the places of residence of Deacons been observed?

3  What Deacons have married since the previous Convocation?

4  Has any Deacon resigned?

5  Has any Deacon died?

6  Does this Convocation recommend that any Deacon ceases to be recognised by the Connexional Executive?

7  Does this Convocation recommend that any Deacon retires?

8  Has any Deacon entered into business during the year?

9  Has any Deacon whose name is not recorded in the Connexional Yearbook come to reside in the Connexion?

10  What Deacons without Circuit appointment are in the Connexion?

11  What is the report of the Convocation on the Examinations of Probationers?
12 What is the report of the Convocation on each candidate for ordination?
13 Whom do we recommend for ordination?
14 What training shall each Probationer receive?
15 Whom do we recommend for reception as Probationers?
16 Whom do we nominate to the Connexional Executive for appointment as Warden of the Order?
17 What matters are referred by the Connexional Executive to the Convocation and what is our judgement on them?
18 Has the Convocation any suggestions to offer through the Connexional Committee to the Connexional Executive?
19 Is there any other business?

Hymn
Prayer
Benediction
APPENDIX 8

CIRCUIT QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The business to be transacted at each Quarterly Meeting includes:

1. Opening devotions.


3. Discussion of ways of extending the mission of the Church in the Circuit, including the staffing of the Circuit.

4. What measures can we adopt for the increase of Spiritual religion in our Societies with special reference to:
   - deepening the spirituality of our members;
   - making clear plans for mission and growth;
   - full involvement of our lay people;
   - effective expression of our life as a Church which is one and undivided;
   - how can we serve the community and each other;
   - how can we set our Minister(s) free for the most important work of ministry?

5. Confirmation of the Minutes of the previous Meeting.

6. Consideration of matters arising from the Minutes.


8. The mandate to be given to each Mission Group.


10. Any other business.

11. Date and place of the next meeting.

N.B: Invitations to Ministers may be introduced at any Quarterly Meeting but not later than the April Meeting prior to the year to which the Invitation applies.

The following special business should be dealt with at the Meeting indicated:

**JANUARY**

12. Circuit Reports to Synod including 4C schedule.

14. Election of Representatives to Synod.
15. Election of a Representative to Conference.

**OCTOBER**

17. Election of Secretary of Quarterly Meeting.

**N.B:** In all elections nominations are received from any member of the meeting, and then voted on.

In addition, the following business is dealt with annually at the appropriate meeting:

19. Election or re-election of Mission Groups to do the work of the Circuit.
22. Consideration of matters referred by Conference, the Connexional Executive or Synod.
23. Election of Circuit Treasurer, if necessary.
25. Appointment of Circuit Treasurer for the Ministerial Students’ Fund.
26. Appointment of lay staff and review of their accommodation and conditions of employment.
APPENDIX 9

CIRCUIT LOCAL PREACHERS’ QUARTERLY MEETINGS

The business to be transacted at each Local Preachers’ Quarterly Meeting (see Chapter 10) includes:

1. What is the state of the Work of God in the Circuit as it relates to the work of the Local Preachers?

2. How can we further prepare ourselves and improve our Gospel preaching, so that the Gospel may come to the people ‘not in word only, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit’?

3. Consideration and adoption of the Minutes of the previous Meeting.

4. Is there any objection to a Local Preacher or Evangelist in the Circuit? (The names are read).

4.1 Is there any objection to their moral and religious character? (Any objection is to be referred to the relevant Society Leaders’ Meeting for attention).

4.2 Is there any objection on the ground that they do not believe and preach our doctrines? (Preachers answer this question for themselves but others may object or enquire).

4.3 Is there any objection on the ground that they do not observe our Discipline or faithfully keep their preaching appointments?

4.4 Have they competent abilities for our work? (This question includes efficiency and general acceptance as well as other competence).

5. Has any Local Preacher died during the quarter?

6. Has any Local Preacher resigned?

7. Has any Local Preacher removed to another Circuit? If so, to what Circuit and has the transfer been duly made?

8. Has any Local Preacher moved into this Circuit?

9. Is anyone now on Trial to be received as a Local Preacher on Full Plan?

10. Who are continued on Trial? (The names of the Local Preachers on Trial are to be entered in the Minutes, with the number of Quarters each has been on Trial).

11. Who are received on Trial?
12 Does this Meeting recommend that anyone receives from the Superintendent a Note to preach?

13 What is the report on those who are on Note?

14 Who is appointed Supervisor of the studies of Preachers on Trial or on Note?

15 What five Local Preachers do we elect as our representatives to the Circuit Quarterly Meeting?

16 Are there any matters relating to the Connexional or District Local Preachers’ Committee which require the attention of the Meeting?

17 Does the Meeting recommend the opening of any new Preaching Place?

18 Does the Meeting recommend that the Circuit Quarterly Meeting closes any Preaching Place?

When and where shall the next Meeting be held?
PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING A PRESIDING BISHOP

1 When an election is to be held for a Presiding Bishop, the Synods shall all meet on the same day, as determined by the Connexional Executive.

2 At a time set by the Connexional Executive the Synods shall vote by ballot, without nomination, for a Presiding Bishop.

3 Probationers in our Colleges, though not at Synod, may vote in the election for a Presiding Bishop.

4 A signed copy of the full result of the ballot shall be transmitted immediately to the office of the Executive Secretary.

5 The Connexional Executive shall ensure that the reception and collation of the results is done in the presence of at least two persons beside the Executive Secretary. Such two persons shall be present throughout the process until a Presiding Bishop-elect has been elected.

6 Results not received three hours after voting was due to commence in the Synods shall not be counted. The Secretary shall immediately remit to each Synod by telefax, failing which by telephone, the aggregate results of the voting of all the Synods.

7 The Synods shall then, if necessary, immediately vote a second time and transmit the result of the ballot to the Executive Secretary.

8 The Secretary shall immediately remit to each Synod by telefax, failing which by telephone, the aggregate results of the voting of all the Synods.

