

## CHAPTER III

### THE PASTOR AS ADMINISTRATOR

(Summary of 1995 General Conference Actions\*)

#### Philosophy of Membership

##### Preamble

In harmony with our mission statement that we "... invite into membership and equip for ministry all who respond in faith" the New Testament model of repentance, faith and baptism shall constitute the primary requirements for membership. This makes membership in the Free Methodist Church as nearly as possible synonymous with entering into the Body of Christ. We are open to all whom God has awakened and support them with the healing and equipping power of the Holy Spirit in His church. The principles of Christian conduct as expressed in Pars. A/315-342 are to be the maturing life goals of all who are invited into membership.

#### Holiness

The church pursues holiness in its most comprehensive meaning of loving God with all our hearts, souls, minds and strength, and our neighbors as ourselves. This call to holiness reaffirms our historical values and heightens our responsibility to openly confront contemporary sin, be it addiction, selfishness, evil speaking, or anything else that dishonors the name of God. (See Par. A/352.1, *Book of Discipline*)

#### Disciple-making

The Free Methodist Church engages in evangelization and disciple-making with intentional concern for the spiritual growth of every constituent, whether seeker, new Christian or long-time Christian.

#### Christian Conduct

The goal of Christian maturity is described in Chapter III of the *Book of Discipline*. Entry Requirements: Repentance, Faith and Baptism

The primary requirements for membership in the Free Methodist Church are repentance, faith and baptism in keeping with the New Testament model for entering the Body of Christ.

#### Conditions for Admission into Membership:

- a. awakening to God, a desire to seek God (Par. A/301);
- b. assent to participate in the maturing opportunities offered by the church such as classes, Bible studies and small groups (Par.A/307);
- c. evidence of genuine conversion (Par. A/302);
- d. receiving the catechism of baptism and the sacrament of baptism,

or, if baptized in infancy, giving public assent to the baptismal covenant (Par. A/124);

- e. completing the approved course of instruction for prospective members;
- f. commitment to the membership covenant (Pars. A/154-160), and the Christian Conduct section of the *Book of Discipline* (Pars. A/315-342);
- g. interview by the pastor and/or membership care committee, who will verify the person's readiness for membership (Pars. A/306-307);
- h. approval by the church's official board upon recommendation of the membership care committee (Par. A/404.4, Sec.4); and
- i. giving affirmative answers to the questions for membership before a public meeting of the church (Par. A/353.1).

The sequence of the above steps for membership is the normative order but may vary according to individual need. The purpose is to allow new believers or transfer members to:

- a. identify life issues and receive assistance;
- b. identify theological/doctrinal questions and find answers; and
- c. learn the mission of the Free Methodist Church and make commitment to it.

A local church or annual conference may designate steps 1:a-c as preparatory membership. The ritual for reception into preparatory membership may be used (Par. A/360).

### **Selecting Leaders** (Par. A/402, Sec. 2)

To assure the spiritual health and growth of the local church, members of the several boards and committees whose task is to give substance and direction to the church's mission should be persons of spiritual depth, vital faith, faithful church attendance and be in agreement with the doctrine, conduct and mission of the Free Methodist Church.

Nominating committees and societies should consult guidelines for choosing leadership found in Exodus 18:21, Acts 7:3, 1 Timothy 3:1-13, and Titus 1:5-9. Persons chosen as delegate(s) to annual conference, leadership positions, teaching assignments and public ministry shall demonstrate a lifestyle in harmony with the Scriptures above and Chapters I and III of the *Book of Discipline*.

### **Society Meeting** (Par. A/402.1)

The meeting shall be announced at least ten days in advance. Absentee voting is not permitted.

In preparation for electing lay leaders the pastor shall call attention to scriptural qualifications for leadership as found in Matthew 20:26-28, John 15:12-17, Acts 6:1-7, and Ephesians 4:1-17.

## **Annual Conference Delegates**

The society shall, from their number, elect by ballot delegates to the annual conference according to the provisions in Par. A/277.

Delegates to annual conference may be nominated by the nominating committee if the society so chooses, presenting at least two nominations for each delegate position for election by ballot (Par. 402.1, Sec. 4).

The election of delegate(s) and reserve delegate(s) shall be by separate ballot and shall each require a majority vote of those present and voting. Adult members, with the exception of conference ministerial candidates, are eligible to be a delegate. However, a delegate who is received as a conference ministerial candidate during the current session shall not be disqualified to serve as a delegate.

Delegates serve as liaison between the society and its appointed personnel, as well as between the conference and the society. Their primary tasks include: representing the local church at annual conference; participating in conference activities as requested; representing the church to the superintendent; preserving unity within the body by promoting peace and harmony between the members.

Lay delegates are to conform to the conditions outlined for leaders in Par. A/402, Sec. 2:b and support the pastor and staff in planning and promotion of Great Commission strategies.

