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2014 General Conference Amendments to the *Local Church Constitution*

November 2014

Following each General Conference a summary of resolutions affecting the *Local Church Constitution and By-Laws* is provided to assist local assemblies in updating their local constitution. At the 2014 General Conference in Saskatoon, the Local Church Constitution was revised, both in terms of its content and format with the following Resolutions being Moved, Seconded and CARRIED.

RESOLUTION #1 ARTICLE 5: STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL AND ESSENTIAL TRUTHS – GENDER INCLUSIVITY

WHEREAS The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada values all people and seeks to reflect gender inclusivity;

AND WHEREAS the Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truths historically represented all people under the term “man”;

AND WHEREAS the General Constitution and By-Laws has been revised to reflect gender inclusivity;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Article 5 of the Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truths be amended to reflect gender inclusivity, illustrated as follows:

ARTICLE 5 STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL AND ESSENTIAL TRUTHS

5.3.2 THE BELIEVER AND DEMONS

Demons attempt to thwart God's purposes; however, in Christ, the believer may have complete liberty from the influence of demons. ~~He~~ The believer cannot be possessed by them because ~~his~~ the believer's body is the temple of the Holy Spirit in which Christ dwells as Lord.

5.4 HUMANITY MAN

~~Humans were Man~~ was originally created in the image and likeness of God. ~~They~~ He fell through sin and, as a consequence, incurred both spiritual and physical death. Spiritual death and the depravity of human nature have been transmitted to the entire human race with the exception of the Man Christ Jesus. Humans ~~Man~~ can be saved only through the atoning work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5.5 SALVATION

5.5.1 ATONEMENT OF CHRIST

Salvation has been provided for all ~~people men~~ through the sacrifice of Christ upon the cross. It is the only perfect redemption and substitution atonement for all the sins of the world, both original and actual. His atoning work has been proven by His resurrection from the dead. Those who repent and believe in Christ are born again of the Holy Spirit and receive eternal life. Furthermore, in the atonement, divine healing was provided for all believers.

5.5.2 REPENTANCE AND FAITH

A person ~~Man~~ can be born again only through faith in Christ. Repentance, a vital part of believing, is a complete change of mind wrought by the Holy Spirit, turning a person to God from sin.

5.5.3 REGENERATION

Regeneration is a creative work of the Holy Spirit by which a person ~~man~~ is born again and receives spiritual life.

5.5.4 JUSTIFICATION

Justification is a judicial act of God by which the sinner is declared righteous solely on the basis of ~~their~~ his acceptance of Christ as Saviour.

5.6 THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE

5.6.1 ASSURANCE

Assurance of salvation is the privilege of all who are born again by the Spirit through faith in Christ, resulting in love, gratitude and obedience toward God.

5.6.2 SANCTIFICATION

Sanctification is dedication to God and separation from evil. In experience it is both instantaneous and progressive. It is produced in the life of the believer by ~~the~~ his appropriation of the power of Christ's blood and risen life through the person of the Holy Spirit; He draws the believer's attention to Christ, teaches ~~them~~ him through the Word and produces the character of Christ within ~~them~~ him. Believers who sin must repent and seek forgiveness through faith in the cleansing blood of Jesus Christ.

5.6.3 BAPTISM IN THE HOLY SPIRIT

The baptism in the Holy Spirit is an experience in which ~~the believers~~ he yields control of ~~themselves~~ himself to the Holy Spirit. Through this ~~the believer~~ he comes to know Christ in a more intimate way and receives power to witness and grow spiritually. Believers should earnestly seek the baptism in the Holy Spirit according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. The initial evidence of the baptism in the Holy Spirit is speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gives utterance. This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth.