9 The Synods shall vote for the final time on the two persons who received the greatest number of votes and convey the results to the Secretary.

10 The person who obtains the majority is the Presiding Bishop-elect.

11 If a Candidate receives an absolute majority of all votes cast after any round of voting there is no need for further voting and that person shall be Presiding Bishop-elect.

12 If the Executive Secretary at any stage receives votes during a ballot, the Executive Secretary shall forthwith rescues him/herself from the rest of the election process, which process shall then be overseen by the two persons in 5 above.

13 If a District Bishop receives votes during a ballot, such Bishop shall forthwith hand over the chair for the voting process the Vice-Chairperson of the District or to some other person at Synod, who has not received any votes during the ballot.
APPENDIX 11

PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING A BISHOP

1 The election or re-election of a Bishop shall take place at Synod in the second-last year of the incumbent Bishop’s current term of office.

2 The District Secretary shall invite all Members in good standing in the District to submit to the Executive Secretary, before the end of March, their unseconded nomination for any Minister in full connexion, whether or not in the District concerned. Anyone who receives two such nominations qualifies for further consideration.

3 The Executive Secretary shall ascertain whether each such nominee is available for election. No person shall declare at the same time availability to be elected Bishop in two Districts. A Minister who is in breach of this rule shall be disqualified for election in that year as Bishop in any District.

4 Nominees who declare their availability shall submit to the District Secretary a Curriculum Vitae on a form supplied by the Executive Secretary. The District Secretary shall supply each member of Synod with a copy of each Curriculum Vitae.

5 No discussion of nominees shall be allowed in the Synod.

6 The Synod shall proceed to vote by ballot. The Required Majority for a nominee to be elected is 50% of the votes cast plus one vote, except that the Required Majority for an incumbent Bishop who has already served 3 terms of office is 75% of the votes cast in the first ballot. If such incumbent Bishop does not obtain 75% of the votes cast in the first ballot he/she ceases to be eligible for election in a subsequent ballot.

7 If no nominee secures the Required Majority in the first ballot, Synod shall vote again on the three persons who secured the greatest number of votes in the first ballot. A nominee who secures the Required Majority in the second ballot is thereby elected.

8 If no nominee secures the Required Majority in the second ballot, the two nominees who secured most votes on the second ballot go forward to a third ballot. In the third ballot, whoever receives a simple majority of votes cast shall be elected.

9 If there are only two nominees to begin with, and the incumbent Bishop who has already served three terms is one of them and he/she does not obtain the Required Majority in the first ballot as stated above in para 6, the candidate other than the incumbent Bishop shall be deemed to have been elected.

The Conference retains the right to veto the election of a Bishop by a Synod, in which case Conference shall, mutatis mutandis, follow the above procedure in making the election. In such an event the Bishop-elect shall not be eligible to be a candidate in the fresh election.
APPENDIX 12

PROCEDURE FOR ELECTING THE LAY PRESIDENT

1. the election of the Lay President shall take place at Conference.

2. each Synod shall be required to make a nomination to the Secretary of Conference. Such nomination must be accompanied by a completed CV.

3. the Secretary of Conference shall supply each member of Conference with a copy of the CV of the nominees.

4. no discussion of the nominees shall be allowed on the floor of Conference.

5. the Conference shall proceed to vote. The required majority for election is 50% of the votes cast plus one. In the case of any nominee who is serving a current term, the required majority for election is 75% of the votes cast.

6. Nomination procedure:

6.1 Circuits to nominate Candidates by 31st March to the District Office. Such candidates shall be interviewed by a Committee appointed by the District Executive. A report on each nominee shall be made at Synod.

6.2 Synods may nominate any member in the Connexion.

6.3 the proposer shall brief Synod on the person nominated and answer any questions for clarification.

6.4 the nominee who secures the greatest number of votes cast becomes the Synod’s nominee to Conference.
PROCEDURE FOR THE ELECTION OF THE SECRETARY OF CONFERENCE

1. The election of the Secretary of Conference shall take place at Conference.

2. No discussion of names shall be allowed in the Conference.

3. The Conference shall proceed to vote. The Required Majority for election is 50% of the votes cast plus one vote.

4. If no person secures the Required Majority in the first ballot, Conference shall vote again on the three persons who secure the greatest number of votes in the first ballot.

5. If no nominee secures the Required Majority in the second ballot, the two nominees who secured the most votes on the second ballot go forward to a third ballot. In the third ballot, whoever receives a simple majority of votes cast shall be elected.
APPENDIX 14

MEDIATION AND ARBITRATION PROCESSES

1 Mediation

1.1 Connexional Panel

i a Connexional panel (hereafter ‘the mediation panel’) of not less than 5 persons but not more than 9 persons must be appointed by Conference. The Conference shall establish criteria for the appointment of such persons.

ii the mediation panel must serve in that capacity at the pleasure of Conference.

iii there shall be a Convener of the mediation panel appointed by Conference.

iv all disbursements of the panellists in the exercise of their mediatory service shall be borne by the Connexion at the rates determined by the General Treasurers from time to time.

1.2 Referral to the mediation panel and procedure

i Society, Circuit and District Structures are encouraged to try and resolve disputes or conflicts internally whenever these arise

ii a matter must be referred to the mediation panel by the Presiding Bishop or the Convener of the Arbitration Panel. Once a matter has been referred to the Convener of the mediation panel, the Convener of the mediation panel, after consultation with the District Bishop, shall decide whether a dispute must be referred to the mediation panel or to a District/Circuit/Society structure or any other forum/process for mediation. If the said Bishop is party to the dispute the Presiding Bishop must take the Bishop’s place. If the Presiding Bishop is a party to the dispute then the Secretary of Conference shall take the place of the District Bishop.

iii in the event of the Convener of the mediation panel referring the dispute to a Society/Circuit or District structure for mediation or any other process which might be called for and the matter is not resolved, the matter can thereafter once again be referred to the mediation panel for mediation.

iv the Convener of the mediation panel shall determine if a mediation requires more than one of the panellists.