## **Nominating Committee**

The objective of the nomination process is to identify persons of spiritual maturity, giftedness and fruitfulness in ministry, and to provide appropriate roles for each to participate in the overall mission of the church.

At the annual meeting the society shall elect by ballot from its adult membership a standing nominating committee of not fewer than three or more than nine persons, plus the senior pastor. The society shall consider persons who are spiritually mature and who understand and actively pursue the mission of the church.

The society shall determine the size, duration and rotation of terms including any term limits. Nominations to the nominating committee may be received in advance. If so, a form for nominations shall be provided at least one month prior to the election. The official board shall process these nominations and provide a ballot including all available persons. Nominations may be received from the floor if the society has so determined in advance by a standing rule. The nominating committee may not present nominations for the next nominating committee.

**Duties:** The nominating committee shall recommend to the society persons to serve in the leadership roles of standing committees or boards, (which may include two-thirds of the pastor's cabinet according to Par. A/404.3, Sec. 1); treasurer of the society; director of Christian education and the age-level directors; directors or chairs of the board of stewards, trustees, evangelism and church growth, missions, finance and stewardship; and other leadership positions as determined by the society. Ministry teams of these boards and committees may be nominated by the respective directors or by the nominating committee as determined by the society.

The report of the nominating committee shall be made available to the society at least ten (10) days prior to the election.

### **Treasurer**

The treasurer shall be an adult member of the Free Methodist Church and shall keep a record of all monies raised and of the manner in which they are expended and shall be responsible for furnishing in writing a detailed financial statement monthly and a full report to the annual society meeting.

To safeguard the treasurer it is recommended that the official board elect tellers who shall count each offering and provide the necessary documentation for the annual audit, which forms the treasurer shall make available for the audit.

It is also recommended that a financial secretary be elected if the size of the congregation and amount of funds handled make it advisable. Duties of the financial secretary shall be defined by the official board.

Upon the joint request of the pastor and the finance committee, the financial books shall be made available for examination.

### **Official Board**

The official board shall be composed of the senior pastor and ministry leaders in the church as determined by the society. It is recommended that there shall be no less than seven and no more than twelve members. At least one delegate and one trustee\* shall be included. It is also recommended that no member, with the exception of the pastor, shall serve for more than six consecutive years.

Official board members shall be representative members of the local church, faithful in worship attendance, involved in ministry, and be supportive financially at least to the level of the tithe.

The official board shall organize itself to provide oversight for the ministries of the church according to need. It shall give attention to providing leadership for evangelism and church

growth, world missions, Christian education and the spiritual health of the congregation.

### **Evaluation of Ministry Effectiveness**

The revised procedure for the evaluation of pastor(s) and congregation is found in Par. A/403 of the *Book of Discipline*.

There is no longer provision for a pastoral return survey and vote on the return of the pastor.

\* Unless found elsewhere in the *Handbook*

### **LEADING THE OFFICIAL BOARD**

Each established church has an official board which serves as the nerve center of the congregation. It is a clearing house for the desires of the body of believers, makes decisions, prepares important proposals to the society, implements board actions, and communicates the results to the entire body. A church may be blessed with an efficient, well-trained, smoothly operating board. On the other hand, it may become ineffective, dispirited, and of questionable value, depending, in many instances, upon the attitude and leadership skills of the pastor.

Every pastor should have as a goal to assist the official board to become what it is intended to be. One begins by being willing to accept, train, and lead the members in their individual and collective roles. (See preceding section on *1995 General Conference Actions, Official Board*.)

To make a preliminary evaluation of the official board, use the following checklist of questions:

1. Does the church understand its mission with a related set of priorities?
2. Do the elected and appointed leaders understand their ministry responsibilities?
3. Is a sense of accountability established by periodic reporting of plans and progress by leaders and committees?
4. Are the board meetings conducted in a manner that builds morale and accomplishes essential business?
5. Are the meetings scheduled on a regular basis and well attended?

If an official board is unsure regarding 1 and 2 above, the first responsibility of the pastor is to train them with guidance from the superintendent, as needed.

Purchase a sufficient number of copies for distribution among official board members. Assign readings to be followed by your teaching, either at a day-long retreat or in segments of study as a part

of the agenda in successive meetings of the board. Members of your church with the gift of teaching might well assist you.

The church that has a clearly stated mission, a carefully thought out set of priorities, and goals “owned” by the congregation is in a position to achieve great things for God. The official board itself is a proper place to discuss, refine, and adopt these items.

The *Book of Discipline* of the Free Methodist Church (1995 edition) describes the composition and work of the official board in Par. A/402.3. The duties of the membership care committee, board of missions, board of evangelism and church growth, board of Christian education, pastor’s cabinet, stewards, trustees, and other officers are further enlarged in Pars. A/404 - 404.5, and A/850 -854.