RESOLUTION # 24 BY-LAW 14.10 LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

WHEREAS the Local Church Constitution By-Law 2.1.6, as amended in 2012, contains procedures for handling the right of a pastor to hold credentials;

AND WHEREAS there may be staff members who hold credentials;

AND WHEREAS The *General Constitution and By-Laws* has outlined the criteria and procedures for determining whether a credentialed staff member has the right to hold credentials if allegations are brought forward;

AND WHEREAS allegations brought against a credential holder would be handled by a committee of their peers;

AND WHEREAS the Local Church does not have the prerogative to determine whether a credentialed pastor has the right to hold credentials with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT By-Law 14 be amended by addition as follows:

- 14.10 Allegations leading to charges in matters involving the right of a credentialed staff member to hold credentials with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada as defined in By-Law 10.6.2 must be made to the district in writing, and properly signed by one who is willing to appear in person and give testimony concerning the charges. Charges brought against a credential holder shall be dealt with according to provisions made in the General Constitution and By-Laws of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.**

AND FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the remaining By-Laws be renumbered for the inclusion.

AND FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local Church Constitution By-Law 2.1.6 be amended as follows:

- 2.1.6 CHARGES INVOLVING CREDENTIALS:** Allegations leading to charges in matters involving the right of a credentialed staff member ~~pastor's right~~ to hold credentials with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada as defined in By-Law 10.6.2 of the General Constitution and By-Laws must be made to the district ~~executive~~ in writing, and properly signed by one who is willing to appear in person and give testimony concerning the charges. Charges brought against a credential holder shall be dealt with according to provisions made in the *General Constitution and By-Laws* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

RESOLUTION # 25 LCC ARTICLE 8.3 NOTICE OF BUSINESS MEETINGS

WHEREAS the use of the term “pulpit” may not be used in some churches in our present culture;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local Church Constitution Article 8.3 be amended as follows:

Article 8.3 NOTICE OF BUSINESS MEETINGS: Two weeks (14 days) notice shall be given of the annual congregational business and special business meetings with a public announcement in the main service(s) from the pulpit and as well as being posted and publicized in the local church. It shall include date, time and purpose of the meeting.

RESOLUTION # 26 LCC BY-LAW 3.1.2 PASTOR’S COUNCIL

WHEREAS the Canada Not for Profit Corporations Act (2009) calls for greater input from members for those governing non-profit organizations;

AND WHEREAS The PAOC recognizes this as a preferred practice;

AND WHEREAS the Pastor’s Council model does not require election of members to the Pastor’s Council;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local Church Constitution By-Law 3.1.2 be amended as follows:

OPTION TWO – PASTOR’S COUNCIL

3.1.2 All members of the Pastor’s Council will be presented at the annual congregational business meeting for ratification.

RESOLUTION # 27 LCC BY-LAW 3.1.4 NOMINATING COMMITTEE

WHEREAS some local churches want to continue to use the OPTION ONE – ELECTED model in selecting their leadership but would prefer more flexibility in its implementation than the Local Church Constitution presently permits, and;

WHEREAS the unity of some local churches is maintained more easily when the nomination committee is put in a position where they can approach individuals to serve on the local church leadership board rather than reviewing nominations, placing them in a position where they must communicate to individuals that they are deemed unsuitable or unqualified to serve on the local church leadership board;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local Church Constitution By-Law 3.1.4 be amended by addition to read:

OPTION ONE – ELECTED

3.1 NOMINATIONS

3.1.1 The nominating committee shall be comprised of the pastor and [leadership] or a committee appointed by the [leadership], which shall be constituted of the pastor, one (1) [leadership] member and three (3) non-[leadership] members.

3.1.2 The nominating committee, after its appointment, shall invite submissions from members of the congregation, until 14 days prior to the annual congregational business meeting, or a longer period as approved by resolution of the membership and recorded in minutes of the congregation. The submissions shall be in writing, signed by the local church member, and submitted without the knowledge of the person.

3.1.3 It shall be the duty of the nominating committee to receive submissions for each office to be filled and, after determining if such individuals are qualified and willing to serve, shall present a slate of nominees for consideration at the congregational business meeting.

3.1.4 The membership may empower a nominating committee to set aside the submission process and agree on the names of members who are qualified and willing to serve on the

leadership team. Such names shall be presented as the slate of nominees for consideration at the congregational meeting.