v the person/s presiding over the mediation shall follow whatever procedure they deem necessary to settle the matter by mediation. Similarly they may give any directions to the parties they deem necessary.

vi at the end of the mediation the panellists/s must submit a report of the
outcome of the mediation to the Convener of the mediation panel and the Bishop of the District. This must be done within 5 days of the process being completed.

vii if mediation fails the matter must be referred forthwith back to the Presiding Bishop or the Convener of the Arbitration Panel by the Convener of the Mediation Panel depending on who referred the matter to the Mediation Panel. If it is referred back to the Convener of the Arbitration Panel, then the Convener of the Arbitration Panel’s ruling at this stage, even if the matter does not go to arbitration, shall be final and binding on all members of the Church. If the matter is referred back to the Presiding Bishop, the Presiding Bishop shall decide on the future conduct of the matter which shall include, but not be limited to, referring the dispute to the Convener of the Arbitration Panel.

viii where one party refuses to be part of the mediation process or refuses to co-operate in the mediation process, the convener of the mediation panel may use such refusal as a basis for finding that the mediation process has failed and may then refer it to Arbitration.

ix the Convener of the mediation panel (and any other panellist) shall not divulge anything, which was said or done or handed in during the mediation process, to the Convener of the Arbitration Panel in the event of the matter being referred back to the said Convener.

2 Arbitration

The Arbitration Act, 1965 shall apply to all arbitrations in the MCSA.

2.1 Panel

i a Connexional panel (hereafter ‘the Arbitration Panel’) of not less than 3 persons and not more than 5 persons shall be appointed by Conference. The Conference shall establish criteria for the appointment of such persons.

ii there shall be a Convener of this panel appointed by Conference.

iii all disbursements of the panellists in the exercise of their arbitration services shall be borne by the Connexion at the rates determined by the General Treasurers from time to time.

2.2 Referral and procedure

i any member or minister may refer a matter to the Convener the Arbitration Panel.

ii the Convener shall determine and clarify what the issues are from the party/ies. The Convener shall hereafter decide what the correct forum or process is for the matter. The Convener’s decision in this regard shall be binding on all members of the church.
If it is not arbitration, the Convener shall direct how the matter shall be dealt with and/or refer the matter to the correct Church forum, which shall include but not be limited to mediation. If arbitration is the correct forum, the Convener shall finalise a written arbitration agreement which both parties shall sign. If either party refuses to sign the said agreement, the Convener shall have the power to sign on their behalf. If the Convener is to be the arbitrator in the particular matter, the said Convener shall designate another arbitrator to this responsibility.

iii the arbitrator shall follow whatever procedure is deemed necessary to arrive at a decision. The Convener shall have the power to make and issue directives as to the procedures to be followed at any stage of the process, inclusive of the initial referral of the matter to him/her.

iv all members of the church shall be obliged to co-operate fully with the arbitrator, including but not limited to, the giving of evidence and the production of documentary evidence.

v the disbursements of witnesses shall be covered as in 2.1 iii above where the Arbitrator deems it appropriate.

vi the arbitrator’s decision shall be final and binding on all members and structures of the church.

vii unless agreed to otherwise by the parties, the arbitrator shall submit a ruling with reasons to the Presiding Bishop and parties involved within 7 days of the completion of the arbitration hearing.

viii no legal representation shall be allowed at the arbitration.

ix the Convener shall decide whether more than one arbitrator is necessary for an arbitration.
MISCELLANEOUS
CONFERENCE
RESOLUTIONS
OF
THE METHODIST CHURCH
OF
SOUTHERN AFRICA
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1985 – 2005

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1 MISCELLANEOUS CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS:

1.1 TITHING AND PLANNED GIVING

1.1.1 Conference recognises that there is a need to increase the financial, material and manpower resources of the church in order to meet the increasing needs and demands placed upon the church and its people, not least of which is the necessity to increase the basic minimum stipends of ministers to a reasonable level.

1.1.2 Furthermore, believing in the principle of Stewardship that every material thing we possess actually belongs to God and that when we plan our giving to God’s church we are setting aside for His work a portion of His resources that has been entrusted to us, Conference strongly urges

1.1.2.1 that in order to achieve more reasonable levels of financial and other commitments by members, Circuits and Societies actively organise Scripturally based education and Stewardship training programme utilising the material and people available in the Mission Department’s divisions of Evangelism, Holiness and Stewardship;

1.1.2.2 that the Methodist Church of Southern Africa move close to the Biblical example of the Stewardship of money, namely, giving on a proportional, sacrificial and regular basis.

Conference commends to all our people the practice of tithing and calls on every Methodist to give serious consideration to adopting such a practice as part of their commitment to Jesus Christ;

1.1.2.3 that the doctrine of tithing be proclaimed throughout our Church and that where members prayerfully consider that they are unable to achieve this level that they are unable to contribute weekly a minimum of one hour of their weekly income to the church, or alternatively a minimum of 2.5% of their income.

1.1.3 The Societies and Circuits which are responsible for the finances of Societies therein be requested to accept as their responsibility to the overall budget of Connexional needs, an amount not less than 10% (a tithe) of the total income, and urged to reach the target as soon as possible.

1.2 USE OF GLEBES

In the light of the responsibility the Church has for the various pieces of land under its controls, Conference resolves that:

1.2.1 no further alienation of Glebe lands be permitted;

1.2.2 the necessary steps be taken to secure all boundaries and fence all Glebes;
1.2.3 Glebes be developed as far as possible for the benefit of the whole community;

1.2.4 all matters affecting relationships with Government authorities be referred to the Chairman of the District concerned;

1.2.5 that Glebe committees continue to consult with Government authorities in matters involving the development and use of Glebes;

1.2.6 the Mission and the Christian Citizenship Departments together organise further consultations together organise further consultations and seminars on the development of Glebe lands;

1.2.7 all Circuits with Glebe lands to report annual to the Missionary Department.