Larger churches often assign specific responsibilities to trustees and stewards. For example, trustees (singly or with support teams) may be responsible for business, building maintenance, landscaping, plumbing, and so forth. Stewards may be assigned to lead in meeting community needs, hospitality, fellowship, nursery care, communion preparation, and such like.

The following guidelines will help in conducting an effective official board meeting:

1. Have regular meetings incorporated in the church calendar.
2. Follow the adopted rules of order (*Robert’s Rules of Order*).
3. Prepare and distribute the agenda in advance. (Take note of any unfinished items or assignments noted in the minutes of previous meetings.) Input should come from the pastor, the pastor’s cabinet, chairpersons of boards and committees, and members who identify needs of the church. An early business item should be the adoption of the agenda.
4. Contact any persons or committee chairpersons who should make reports as a reminder with offer of any assistance they wish.
5. Begin the meeting with appropriate use of Scripture and prayer. It is also wise to share two or three positive answers to prayer in the life of the church over the past month. Start on a high note!
6. At the beginning of the meeting, set a time for adjournment.
7. Make certain the minutes of any previous meetings which have not been read and approved are presented and approved.
8. Receive reports from each leader and group represented on the official board.
9. When proposing items that are not ‘routine,’ it is often wise to announce that no vote will be taken on such item at this meeting. It is thus presented for discussion and the board is then given a month or more to

think and pray. This builds trust and morale.

10. See that accurate minutes are kept and approved.
11. Assign to persons or committees the implementation of all decisions.
12. Share significant official board actions with the congregation.

If difficulties are encountered in effectively training or leading the church through its official board, the pastor should consult the conference superintendent who is prepared to assist.

## **STRUCTURAL ALTERNATIVES**

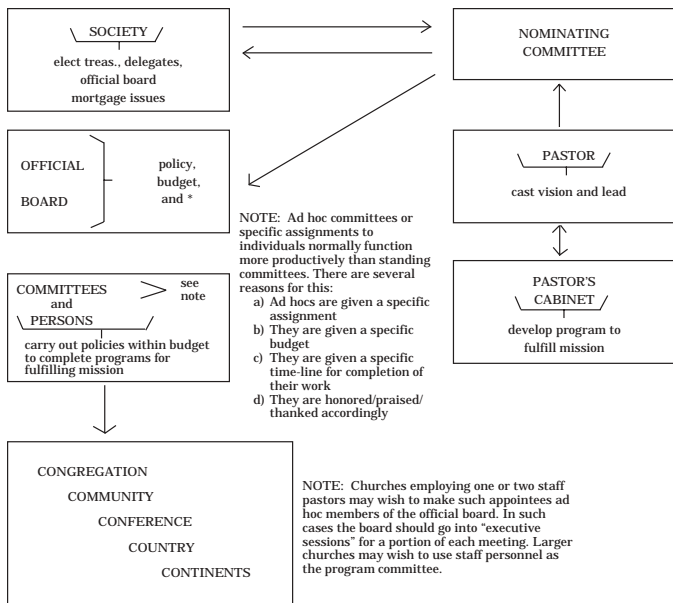
If the Free Methodist Church is going to fulfill its mission through the 90's and into the 21st Century, we will, among other things, be required to adjust structures for effectiveness and productivity. Below is an alternative structure which may be used to meet the objectives of the local church or conference:

### **The Society meets annually to:**

1. Receive a report from the nominating committee to elect some required personnel
  - a. Treasurer
  - b. Delegate(s)
  - c. Official Board (expired terms) which also serves as the board of trustees
2. Receive a report from the official board to elect expired terms on the nominating committee (viz. the official board presents nominations to serve on the nominating committee).
3. Empower the official board to care for all other committees, personnel and business except the sale, purchase or mortgage of property.

### **The Official Board**

1. In some cases the board may serve as the board of trustees and, including the treasurer and delegate(s), may also fulfill the function of all other committees except the nominating committee, or;
2. The board may wish to combine other committees into two or three such as Evangelism/Missions; Christian Education/Stewards/Social Action; Nominating Committee/Membership Care Committee/Pastor's Cabinet; etc., or;
3. The board may wish to function as all boards and committees except the nominating committee and assign individuals and/or groups to specific tasks for a certain period of time, or;
4. The board's primary function may be to set policy and formulate budgets designed to fulfill the mission of the church. (See accompanying graphic.)



The intention of the structure is to maintain focus, accomplish actual ministry, prevent overwhelming groups or individuals, providing for a sense of closure and allowing more workers to say "yes" to opportunities and, if the pastor and his/her cabinet are making assignment in harmony with the mission of the church, progress in mission will occur.

