

Announcement of Proposed Changes to Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws of the Advent Christian General Conference of America

This document will serve as official notice of proposed changes to the articles of association and bylaws for the Advent Christian General Conference of America, Inc. pursuant to Articles X and XI of the corporate bylaws which state:

ARTICLE X - Amendments to Articles of Association

The Articles of Association of this body may be altered, changed, or amended at any regular or special meeting by a two-thirds vote, provided that notice of such alteration, change, or amendment, setting forth the proposed changes, shall have been published in the denominational press for at least four weeks immediately preceding such meeting.

ARTICLE XI - Amendments to By-Laws

The By-Laws of this body may be amended by two-thirds vote at any regularly called meeting.

Following are proposed changes to Article II of the Articles of Association and Articles I and VIII of the corporate bylaws. The current version is listed first followed by the proposed changes.

ARTICLES OF ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE II – Object (Current Version)

The object of this body shall be to serve the Advent Christian people in furthering the fellowship of their faith, in advancing the ordering of their church life, and in encouraging and administering their common endeavors to fulfill the Great Commission in all its intent, as follows:

- 1. To serve in furthering the fellowship of their faith.*
 - a. To provide the Declaration of Principles*
 - b. To provide the publication of materials.*
 - c. To promote fellowship and inspiration.*
 - d. To provide a design for promoting unity of action.*
 - e. To establish an orderly means of communication.*
- 2. To serve in advancing the ordering of their church life.*
 - a. To provide minimum criteria for the ordination of ministers.*
 - b. To provide a program of stewardship and denominational finance.*
 - c. To provide a model of church organization and training for its implementation.*
 - d. To provide benefits for ministers and other employees.*
 - e. To advance a system for the functioning of the local church in Conferences, Regions, and General Conference.*
 - f. To establish the means of cooperation with other organizations and movements.*
 - g. To establish a body of final appeal for its membership.*
 - h. To provide a corporation to receive, hold in trust, or otherwise care for all properties and business matters delegated to it by the Association.*

3. *To serve in encouraging and administering their common endeavors to fulfill the Great Commission.*
 - a. *To stimulate the membership to action by identifying opportunities for service.*
 - b. *To establish a program of evangelism.*
 - c. *To develop a strong program of Christian education.*
 - d. *To encourage participation in meeting local community needs through group effort.*
 - e. *To encourage participation in national programs.*
 - f. *To provide for systematic church expansion.*
 - g. *To provide for missionary outreach at home and abroad.*
 - h. *To promote the education and training of ministers and other workers.*

ARTICLE II – Object (**Proposed Version**)

The object of this body shall be to serve the Advent Christian people in furthering the fellowship of their faith, in advancing the ordering of their church life, and in encouraging and administering their common endeavors to fulfill the Great Commission in all its intent, as follows:

1. To serve in furthering the fellowship of their faith.
 - a. By establishing the Statement of Faith.
 - b. By establishing the Declaration of Principles.
 - c. By setting forth Enduring Resolutions.
 - d. By providing a design for united action.
 - e. By organizing gatherings for fellowship.
 - f. By providing an orderly means of communication.
2. To serve in advancing the ordering of their church life.
 - a. By establishing minimum criteria for denominational membership.
 - b. By establishing minimum criteria for the ordination of ministers.
 - c. By establishing credentialing committees of review and appeal for denominational members and ministers.
 - d. By addressing various concerns of the local church through Conferences, Regions, and the General Conference.
 - e. By providing means of cooperation with other organizations and movements.
 - f. By providing a program of stewardship and denominational finance.
 - g. By organizing retirement benefits for the welfare of Advent Christian ministers and workers.
 - h. By providing a corporation to receive, hold in trust, or otherwise care for all properties and business matters delegated to it by the Association.
3. To serve in encouraging and administering their common endeavors to fulfill the Great Commission.
 - a. By providing a program of leadership development.
 - b. By providing for missionary outreach at home and abroad.
 - c. By providing a program of church planting.
 - d. By publishing materials for the benefit of Advent Christian churches and ministers.

In fulfilling these objectives, this body will promote and express the fulfillment of our Lord's great prayer for the unity of His people (John 17:11-23).

BY-LAWS

ARTICLE I – Membership (Current Version)

Section 1. *The membership of this body shall consist of churches which are members of Advent Christian Conferences; of Conferences which are members of one of the five Advent Christian Regional Associations; of the same Regional Associations of which the Conferences are members.*

Section 2. *Any organization located in North America, serving a constituency of the Advent Christian General Conference, may become an Associate Member of the Advent Christian General Conference upon the recommendation of the Executive Council and acceptance by the delegate body by a two-thirds vote at any regular or special meeting of the delegate body.*

ARTICLE I – Membership (Proposed Version)

Section 1. The membership of this body shall consist of churches which are members of Advent Christian Conferences or Regions; of those Conferences which are members of one of the five Advent Christian Regional Associations; of the same Regional Associations of which the Conferences are members.