1.3 CAPITAL PUNISHMENT

The Conference considers capital punishment to be contrary to the Christian Gospel and calls on the Government of the Republic of South Africa, Mocambique, Botswana, Lesotho, Swaziland, Transkei, Bophutatswana, Ciskei and Venda to set up commissions of inquiry to investigate the desirability of abolishing capital punishment. The Conference resolves to invite other Christian Churches to join this call to these Governments and make the Study Document on Capital Punishment available to such Churches.

1.4 CENTRAL AND INNER CITY MISSION

Conference recognising that Central City and Inner City Churches have a specialised mission and Missionary distinct from the suburban style, resolves:

1.4.1 that selected congregations be designated Central Methodist Missions and Inner-City Methodist Missions, charged with developing ministries to all people in the central and inner city;

1.4.2 that they be staffed where possible with multi-racial ministry teams and that the senior minister in such missions be given sufficient tenure to develop effective long-term projects of ministry to the city;

1.4.3 that such missions be considered as missionary endeavours of the whole Church, authorised to raise financial support beyond their own membership, as is the practice with other mission projects in Methodism;

1.4.4 that they be permitted to appoint up to five persons from other Methodist Societies to their Leaders’ Meetings or Church Council;

1.4.5 that suburban churches be encouraged to develop dynamic links with the work of the Church in the city;
1.4.6 that Central Methodist Missions and Inner-City Methodist Missions be designated as such in the list of stations, upon the recommendation of any District Synod in whose area the work is situated in consultation with the Mission Department.

1.5 **DEFINITION OF SOCIETY AND PREACHING PLACE**

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

1.5.1 a Society must have a Society Steward

1.5.2 a Society should have at least 15 Full Members

1.5.3 a Society should have at least one Class Leader with a functioning class

1.5.4 a Society should ideally be able to do its own bookkeeping

Conference emphasises that these are merely guidelines, not rules.

1.6 **ALCOHOL**

1.6.1 Conference is deeply perturbed by the increasing disregard of the ‘Principle of Abstinence’.

1.6.2 In the light of the three-fold obligation as Christians – a commitment to God, love for one’s neighbour and self-discipline:

   The conference draws the attention of Methodist to the fact that alcoholic indulgence impairs conscience, judgement and the sense of responsibility of the individual;

   1.6.2.1 alcoholic indulgence inflicts heavy loss and damage to the community, through deterioration of character, health, efficiency and discord in family life, as well as intensifying poverty within the society;

   1.6.2.2 there is undue influence of the Liquor Trade on public affairs;

   The Conference therefore urges our Ministers and Laity to promote by word and example the advantages of an alcohol free way of life.

   Conference directs Superintendent Ministers to ensure that their candidates for the ministry are made aware of the dangers of alcohol.

   1.6.2.4 The Conference calls upon our Ministers and Laity to remain faithful to the principle of Total Abstinence, and directs that wherever possible visual aid be used in order effectively to educate our members concerning the dangers and implications of drinking alcoholic beverages.
1.6.2.5 Conference further directs that these statements be brought to the attention of all our people on Temperance Sunday.

1.7 CHRISTIAN LOVE AND OBEDIENCE (Racism)

The Conference notes with the deepest distress the state of the nations, especially at this time.

Conference affirms that Christians can contribute to a solution of South Africa’s problems with true Christian obedience, especially to Christ’s commandment to ‘love one another, even as I have loved you’, and calls on all Methodists to actively demonstrate this love in their public business and private lives by inter alia, and wherever practical:

1.7.1 identifying, and then affirming and supporting, all organisations and businesses which have publicly and effectively done away with all forms of discrimination in their employment, customer/client relations, and public pronouncements;

1.7.2 pressurising, in love, all organisations and businesses which are not striving toward these goals;

1.7.3 utilising every opportunity to establish and develop personal relationships with members of other races, especially fellow Methodists.

Conference further notes that Christ’s love was effective, and involved faith and self-sacrifice and encourages all Methodists to be mindful of the example of their Saviour at this time.

1.8 CHANGING RACIAL ATTITUDES

Conference notes with growing concern that we are living in a racially separated society which is characterised by discrimination, suspicion and prejudice. It recognises that this is in large measure the result of our bondage to personal and corporate selfishness, and can only be changed as individuals and communities are liberated by Jesus Christ from such bondage. In order to help us work out the consequences of personal liberation in Christ for our life in society, it directs:

1.8.1 that the Christian Citizenship Department, the Christian Education and Youth Department and the Missionary Department (in consultation with the Justice and Reconciliation Committee) provide suitable material and training to assist this task.

1.8.2 that the existence of segregated institutions for the training of our ministry compromises our unity and retards the ideals of Justice and Reconciliation in our Church.

1.8.3 that there be regular programmes of contact across racial barriers for our students in theological training and that they receive regular
instruction in Christian attitudes to race and refers both of these matters to those in charge of theological training.

1.9 CHURCH RECORDS

Conference resolved that Superintendent Ministers ensure that Probationer Ministers in their charge are duly instructed in the laws regarding Marriages and the keeping of Registers of Baptisms.

1.10 TRANSFER OF CHURCH MEMBERS

1.10.1 Conference urged all our Ministers to exercise the utmost care in transferring members from one Circuit to another, and called upon all Superintendents to ensure that our long-established practice in this connection is carefully observed.

1.10.2 Conference resolved that where full members leave home Circuits to take up temporary domicile at University, Training College or School, or to undergo Military Training, their Church membership be retained at the home Circuit and that Superintendents of those Circuits where there is temporary domicile of such members be sent advice of such domicile and not Removal Notes.

1.10.3 Notwithstanding para 2, in the case of Methodist Hostels, Schools and Training hospitals, the membership of students may be held in the institution or local Circuit as decided by the home Circuit.

1.10.4 Conference resolved that the matter of the pastoral care of students in the hostels of our Schools and Institutions be enquired into at each Annual District Synod.

1.10.5 Conference instructed Superintendents to make provision for the pastoral care of refugees who may be within their Circuits.