Simple structures give broad permissions to key leaders and allow the pastor to cast vision and lead to a desired future. The above alternative structure is designed to allow such to occur. So long as it does not violate the non-negotiables in the New Day-Permission/Accountability Model, structure may be further adjusted or expanded to address local needs with approval from the conference superintendent. Conference structure may be similarly adjusted in consultation with the area bishop.

Approved by the Board of Bishops  
February 21, 1996



## PROPERTY

### A. Maintenance

**GOAL:** Every Free Methodist Church illustrating to the community the highest standard of neatness in lawn, shrubbery, flower, inside and outside building care.

Any property owned and maintained by the Free Methodist Church is a witness to how seriously we take our worship of God and our stewardship of His tangible gifts. Both the design and maintenance of God's house, the tabernacle and then the temple in the Old Testament, were matters of meticulous concern to God as described in the detailed instructions He gave.

The maintenance and custodial care of our buildings should represent in a physical way our convictions about holiness and purity of life. Preaching clean living in a dirty or poorly maintained church is blatantly contradictory.

It is the responsibility of the pastor to encourage the board of trustees to annually inspect all buildings and to take the necessary steps for maintenance, improvement, and proper care.

A church building need not be either large or new to be an attractive incentive to worship. With care, and often volunteer help, the most modest structure can be made inviting and uplifting.

### B. Building Program

A building program actually involves two simultaneous development strategies; spiritually building the congregation for new outreach and physically renovating existing or building a new facility to more adequately serve the community. Careful attention given to each ministry will contribute to the development of a spiritual climate in which the congregation can grow.

The entire membership should be involved in the society meeting which may elect a building committee or authorize the official board to name the committee. Consultation with the society on each major decision will assist in maintaining unity. According to the *Book of Discipline* the society must vote approval before any land is acquired. No indebtedness may be incurred without the approval of the society.

Professional architectural services will avoid many dangers and, in general, are worth the money invested. At the same time, an architect is only as valuable as the information he or she receives which defines the mission of the church. Simplicity in architecture has been a trademark of the Free Methodist Church (Par. A/859, Sec. 1) without sacrificing aesthetic qualities which enhance worship.

The *Book of Discipline* also requires that before property is acquired approval must be obtained from the conference committee on church buildings and locations (Par. A/859, Sec. 4). Before any financial campaign is launched, the services of the conference superintendent and/or the finance committee may be needed. Professional financial consultants and fund raisers usually provide significant help to churches entering major building programs. Be sure to select such consultants carefully by personally securing several recommendations.

The best building programs are preceded by months of careful planning, listening to ideas from departmental leaders, and prayerfully confronting each problem that arises, seeking always to know God's will. Seek much counsel in the development of plans to assure that all bases are covered.

### **C. Parsonage**

The local church is responsible for providing housing for the pastor. In most cases, this means the building of a parsonage which is especially designed for that use and is not necessarily copied from a set of average house plans.

Some churches have decided to provide housing allowances for their pastor, thereby allowing private ownership of a home. This may prove to be acceptable, but the church should always keep in mind that the next pastor may not desire to own a home or may not have ready cash for the purchase of a home.

### **D. Selling or Mortgaging**

Forms found in Par. B/1020, Sec. 1 of the *Book of Discipline* are to be used whenever property is to be mortgaged or sold. One of the questions refers to action taken by the society which requires the date of the society meeting and the page in the secretary's book where actions are recorded.

The following instructions will inform pastor and trustees of procedures necessary for meeting denominational and legal requirements:

## THE SALE, PURCHASE, AND MORTGAGING OF CHURCH PROPERTY

According to the *Book of Discipline*  
and the Instructions of the Board of Directors of  
The Free Methodist Church of North America

Chapter VIII of the *Book of Discipline* presents regulations governing church property and the duties and responsibilities of the trustees of such property. Every trustee of church property and every official of the body electing the same should be thoroughly acquainted with this important chapter. Note especially:

1. The board of trustees of church property may not act in the purchase, sale, or mortgage of such property without specific authorization by its electing body. See Par. A/853.
2. Action by a board of trustees requires official vote in a regularly called session of the board. See Par. A/853.
3. A board of trustees may not accept a deed to property which contains a clause by which the property may revert to the original grantor, heirs or assigns, nor permit property to be sold or encumbered to meet current expenses. See Par. A/854.
4. Before a board of trustees proceeds to purchase real estate on the authorization of its electing body, it should secure the services of a reliable lawyer and provide a copy of the Free Methodist *Book of Discipline*. See Par. A/855.
5. The trust clause must be included in title to all church property. See Par. A/856.
6. Even when authorized by the electing body, the board of trustees must have the consent of the conference superintendent and of the Board of Directors of the general church to dispose of or encumber church property. See Par. A/857.
7. The proceeds of properly authorized sale or encumbrance of church property may be used only for purchase or improvement of property of the authorizing body, or held subject to due process as defined in Par. A/857.
8. Church property no longer used for church purposes must be declared abandoned by vote of the annual conference before local or conference trustees may sell it. See Par. A/858.
9. The Board of Directors of the general church cannot approve the sale or mortgaging of church property without prior authorization thereof in specific terms by the official body (society, circuit, conference, etc.) which elected the trustees of the property in question. Note the restrictions set forth in Par. A/412 and the first sentence of Par. A/853.