RESOLUTION # 28 LCC BY-LAW 6.3.11 RIGHT OF APPEAL

WHEREAS the General Constitution & By-Laws has been amended to clarify the right of appeal;

AND WHEREAS a Local Church member may choose not to attend their hearing;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local Church Constitution By-Law 6.3.11 be amended as follows:

LCC 6.3.11 RIGHT OF APPEAL: The local church member shall have the right of appeal. The purpose of the appeal is to examine the process and the judgment rendered.

Any appeal of the decision by the hearing committee must be made in writing within 30 days of receiving the decision of the committee to the secretary of the [leadership]. The [leadership] shall request the District Superintendent to appoint a committee to hear the appeal.

The appeal will be heard within 60 days of receiving the request for an appeal in writing.

The accused person will be present at this appeal, but if the accused person neglects or refuses to attend the hearing, it may proceed in the absence of the accused person. The decision of this appeal committee will be final.

The decision of the appeal committee will be communicated in writing to the church member by the chair of the appeal committee within five (5) days of the appeal hearing.

Legal counsel shall not be present for either side at the appeal hearing, nor in any other investigative or disciplinary hearing provided for in these by-laws.

If the church member has chosen to not attend the hearing, then the member will not be eligible to appeal the decision that has been rendered.

RESOLUTION # 29 LCC ARTICLE 9 ABSTENTION VOTES

WHEREAS Roberts Rules of Order states: *In the usual situation, where either a majority vote or a two-thirds vote is required, abstentions have absolutely no effect on the outcome of the vote since what is required is either a majority or two thirds of the votes cast. On the other hand, if the vote required is a majority or two thirds of the members present, or a majority or two thirds of the entire membership, an abstention will have the same effect as a "no" vote. Even in such a case, however, an abstention is not a vote and is not counted as a vote;*

AND WHEREAS the phrases "voting members present" and "majority of those voting" both exclude abstention ballots as votes since they are a refusal to vote;

AND WHEREAS voting members are those who cast "yes" or "no" ballots;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local Church Constitution Article 9 be amended as follows:

LCC ARTICLE 9 (2nd paragraph): The acquiring and disposal of real property shall be decided by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of the **eligible votes cast by voting** members present at a duly called congregational business meeting. Where property is placed in trust with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, either district or international, a 75 percent majority of **eligible votes cast by members present** ~~these voting~~ at a duly called congregational business meeting shall be required.

AND FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED THAT General Constitution and By-Laws 14.13 and 14.14 be amended as follows:

14.13 Where property is placed in trust with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, either district or national, at least a 75 per cent majority of **eligible votes cast by members present** ~~the voting members present~~ at a duly called congregational business meeting shall be required to dispose of such property.

- 14.14 Except as required in By-Law 14.13 the acquisition and disposal of real property shall be decided by at least a two-thirds majority of the eligible votes cast by ~~voting~~ members present at a duly called congregational business meeting.

RESOLUTION #30 LCC ARTICLE 9 DECLARATION OF TRUST

WHEREAS the District Superintendents Committee has deemed it valuable, that for the legal and financial security of the local church, there be one *Declaration of Trust* for The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada;

AND WHEREAS in the event of the dissolution or other transactions involving the property of a local church, any proceeds are transferred to the appropriate district;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local Church Constitution Article 9 be amended as follows:

ARTICLE 9 PROPERTY: All real estate owned by this local church shall be held in the name of ~~the respective district of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada where incorporated, as trustee for the local church according to the terms of the Declaration of Trust, or by The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada where the respective district is not incorporated as trustee for the local church according to the terms of the Declaration of Trust, or,~~ by the trustees of the local church as a local church of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada or and, in the case of an incorporated local church, may be held by the local church in its corporate name as a local church of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

AND FURTHER, BE IT RESOLVED THAT all other applicable references in the General Constitution and By-Laws and Local Church Constitution be amended accordingly.