1.11 GEOGRAPHIC CIRCuits PROGRAMME

Conference adopts the report of the Department on the progress of the Geographic Circuits Programme.

1.11.1 Conference reaffirms its conviction that the visible and structural unity of our people is the will of God and that it reflects the mind of Christ in his prayer that ‘they all be one; ... that the world may believe that you sent me’ (John 17:21), and asserts that:

- racially integrated Circuits and Societies are a natural expression of the true Church of Christ, and an integral part of our mission strategy;
- it is consistent with our mission policy of ‘becoming a one-and-undivided Church’ (Conference 1958);
- the Geographic Circuits Programme is an important step in this direction.
1.11.2 Conference recognises that:

the uni-racial nature of most of our Circuits can be attributed to a number of factors. Such as the historical development of the Church along parallel lines as a ‘Mission Church’, language barriers, distinctive forms of worship, as well as the results of worship, as exacerbated by the oppressive policy of Apartheid;

the suffering of the majority of our Members as a result of racial prejudice and Apartheid has necessitated their solidarity in the ongoing struggle for the justice and liberation which can lead to reconciliation in South Africa.

1.11.3 Conference nevertheless believe that non racial Circuits and Societies, because they express the essential nature of the Church, and the reconciliation which Christ has won for all the Creation, are an essential part of the Church’s prophetic witness in the struggle for justice, liberation and reconciliation in this divided land.

1.11.4 Conference resolves that the term ‘Geographic Circuit’ be defined as a Circuit consisting of all Societies in a geographic area without regard for race. Because the Group Areas Act effectively separated our people in many places, Conference calls upon Districts and Circuit to cross racial and natural barriers where possible when forming Geographic Circuits.

1.11.5 Conference notes that various levels of progress toward Geographic Circuit status attained by our Circuits.

Conference commends those Circuits which have struggled through in trust and obedience to the establishment of Geographic Circuits. Conference applauds and encourages the Circuits where they process of becoming one and undivided has extended to Societies within the Circuit.

Conference notes that some Circuits have become Geographic, but that the process has stalled at the level of Circuit Administration and little is being achieved in bringing local Society members together in true unity.

Conference expresses its deep concern that some Circuits, often not far removed from Methodists of other races, have made little or not progress towards Geographic Circuit status.

Conference recognises that unrest and other circumstances have delayed this process in some well-intentioned Circuits.

Conference reminds those Circuits which are avoiding becoming geographic, and particularly the Ministers and Circuit Stewards involved, that as resurrection is possible only after crucifixion, so the new Church in a new South Africa will emerge only from costly struggle, in obedience and sacrifice.
1.12 THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS

1.12.1 Conference calls on all Methodists to co-operate with environmental organisations in their attempts to alert the public through a vigorous education campaign to the urgency and extent of the ecological problem and to actions that can be taken to deal with it, and to save our environment by reducing pollution, waste and destruction of the ozone layer.

Conference requests Societies to monitor environmental issues in their areas and to publicise and oppose any moves which could displace people as has happened in Bushmanland where people were removed to allow the dumping of nuclear waste; and to embark on programmes of action to save our earth and to report through Quarterly Meetings to Synods.

1.13 PASTORAL CARE OF DISPLACED PERSONS

Conference instructs Circuits in which displacees or refugees (from the present violence) temporarily reside to pastor them under the same conditions as students, ie not requiring them to transfer their membership from their home Circuit.

1.14 NAMING OF INSTITUTIONS

Conference resolves that no Methodist Building be named without the sanction of the Synod or the Bishop.

1.15 MEMBERSHIP RECORDS

Conference resolves that permanent records be kept of all persons received into full membership.

1.16 ABORTION

Conference affirms the Christian view of the sanctity of human life as a God-given gift; recognises the considerable divergence of opinion among Christians of the issue of abortion, especially in circumstances of deprivation and trauma; believes that it is morally wrong to use abortion as a means of birth control; and acknowledges that the issue is complicated by social circumstances;

Conference resolves:

to encourage Societies to provide counselling and support both to those who are struggling to decide whether or not to have an abortion and to those who have made such a decision.

to continue to study and discuss the issue of abortion and the appropriate response to legislation on the subject, bearing in mind the need to
consider the right of women to make decisions about their own body, the interests of the father, and the rights of the foetus.

that any body making recommendations on proposed legislation consist of a majority of women and be fully representative of all viewpoints.

1.17 **GUIDELINES FOR INTERFAITH OBSERVANCES**

1.17.1 *Principles*

1.17.1.1 The existence of different faiths in our countries is recognised and accepted;

1.17.1.2 While these faiths differ fundamentally in doctrine, understanding and practice, there are occasions when they can act jointly because of a common goal;

1.17.1.3 These common goals such as striving for peace and justice, the preservation of the environment, family life and facing some major crisis or calamity may be formed at both national as well as at local and civic levels;

1.17.1.4 The installation of leaders representing national and local communities are other such occasions;

1.17.1.5 Christian may find that joint observations by different religions would compromise their faith and in particular the unique claims that are made of Jesus Christ. There is ample biblical support for the exclusive acknowledgement of the one Lord God and of God’s Son, Jesus Christ;

1.17.1.6 The Bible nevertheless witnesses to a developing understanding of God and that this monotheistic understanding may be found among those who do not believe in Jesus Christ;

1.17.1.7 Interfaith observance can never be fully corporate. Yet meeting for a common purpose is one act of solidarity. Having a time of silence is another. The offering of prayers, readings and songs by each faith in serial is a way in which all can participate without expecting agreement from those of other faiths;

1.17.1.8 Meeting on neutral territory makes it easier, as the premises of one particular religion are bound to appear preferential and its constitution may disallow it.