The selling or mortgaging of property are not routine business matters and cannot be delegated by blanket action.

10. If it becomes necessary between sessions of the annual conference to sell or encumber conference property upon which the conference has not taken required action, the conference administrative committee may attempt a solution through one of the following courses:

a. Request the Board of Directors of the general church to provide written assurance that it will issue a permit to sell or to encumber the property in question at such time as the annual conference votes its approval. If upon its judgment of the merits of the case, the Board of Directors gives such assurance, the administrative committee may be able to negotiate a contract with a prospective buyer or to encumber. However, before such contract can be legally fulfilled, the sale or mortgage must be approved by the following session of the annual conference.

b. Request the bishop of the annual conference to convene an adjourned sitting of the same to vote on the proposal to sell or mortgage the conference property in question. To save expense the adjourned sitting might be called, in conjunction with another scheduled conference event.

c. If a mail vote is considered appropriate the ballot should contain two sections: a) a consent to the mail vote, and b) a yes/no vote on the issue. A majority result on a) is necessary before the vote on b) may be considered official. For the record, a mail vote should be confirmed by action of the next regular sitting of conference.

Application forms for permission to sell or mortgage church property may be obtained from the conference office or from the Department of Administration and Finance at the World Ministries Center.

Board of Directors  
The Free Methodist Church of North America  
Free Methodist World Ministries Center  
Indianapolis, Indiana 46253-5002

## **GUIDELINES FOR THE SELECTION, APPOINTMENT, AND CONTINUANCE OF PASTORAL STAFF ASSISTANTS**

See Par. A/536 of the *Book of Discipline*.

### **UNITED MINISTRIES FOR CHRIST OVERVIEW**

Since 1965 the unified budget approach of the Free Methodist Church has been a method by which each Free Methodist, by contributing through the local church, supports every facet of the worldwide ministry of the Free Methodist Church.

At that time, United Ministries for Christ (UMC) was a means by which the contributions sent from every church and conference in the United States are placed in the general fund and distributed to those approved ministries of the denomination according to predetermined budgets.

The 1985 General Conference adopted a significant change in the procedures, while at the same time calling for the United Ministries for Christ to continue as the “approved system for funding all the ministries of the general church.”

Since 1987 there have been two distinct plans for raising United Ministries for Christ funds: UMC-World Missions and UMC-Home Ministries. World Missions and Home Ministries dollars are raised separately but continue under the umbrella of United Ministries for Christ.

### **UMC-World Missions**

This portion of the UMC involves a personalized support system for Free Methodist missionaries and their ministries. Conferences and local churches agree to support a missionary (or missionaries) at a specified amount with the expectation that the home support base will continue for the duration of their ministry under the Department of World Missions. All UMC-World Missions monies received for such support will be used exclusively for evangelizing and discipling people beyond our borders.

### **UMC-Home Ministries**

The funding plan for UMC-Home Ministries is called Basic Support Shares. These shares are determined by applying a Board of Administration-approved formula to a conference’s total giving for the prior year. Each local church receives a portion of the accepted conference goal. Departmental budgets are based on the goals accepted by the conferences. Therefore, conferences and local churches are expected to reach these goals to avoid departmental deficits.

### **A. Budgets and the UMC Budget and Finance Committee**

Budgets are necessary to facilitate good stewardship of the resources God has provided through His people.

Projected budgets for the several ministries receiving funds through UMC are presented to the United Ministries for Christ Budget and Finance Committee for review, determination of allocations, and recommendation to the Board of Administration for adoption.

United Ministries for Christ is dependent upon a steady flow of funds. Each conference is encouraged to submit one-twelfth of its UMC-World Missions Minimum Goal and UMC-Home Ministries Basic Support Share, each month.

The Operating Committee at the World Ministries Center prepares the Home Ministries budget and the Department of World Missions prepares the World Missions budget. These budgets are submitted to the Budget and Finance Committee for review, and, if necessary, revision. This committee is composed of ministers and laypersons from across the denomination. They work diligently to distribute fairly the funds available to the several ministries of the church. The budget is presented to the denominational Board of Administration for final approval.

### **B. Special Growth Projects**

By action of the 1979 General Conference, it is possible to give to special projects above and beyond the United Ministries for Christ.

Special Growth Projects represent approved areas of ministry for which additional funds are needed over and above the basic UMC budgets.

All such projects have been approved by the Board of Administration. Money given to Special Growth Projects goes directly to those specific projects and is not allocated proportionately to other ministries. A list of special growth projects for both World Missions and Home Ministries is sent to pastors from the World Ministries Center each year.