ARTICLE 12 LOCAL ASSEMBLIES

Local assemblies shall be composed of born-again Pentecostal believers, associating themselves together in a group for the purpose of worship, self-edification and worldwide evangelization. Its members shall share in maintaining scriptural order, a standard of holiness and agreement with *The Statement of Fundamental and Essential Truths* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, and shall be faithful in financial support. The assemblies shall be set in order and have the privilege of calling a pastor, electing a board, and conducting its business and being represented at the biennial General Conference and the annual district conference according to the requirements of the *General Constitution and By-Laws* and the district constitution and by-laws of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. It may acquire property, titles being held in trust by the respective incorporated district of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, or in trust by The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada according to the terms of the Declaration of Trust, or, by the trustees of the local church as a local church of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada or in the case of an incorporated local church, may be held by the local church in its corporate name as a local church of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. ~~where the respective district is not incorporated, or by trustees duly appointed by the local assembly.~~ The interrelationship of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, the district conference and the local assembly shall be maintained according to the *General Constitution and By-Laws* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada. The assembly may appeal to the district executive for help in solving local problems. Local assemblies are expected to cooperate with district and national programs, and are expected to contribute regularly to the worldwide missionary program of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

By-Law 12.16.2.1.8 The property title of an assembly seeking affiliation shall be held in the name of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, ~~either district or national,~~ according to the terms of the *Declaration of Trust*. Exceptions may be considered by a district executive.

By-Law 14.6 In the event of dissolution or winding up of the local assembly, where the title is held in the name of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, ~~either district or national,~~ all its remaining assets shall be distributed to The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada for its continuing ministries, as provided in the *Declaration of Trust*. Otherwise, upon dissolution the remaining assets shall be distributed to The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

By-Law 14.10 All real estate owned by the local church shall be held in trust by ~~the district of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, if incorporated, for the local church, or in trust by The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada for the local church,~~ or by the trustees of the local church as a local assembly of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, or, in the case of an incorporated church, the property may be held by the church in its corporate name as a local assembly of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada.

BY-LAW 14.11 THE DECLARATION OF TRUST

Property held in the name of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada ~~or in the name of any district of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada,~~ shall be governed by the terms of the *Declaration of Trust* of The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada ~~or the Declaration of Trust of the respective district,~~ whether or not the local assembly is in possession of a copy of the *Declaration of Trust* issued with reference to the specific property held in trust by The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada for the local assembly.

By-Law 14.12 Where the title to the local assembly is held in trust by The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, ~~either district or national~~ on behalf of the local assembly, and the local assembly at a duly convened congregational business meeting requests the return of title to the local assembly, such request shall be considered by ~~the district secretary-treasurer or the Assistant Superintendent for Fellowship Services as the case may be~~, in accordance with the provisions of the *Declaration of Trust*.

By-Law 14.13 Where property is placed in trust with The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada, ~~either district or national~~, at least a 75 per cent majority of the voting members present at a duly called congregational business meeting shall be required to dispose of such property.

RESOLUTION # 31 LCC ARTICLE 7 PASTOR AND [LEADERSHIP]

WHEREAS it is the practice of PAOC for the District Superintendent to work with the local church leadership, if needed, when finding a new pastor;

BE IT RESOLVED THAT Local Church Constitution Article 7 be amended by deletion as follows:

7.1 PASTOR

- 7.1.1 Nominations for pastor shall be submitted to the local church congregation by the [leadership], after consultation with the District Superintendent ~~and the retiring pastor~~.

In order to take effect locally, each *self-governing assembly*, at a regularly convened congregational meeting is required to adopt amendments individually, OR adopt the *Local Church Constitution* (as approved at the 2014 General Conference) in one single motion. However, we ask that you please point out to the members the potential changes.

For this Local Church Constitution to be adopted locally, a two-thirds majority of members present and voting at a duly convened congregational meeting is required.

As provincial legislation may vary from District to District, you are encouraged to review your final version with your District Office.

If your church is incorporated, you may wish to review proposed amendments with your legal counsel.

The new Local Church Constitution can be viewed and downloaded from www.paoc.org -> Fellowship Services -> Credential Resources -> Forms and Documents -> Constitutions -> Local Church Constitution. Should you desire to receive a hard copy of these documents, please contact the Order Desk at 905-542-7400 ext. 3223 or orderdesk@paoc.org.

Further, if you have any questions, please feel free to contact your District Office.

Sincerely,



David Hazzard
Assistant Superintendent for Fellowship Services