1.17.2 *Steps to be taken*

1.17.2.1 The purpose of the occasion should be made clear in the introduction. All present must be assured that they are to feel free to take part or merely be present as members of the community;

1.17.2.2 Each inter-faith observance needs to have a specific purpose and not be for the proselytising of people of other faiths;
1.17.2.3 Care should be taken to ensure that such observances are not supporting a controversial political issue or implying support of a new inter-faith religion. Neither should they include elements from many religions or a lowest common denominator of them all;

1.17.2.4 It is important to be sensitive and allow everyone present to express the workshop of God in a way that is honest in experience and understanding;

1.17.2.5 No part of the observance should be designed so that people will feel obliged to participate in responses;

1.17.2.6 The venue for each observance should be carefully selected. A cathedral or large local church may be seen as the focal point of the community but Christian symbols may be offensive to many present and give the impression that the Christian faith is propagated. There are churches within the Christian faith that forbid observances to be held on their premises unless they are of a Christian nature;

1.17.2.7 A neutral venue such as a City Hall would allow people of different faiths to meet on equal terms;

1.17.2.8 Readings from the sacred writings of each participating religion may be presented. These readings, which could include poetry, should be appropriate to the occasion and helpful, without being offensive to other who are participating. The readers should be people of that particular faith; discretion should be exercised when civic dignitaries are expected to participate. Such readings may be followed by a time of silent reflection and prayer according to each tradition;

1.17.2.9 Prayers may be offered from a particular tradition or be universal in intention. It may be appropriate for the congregation to join in saying a prayer such as that attributed to St Francis of Assisi or another of similarly wide acceptability.

   Silent reflection and prayer according to each tradition might be the most acceptable. This avoids the possibility that the prayers become either amorphous or syncretistic and allows Christians to be faithful to the Good News of Christianity.

1.17.2.10 Music items may be included, preferably without words. Music is always a good aid to meditation;

1.17.2.11 Serial multi-faith observances permit people to be present at each others’ observance without necessarily taking part. Each observance is complete in itself and people of other faiths are present without feeling obliged to take part. A variation could include a multi-faith pilgrimage from one place of worship to another;

1.17.2.12 Symbolism should be handled with great care. It would be unwise to include Baptism or the Eucharist in a Christian observance, but the lighting of candles or the giving of flowers and the exchanging of appropriate greetings, for instance ‘Peace be with you’, would probably be acceptable without causing offence.
1.18 POLITICS AND RELIGION

Conference received as an interim measure, the following Guidelines for the Church in relation to matters of a political nature:

It is our belief that the lordship of Christ extends to all of life, including the political, social and economic areas of our existence.

In this regard, we reaffirm on the basis of Romans 13 that ‘there is no authority except from God’, and that where rules are obedient to the law of God we are obliged to obey them. We further reaffirm that it is incumbent upon us in all matters to obey God rather than humans (Acts 5:29). It is clearly as wrong to quote a part of Romans 13 in the nature of the rule of such authority, is ‘of God’, as it is to quote Revelation 13, in isolation from all other Scripture, to suggest that all government authority is the incarnation of evil as symbolised by the beast.

Where it is the considered and prayerful conviction of the courts of our Church or its leaders that the government of the day is acting contrary to the declared purpose of God, they are constrained to minister both to the government and to the people of this land by declaring what in their informed and considered opinion is hurtful and sinful about a particular policy or practice.

In so doing, The Methodist Church of Southern Africa, in keeping with its theological tradition, needs to act cautiously and humbly but also resolutely and in obedience to Scripture and its understanding of the will of God in this situation. The Wesleyan tradition is clear: ‘The distinguishing marks of a Methodist are not his opinions of any sort. We think and let think’. In this spirit, we recognise that there are widely differing interpretations of the precise way in which the justice of God may be manifest in political or economic structures. Yet precisely because of the Incarnation the Church is to guard against making pronouncements which are merely of an ethereal and abstract nature, remote from the stubborn concreteness of life. It is therefore obliged from time to time to express its mind on specific political and economic matters. It does not decree in an absolutist or in uncompromisingly prescriptive manner. Rather it does so with tolerance, understanding, and mutual respect for all who seek to live responsibly before God but disagree with the mind of the Church at that particular time.

Methodists, in common with Christians throughout the ages and in all parts of the world, hold to certain essential and non-negotiable beliefs concerning human existence under God. Where and when the situation requires it, Methodists are obliged before God to affirm and strive for the ideals of human dignity, justice and equity. Conference has in recent times felt itself compelled under the Gospel to make such affirmations and in the light thereof to condemn certain practices and laws of this land in the strongest possible way. In doing so, we acknowledge that these are our interpretations of the will of God which are offered as a responsible contribution toward the welfare of our society. We need to continue to search our minds and be open to
further persuasion, but we dare not neglect our responsibility in proclaiming the political, together with other, implications of the Gospel in society today.

Each Methodist is called upon to appreciate the spirit in which such resolutions are made, to note their content and background, and to understand why our Church has felt obliged to express itself on a particular issue at a particular time.

1.19 **RETIRED OF MINISTERS**

Conference sets a normal, maximum retirement age of 65. Ministers who wish to continue beyond that age should apply to the Connexional Executive, which will involve a review of performance.

1.20 **MEMBERSHIP OF POLITICAL PARTIES BY MINISTERS**

The Church has an obligation to act as mediator on behalf of God in society and therefore Ministers should seriously examine their consciences whether to be seen to be members of any political party.

1.21 **FLAGS IN CHURCH**

No flags, international, national, or political, shall be on display in any of our Church buildings.

1.22 **MINISTERS AS ASSESSORS**

Ministers approached by a Magistrate to serve as an assessor may accept such nomination only with the approval of their Bishop.

1.23 **ORDER OF PEACEMAKERS**

The Methodist Order of Peacemakers observes the following objectives:

- to provide pastoral care and support for those who express or choose a non-violent witness in or toward military or security structures and any other form of organised and coercive violence.
- to encourage and assist in the process of conflict resolution,
- to work for a true and costly expression of reconciliation,
- to encourage non-violent approaches to protest, change and resistance.