The basic United Ministries for Christ budget must have priority in all promotional efforts. Special Growth Projects must be treated as special areas of ministry that do not compete with, but supplement, the UMC budget.

### **THE PENSION PLAN**

The 1964 General Conference authorized the Board of Administration to develop a pension plan which could supplement Social Security for the ministers and employees of our church. The Board of

Administration immediately began to work on implementing a plan to provide protection and security to the people who contribute years of service in the work of the church. The plan was adopted and became effective January 1, 1969.

The Pension Plan was to be financed entirely by the church, no contributions being required or allowed from the participants. It was known as a “money purchase plan,” meaning that at retirement the participant would receive a monthly amount based on the purchase of an annuity limited according to the provision of the plan. While this was a positive step forward, it was soon evident that major adjustments were necessary to make it more beneficial to the participants.

The Pension Board, after careful study, recommended a revised plan to the Board of Administration, which was adopted in the spring board meeting of 1980, reviewed by the board in the fall meetings of that year, and became effective January 1, 1981.

The major revisions included a change from a “money purchase plan” to a “defined benefit” plan. The new plan is explained fully in material presented to each participant. The benefits have been weighted toward service to encourage and reward loyalty, while at the same time they make a small allowance for different compensation levels. Other goals achieved were uniformity of administration and a more adequate retirement supplementary income.

The plan sets a vesting schedule for participants to qualify for benefits. Benefits will vary according to annual salary, length of service, and age at time of retirement. Various options are available as one nears retirement.

The investments of the fund are handled by the Free Methodist Foundation.

It is mandatory that each local church participate in the plan. In so doing, they prove their cooperation in benefiting their pastors with added retirement security. Therefore, each church should recognize this obligation when setting the budget and instruct the treasurer to send payments promptly.

If at any time you have any questions about the plan, contact the pension agent in your conference or the Department of Human Resources at the World Ministries Center.

### **GUIDE TO SETTING HONORARIA FOR EVANGELISTS**

Official boards sometime need help in setting a fair honorarium for the evangelist. The guidelines set forth below were studied by the committee of General Conference (1979), reviewed by the Commission on Evangelism, and passed by the Board of Administration. Since

evangelists are ordained of God, as clearly set forth in His Word, they are worthy of their hire.

Full-time general evangelists have a special calling from God (Ephesians 4:11-13) to perform a God-ordained ministry to our local churches. However, the evangelists are in a unique financial position. They must pay their own housing, utilities, car allowance, and at least one half of their insurance, pension and social security. Evangelists are not normally scheduled at holiday seasons nor during most summer months, except camp meetings. Furthermore, they have no paid vacations as do local church pastors. Most evangelists can expect income for only eight or nine months a year.

In contrast to local pastors, evangelists do not receive salary during illness or emergency leave. They forego such perks as expense money for retreats, seminars, annual conference, books and office supplies.

The following financial guidelines are standard throughout holiness denominations. If these guidelines are followed the evangelist will receive a salary comparable to the pastor's salary for the week.

Pastor's Weekly Salary	_____
Cash Benefits (housing, utilities, etc.)	_____
Social Security	_____
Total	_____
Multiply x 2	_____

This is the amount you should pay the evangelist for a week or partial week of service. Engaging an evangelist over two Sundays constitutes two weeks even if ministry covers only eight days.

### **PASTORAL ETHICS**

The exhortation of the Apostle Paul, "... set an example for the believers ..." (1 Timothy 4:12, NIV), is one that every minister must take seriously. Moral integrity must never be compromised by lack of complete honesty; breach of vows to spouse, family, church, and country, nor by indiscreet actions toward the opposite sex. Debts are to be paid when due. The pastor must be self-disciplined, not allowing even the appearance of evil. Actions speak louder than words. The strongest sermon ever preached is in the life lived. Even thoughts need to be cleansed by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.

You and your fellow pastors make up the conference team. Your colleagues deserve your support. Be affirming. Let no layperson ever hear from your lips critical comments concerning another pastor.

Be ready to help new and younger pastors who come to your



conference. Respect and honor those who are older and have given years of their lives for the ministry.

One of the strongest encouragements to conference unity is the practice of pastors praying one for another on a daily basis. Apply the Golden Rule in your relationships, endeavoring always to treat fellow pastors as you would have them treat you.

As you accept the responsibilities of a new congregation, speak affirmatively of your predecessor, acknowledging contributions and strengths. Closest friends of the former pastor will soon be your supporters. Build your ministry on your own strengths.

When leaving a congregation, make the transition as easy for your successor and spouse as possible. Introduce them personally to the leaders of the church and community. Do not return to your former pastorate except when absolutely necessary.