Section 2. Membership shall only include those regions, conferences, churches, and associate member organizations, that:

- a. Affirm and uphold the Advent Christian Statement of Faith
- b. Affirm and uphold the Advent Christian Declaration of Principles
- c. Affirm and uphold the Enduring Resolutions of the General Conference
- d. Financially contribute, directly or indirectly, to the ministry of the General Conference
- e. Cooperate with the provisions set forth in these Articles of Association and Bylaws

Section 3. Membership as an Advent Christian Conference shall be granted by the Advent Christian General Conference with the recommendation of the Executive Council and acceptance by the delegate body by a two-thirds vote at any regular or special meeting of the delegate body. Removal from membership shall follow the same procedure. Membership as an Advent Christian Conference shall require that:

- a. Any conferences **applying for membership** must include at least six Advent Christian churches.
- b. These churches do not maintain membership in another Advent Christian Conference.
- c. The membership of these churches does not violate the territorial integrity of a recognized Advent Christian Conference.
- d. The conference maintains a ministerial committee in good standing for the credentialing of Advent Christian ministers and churches.

Section 4. Membership as an Advent Christian Regional Association shall require that the membership of the regional association includes at least one recognized Advent Christian Conference, that includes at least six Advent Christian churches in its membership, or that the region includes at least six Advent Christian Churches in its membership and a regional ministerial committee in good standing. Such membership shall be granted by the Advent Christian General Conference with the recommendation of

the Executive Council and acceptance by the delegate body by a two-thirds vote at any regular or special meeting of the delegate body. Removal from membership shall follow the same procedure.

Section 5. Any organization located in North America, serving a constituency of the Advent Christian General Conference, may become an Associate Member of the Advent Christian General Conference upon the recommendation of the Executive Council and acceptance by the delegate body by a two-thirds vote at any regular or special meeting of the delegate body. Removal of associate members shall follow the same procedure. Associate Members that receive funding from the Advent Christian General Conference are exempt from Article I, Section 2.d.

ARTICLE VIII - Court of Appeal (Current Version)

A Judiciary Committee of five members, one from each of the five Regions, shall constitute a final Court of Appeal to hear all cases which have failed to find adjustment in the local church, or in the local Conference, or in the local Region, or cases referred to it by the Executive Council of the General Conference.

The costs involved in such a hearing shall be advanced by the party appealing to the Committee. In the event that the decision is favorable to the appellant, the costs will be refunded by the General Conference. The members of the committee shall be elected for nine years.

Recommended that Article VIII - Court of Appeal be replaced so as to delineate lines of accountability while retaining the function currently detailed.

ARTICLE VIII - General Conference Ministerial Committee (Proposed Version)

Section 1.

Every Advent Christian Conference shall maintain a ministerial committee for the credentialing of Advent Christian ministers and churches. While not required, Advent Christian Regions may elect to maintain a ministerial committee for the same purpose. To remain in good standing, a ministerial committee must include a minimum of three members ordained to Advent Christian ministry and uphold the standards of Article I, Section 2. The committee may include laypersons, provided that such members constitute no more than 25% of the committee. These committees are authorized to issue and revoke Advent Christian credentials for ministry and to make recommendations for the decision of the Conference delegate body regarding the membership of churches in the Conference. The decisions of these ministerial committees shall be recognized by the Advent Christian General Conference unless they are (1) overturned by their Conference or Regional delegate body or (2) further appeal is made to the General Conference Ministerial Committee through which their decision may be overturned by the General Conference delegate body.

Section 2.

The General Conference Ministerial Committee (GCMC) shall oversee the denominational membership and credentials of all Advent Christian regions, conferences, churches, ministers, and associate members. The members of this committee shall include every ordained regional superintendent and one ordained Advent Christian minister from each region as elected by the delegate body of said minister's region for a term of three years, not to exceed two consecutive terms. In such cases in which the regional superintendent is not ordained or the region lacks a superintendent, the concerned regional board may appoint an ordained minister from their region to this committee until such time as a regional superintendent can serve in this capacity. The committee shall select one of its members by the vote of the majority to serve as the chair of the committee.

Section 3.

The GCMC shall be empowered to determine the course of action that should be taken as far as it concerns the standing of any Advent Christian region, conference, church, or minister. The committee shall convene at least twice a year to (1) review reports that shall be submitted annually by every Advent Christian ministerial committee, (2) receive any relevant appeals for adjudication, (3) consider matters within the committee's scope of oversight deserving inquiry, (4) and make any necessary determinations, referring any necessary actions to the parties concerned and the most immediate denominational body of oversight. Whenever such determinations are not heeded by those being advised, the GCMC shall be empowered to present a recommended action to the General Conference delegate body, up to and including removal from denominational membership and revoking denominational credentials.

Section 4.

The approval of any such determinations or recommended actions shall require that a minimum of two-thirds of the members vote in favor of the proposed motion; excluded from this percentage are any committee positions left vacant.

Section 5.

Before any appeal is made to the GCMC, it should first be heard by the relevant conference or regional ministerial committee. If after such a hearing an appeal is made to the GCMC, any costs involved in this further appeal shall be advanced by the party appealing to the GCMC. In the event that the decision is favorable to the appellant, the costs will be refunded by the General Conference.

In fulfilling these objectives, this body will promote and express the fulfillment of our Lord's great prayer for the unity of His people (John 17:11-23).