The following Principles and pledge are the basis of membership:

Jesus said: "Blessed are the Peacemakers for they shall be called children of God." Matthew 5.9

- I desire to model my life on the non-violent way of Jesus.
- I therefore renounce violence and pledge myself to engage actively in the work of Peacemaking.
- I will seek to live according to the rule of life of the Methodist Order of Peacemakers.
• I accept that this commitment maybe costly to me, but make it trusting in Christ, who strengthens me.

The rule of life is:

• A commitment to Christian fellowship, devotion and practice;
• A life-style reflecting the renunciation of violence;
• Participation in the fellowship, training and local Activities of the Order through a local chapter.

The procedure of joining the Order is:

• Sign a copy of the pledge
• Attend a meeting of the Local Chapter and ask them to accept your pledge
• Be inducted by the Chapter at a service in the local Society
• Have your pledge lodged by the Local Chapter.

A National Co-ordinating body was established with a Co-ordinator and Chapters established in Namibia, Natal, Gauteng, Eastern and Western Cape.

1.24 WEAPONRY AND GUN-FREE CAMPAIGN

Trust in Lethal weapons is a sign of our failure to fashion a society free of violence and fear. The only long-term answer to this problem lies in obeying God’s teaching about caring human relationships and respect for life.

The Methodist Church therefore:

• calls on all in civil society, especially Methodists, to turn away from owning firearms.
• requests the Government to ban private ownership of firearms.
• affirms the Gun Free South Africa Campaign designed to achieve the voluntary surrender of firearms and calls on all Methodists to participate in the campaign.
• directs our ministers not to assist people to gain firearm licenses.
• directs that no firearms be brought to worship services and other meetings of our church.
• calls on toy manufactures to stop manufacturing gun replicas of any kind.
• Methodists should work for the conversion of the arms industry in South Africa to the production of humane civilian products, with due consideration to existing employment levels and/or adaptation of present skills.

The Gun Free Campaign should address the increase in the advertising of handguns with a view to having such advertising banned in our violence-ridden society.
1.25 STATEMENT ON WOMEN

In 1988 Conference endorsed the Decade of Churches in Solidarity with Women and now notes that Churches and Society continue to treat gender concerns lightly, and because the Church is immersed in the problems of violence and economic and political issues women’s issues are treated as peripheral, that women are frequently the victims of violence and of misinformation by media and anti-justice structures, and that women continue to be under-represented.

Women are created in God’s image, are in the majority in the Churches and in society at large, and have great potential that needs to be unlocked for the benefit of the Church and Southern Africa.

Therefore all structures within the Church should include at least 40% women, the church should play a meaningful role in preparing women through education for elections and voting, should encourage awareness campaigns in our Churches on the issues of violence against women, rape and child abuse, should open it’s doors for open debates on public issues, which should include AIDS, Reproductive rights of Women, Family Planning and Family Life, all new documents, reports, publications, liturgies, prayers, songs, hymns and sermons should use inclusive language, the Doctrine committee in consultation with the Unit should prepare a study document on the issue of gender in the Scriptures, a co-ordinating committee should deal with issues concerning women in the Church.

1.26 GUN-FREE ZONE INITIATIVE

Conference directs that no firearms be brought to worship services and other meetings of our Church, and encouraged all our Churches to display Gun-free Zone signs to inform and educate our people in regard to this policy.

1.27 PORNOGRAPHY AND CENSORSHIP

All members are called to take an active stand against the relaxing of all censorship laws in areas of violence and pornography, and to challenge or boycott any local outlet that distributes pornographic material.

1.28 ASCENSION DAY

Conference resolves to draw the attention of the Methodist People to the value of using Ascension Day as a Holy Day.

1.29 PENTECOST

Conference resolves to draw the attention of Circuits to the importance of the Pentecostal period in the life of the Church, and urged Circuits to have special services at this time.
1.30 CUSTODY OF RECORDS

Conference recommends that Circuits’ records which are more than fifty years old be placed in the custody of the Methodist Archives at the Cory Library for Historical Research at Rhodes University.

1.31 LOCAL CHURCH GAMBLING

Conference notes with Concern the tendency of some members, organisations and Societies to raise funds through “games of chance”. It therefore calls on all Ministers and Lay Leaders to desist from this practice.

1.32 CARE OF PRISONERS

Conference directs Ministers with prisons within their Circuit boundaries to ensure that Methodist Spiritual Workers are appointed to such prisons. The procedure for such appointments is a personal application to the Head of the Local Prison, where Form G.317 must be completes in triplicate.

1.33 DEATH PENALTY/ABORTION

Conference urges its ministers to promote the theology of sacredness of life through a series of sermons, seminars and education material.

1.34 SUNDAY OBSERVANCE

All Methodists should hallow the Lord’s Day and desist from entertainment or commercial activity on Sundays that hinder their participation in worship or conflict with the spirit of worship. On the Second Sunday in November, special reference should be made in all our places of worship for observance of the Lord’s Day.

Conference resolves to direct all Connexional and District agencies and offices to refrain from engaging its members in any form of business other than worship and service (eg book rooms, car washes and other means of employment) on Sunday and Holy Days. This would include for instance travelling to and from Conference.

1.35 UNITED CONGREGATIONS

The Connexional Executive reaffirms its acceptance of United Congregations as an expression of unity.

1.36 REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

The Executive urges the Synods and the local level of the Church to take seriously the inclusion of women at every level of Church life.
1.37 CHURCH PUBLIC RELATIONS

The Presiding Bishop is the Chief Public Relations Officer of the Connexion. Statements on matters of national importance shall be issued by him. In matters of public concern, he may consult the Bishops. Officers of Connexional Departments shall communicate with him if needs be on matters which may require his consideration.

Bishops are Public Relations Officer within their areas. Superintendents may communicate with them on matters which require their consideration. A Bishop may appoint liaison officers with the local Press and News Broadcasters.

1.38 METHODIST EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS:

The Connexional Executive encourages all Methodist Educational Institutions to reflect the demography of the country in the composition of their governing bodies.

1.39 AFRICAN LANGUAGE STUDY

Conference urges all its Ministers to undertake the study of one African Language, and suggests that each Minister invite a small group of persons from the Circuit to initiate and undertake the study as well, utilising the teaching resources available in the Circuit or in neighbouring Circuits.