Avoid conducting funerals and weddings where you have previously served without full knowledge and consent of the incumbent pastor. If it becomes necessary, always involve the present pastor in the service. If for some reason you are going to be in the community, inform the pastor of your presence. Let the people know you are not there in a pastoral role.

Paul continues: "Watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers" (1 Timothy 4:16, NIV).

## CODE OF ETHICS FOR MINISTERS OF THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH

### Personal Standards

*I will endeavor* at all times to be conscious of the sacredness of my calling.

*I will endeavor* prayerfully to deepen my commitment to Christ and constantly live this commitment before all in perfect love.

*I will endeavor* to give adequate time in developing my intellectual capacities, in keeping abreast of current thought, and in preparing my messages.

*I will endeavor* to keep my body physically fit.

*I will endeavor* to give full-time attention to my ministerial duties.

*I will endeavor* to maintain a high moral standard in speech and conduct, and be decorous in manners and dress.

*I will endeavor* to act above reproach in all business and financial matters, and incur no debts that would embarrass me or my church.

*I will endeavor* to present a balance of truth tactfully and constructively.

*I will endeavor to acknowledge the influence of others upon my life and ministry, and give due credit to resource materials used.*

*I will endeavor to regulate the demeanor of my own family.*

### **Pastoral Standards**

*I will accept a pastorate as a sacred obligation and faithfully perform all my duties until released.*

*I will be a spiritual shepherd of all my people and endeavor to be a shepherd to those who do not have one.*

*I will preach the gospel of salvation and entire sanctification with love and patience.*

*I will endeavor to act above reproach in the performance of my personal duties.*

*I will regard my service as primary, my remuneration as secondary.*

*I will keep confidences inviolate.*

*I will represent the Free Methodist Church in my community and be a messenger of good will and unity in the spirit of Christ.*

*I will leave the church records and property in good order when my responsibilities are terminated.*

### **Professional Standards**

*I will respect the pastorate of another minister and render service only in emergencies or with the consent of the assigned minister.*

*I will seek to enhance the work of another minister.*

*I will deal honorably with the record of my predecessor and successor.*

*I will be enthusiastic about and promote the mission of the Free Methodist Church.*

*In the event of a change in my doctrinal position or if for any other reason I find myself no longer in harmony or sympathy with the Free Methodist Church, I will voluntarily withdraw from the conference and church in the spirit of Christ endeavoring to protect the best interests of both the local and general church.*

Adopted by the 1974 General Conference

### **RELATIONSHIP TO THE ANNUAL CONFERENCE**

Pastors in the Free Methodist Church are employed by and amenable to an annual conference. They hold membership in the conference, are elected to orders and ordained by the annual conference, and are under its assignment.

Such a relationship provides opportunities for wider ministries through participation in conference outreach initiatives. Here pastors

can use their special gifts to even greater advantage for the building of the church. Pastors find renewal and instruction in working with other pastors and laypersons who share similar concerns.

Loyalty to the conference and its ministries is a responsibility to be taken seriously. Free Methodist pastors are expected to demonstrate loyalty to their superintendent and group leader, and to the ministries of their conference and denomination.

While fulfilling responsibilities to the conference, a pastor must maintain proper balance between it and the pastoral work in the local church. The latter is of primary importance. Successful pastors will help their church to participate in the larger outreach of the conference and denomination.

### **EMPLOYMENT OF PERSONNEL WITH CONFERENCE MEMBERSHIP**

The Free Methodist Church is a connectional church. Since our founding in 1860, we have provided for leadership in our churches through an annual conference appointment system. In addition to approximately 1,200 appointed pastors, a large number of ordained persons are either assigned to some special work relating to the general needs of the church or are released for work outside the church.

There is, and has always been, a movement of pastors between conferences. Furthermore, employment by the general church or associated bodies provides a steady flow in and out of pastoral ministry.

We must recognize and accept this movement. It is both ethical and legal to transfer from one conference to another. At the same time it is necessary to observe certain guidelines which are accepted and respected by all.

#### **A. Governing Principles**

1. Annual conference membership is a central principle in historical Methodist ecclesiology. Workers are called, nurtured, trained, and ordained for service in the annual conference. Their character and work are annually reviewed. Both the privileges and responsibilities of conference membership are to be respected. In harmony with this system, the *Book of Discipline* insists on ample notification prior to transferring (Par. A/533, Sec. 4).

2. The good of the kingdom and the growth and welfare of the Free Methodist Church is a major concern for all people involved in staffing the work. Pastors and superintendents are asked to forego personal benefits for the good of the whole.

3. At the same time the interests of the person employed are of great importance. The pastor's personal development, happiness, and

effectiveness in ministry are of concern. What is best for the individual will be viewed differently, depending on one's perspective. Thus, every person choosing a field of labor should be free from undue pressure.