1.40 A PLACE OF CONTEMPLATION AND RETREAT

Conference reaffirms the call for deepened spirituality within the lives of all Methodists. We therefore encourage all the people called Methodist to:

• the exercise of daily personal devotional discipline
• attend an annual retreat under a retreat director
• recover our Christian contemplative heritage

1.41 CRIME AND CORRUPTION

Conference, in the quest for the realisation of the presence of the Kingdom of God in our midst, calls upon members of the Methodist Church of Southern Africa to strive to uphold the norms and values of the Kingdom. In striving for this, we pledge ourselves to work towards the eradication of crime and corruption within our church, and together with government and other agencies for the eradication of crime and corruption within society.

1.42 REVIVAL OF FAMILY VALUES

Conference calls Methodists to be committed to the revival of sound moral values in their families and their church families.
1.43 **TOWARDS AN INCLUSIVE METHODIST CHURCH**

Conference calls all Circuits to strive to make our churches more accessible to people with disabilities by building ramps, providing hearing aids, reading material, sign language interpreting, etc.

1.44 **USE OF ALCOHOL**

The Connexional Executive, noting the devastating effects of alcohol on family life, calls upon Methodists to recommit themselves to an alcohol free way of life. Further, all Methodist Ministers and Local Preachers are requested to preach on the effects of alcohol regularly and where possible at least once a month as a focus or as part of a sermon.

1.45 **HIV/AIDS ORGANISATIONS**

The Connexional Executive instructs that the men’s organisations of our church do reflective work on the issue of HIV/AIDS paying particular attention to the role men play in fighting the growth of this epidemic. Further more the Connexional Executive requests all organisations to institute programmes which specifically address issues that relate to HIV/AIDS.

1.46 **MISSION IMPERATIVES**

Conference reaffirms the four imperatives that have emerged out of the Millennium Mission Campaign and which are expressed in the mission policy, and endorses them as the framework for holistic mission within our church. Conference stresses, in the clearest and strongest terms, that these mission imperatives are not a list of options from which the local church can pick and choose, but that every local church needs to embrace and engage all four imperatives if we are to be faithful to this mission calling.

Therefore Conference resolves that these four mission imperatives form the primary focus for the business of Leaders’ Meeting, the Circuit Quarterly Meeting, District Synods, Bishops Meetings, the Connexional Executive and Conference.

1.47 **PENSIONS**

Conference resolves to call upon Government Officials to cease the practice of paying pension grants on Sundays thereby debarring the congregants from attending services and interfering with their rights to worship freely.

The Church has consented to the use of Church halls as pay-out points where there are no suitable facilities for the payments of pensions and disability grants. This further strengthens our call for pension payments to be made on any other day during the week which will not conflict with our worship services.
1.48 MINISTRIES OF HEALING

Conference resolves to encourage local Circuits and Societies to give greater priority to ministries and services of healing, and to explore in greater depth means by which this vital aspect of Christian Ministry may be exercised within our Connexion in a manner that is scriptural, contextual, inclusive and wholistic. In this vein, it is our hope that the healing wisdom inherent within African spirituality be further explored to foster ministries of healing that are authentically rooted in a spirituality that is both deeply Christian and deeply African.

1.49 GAMBLING

Conference 1995 notes with deep concern the recommendation of the Gambling and Lottery Board, and reiterates its opposition to all forms of gambling due to its destructive influence on community and family life.

Conference notes that this deep concern is well founded, and is a growing tragedy in our communities. More and more people are becoming addicted to gambling, with the resultant poverty and consequent disastrous effects on family life. The moral fibre of our communities is degenerating with the expectation of gain without having to earn.

While the gambling industry does provide employment for a limited number of people in the vicinity of gambling outlets, a far greater number of people in the community are impoverished, while the owners of gambling schemes get rich.

Therefore Conference calls upon Methodists members to maintain a Christlike influence in the midst of this growing epidemic and tragedy by:

- Abstaining from all forms of gambling.
- To seek help and counselling for themselves and their families from relevant agencies when experiencing problems, either directly or indirectly, in this area.

Conference calls upon our Districts, Circuits, Societies and individual members to equip themselves for ministry to those so afflicted.

Conference recommends to the Connexional Executive that The Mission Unit and our Connexional leadership continue to confront the Governments of the six countries in our Connexion with a view to eliminating this scourge from our sub-continent.

1.50 RACISM

Conference, in denouncing racism, calls on all Methodist to continue striving against all forms of racism in Church and Society and commits the MCSA to co-operate with all agencies working towards similar objectives.
1.51 THE PROPHETIC CALLING OF THE CHURCH

The Connexional Executive notes the following resolution:

- the Church of Jesus Christ, of which the Methodist Church of Southern Africa is a significant part, is called upon to exercise its prophetic voice in Society

Therefore:

The leadership of the MCSA is requested to seek to fulfil its prophetic calling of the Church by:

- taking a strong and very public stance on God’s will on issues like:
  - Crime
  - Corruption
  - AIDS
  - Abuse of women and Children

- Mount a concerted information campaign within the church, so that individual members will be well informed and well equipped to speak out on these issues in their particular circles of influence.

1.52 POVERTY

Given the inequalities that exist in our Southern Africa context, human and financial resources are required to redress poverty,

Conference stresses that the challenges of fighting and eradicating poverty does not lie solely with governments. Faith-based organisations are ideally positioned to address poverty amongst our people.

Conference renews the commitments of the MCSA, in keeping with the original Wesleyan imperative, to be in solidarity with the poor.

Conference therefore requests all Circuits, Societies and Districts to strengthen ministry alongside the poor in united determination to combat poverty.
APPENDIX ‘A’

Conference 1958

‘The Conference declares its conviction that it is the will of God for the Methodist Church that it should be one and undivided, trusting to the leading of God to bring this ideal to ultimate fruition, and that this be the general basis of our missionary policy’