While the above considerations are all important, they seem at times to conflict. At such times the will of the Lord must be sought through both the ministerial appointments committee and the individual's sensitivity to divine leading. We can find our way through these matters if we observe the Christian virtues of openness, mutual trust, mutual respect for persons, and respect for the polity of the church.

### **B. Specific Guidelines:**

1. A minister desiring to transfer to another conference, institution, or work for the general church, should understand that no serious consideration will be given by the prospective employer without contact with the present superintendent/employer. The current employer in every case will be one of the transferee's references.

2. Many contacts regarding employment are not made directly, but are initiated by a third party who knows something of the minister's skills and intentions. A discreet inquiry may be made regarding possible interest. It should not be pursued further, however, until the present superintendent/employer is notified that consideration is being given to the potential transferee. It is advisable in all such cases for the superintendent to confer with the area bishop as chairman of the ministerial appointments committee.

3. The above will also apply when a person is being considered for a general church or other strategic leadership position.

4. The sixty-day notification rule will be observed unless suspended by mutual agreement between the transferee and superintendent/employer involved.

5. After faithfully observing the guidelines, the transferee shall be free to make the final decision and should not be subject to undue pressure from either the present or prospective employer. Annual conferences and/or boards of ministerial education and guidance will not refuse a request for a certificate of standing unless there are charges against the character of the transferee. All transfers into annual conferences are subject to the vote of the receiving conference.

6. The above procedures apply only to full members of an annual conference. Conference ministerial candidates may transfer, see Par. A/533, but are not allowed to transfer their license as a conference ministerial candidate.

## **CONTINUING EDUCATION FOR FREE METHODIST MINISTERS**

### **A. Purpose**

The purpose of continuing education for ministers in the Free Methodist Church is the development and maintenance of skills necessary for a balanced and growing ministry.

### **B. Definition**

Continuing education refers to learning experiences chosen to enhance one's ministry. Such experiences may be either for academic credit or non-credit. Academic credit refers to collegiate studies whereas non-credit experiences are called Continuing Education Units (CEU). One CEU requires ten contact hours of learning. The CEU may be earned in fractions depending on the number of contact hours.

### **C. Approval**

Each conference will maintain a list of approved events for CEU credits. Events not listed on the approved list must be cleared in advance by the conference superintendent.

### **D. Choice**

The pastor, in consultation with the superintendent, plans his/her continuing education for a one-to-three or one-to-four-year time period. Advance planning will assist in relating personal CEU programs to the perceived needs of the individual. This includes a perception of self as well as that of the conference superintendent and laity.

A list of suggested learning experiences is found in sections J and K below. From time to time, added suggestions will be forwarded to conference superintendents. Your ideas and suggestions are welcome.

When possible, provision should be made for including the spouse in the learning experience.

### **E. Finances**

Churches and annual conferences are expected to arrange financial assistance for their ministers to participate regularly in continuing educational experiences.

### **F. Records**

Individuals may obtain an "Event Certificate" from the conference office or Ministerial Credentialing Services, P.O. Box 535002, Indianapolis, IN, 46253-5002. The Event Certificate must be completed and sent to the conference superintendent for signature. The conference office will forward the information to Ministerial Credentialing Services to be recorded.

### **G. Certificates**

1. Studies for academic credit will receive recognition upon

completion through the regular channels of the educational institution involved.

2. Continuing Education Units (non-academic) successfully completed will receive recognition by an appropriate certificate issued by Ministerial Credentialing Services.

3. Upon completion of 10 CEUs, a certificate of recognition will be presented at the annual conference by the MEG Board.

## **H. Authorization**

Paragraphs A/416, Sec. 5, and B/479 of the 1995 *Book of Discipline* give instructions on continuing education.

## **I. Topic Areas**

Areas to be covered in the plan of continuing education for ministers are found in the Christian ideal of knowing God, knowing self, knowing people, and knowing the minister's task.

1. Knowing God: Ministers are expected to maintain a disciplined and meaningful personal devotional life. They will lead the congregation in worship experiences. Suggested continuing education topics include:

- a. Personal Spiritual Growth
  - (1) Personal Spiritual Discipline
  - (2) Effective Prayer
- b. Biblical Studies and Theology
- c. Worship and Music
  - (1) Planning Worship Services
  - (2) Creative Approaches in Worship
  - (3) The Function of Music in Worship

2. Knowing Yourself: This includes the minister's family responsibilities, time management, and the handling of stress. The development of personal maturity is essential to effective ministry. Pastors must have a "pastor" or consultant with whom they can build a relationship in order to counsel in times of stress.

Suggested topics:

- a. Developing Personal Maturity
- b. Personal Inventory Analysis
- c. Time Management
- d. Stress Management
- e. Marriage and Family Enrichment
- f. Parenting
- g. Self-improvement Skills
- h. Ministerial Ethics
- i. Personal Finance

3. Knowing People: Ministers utilize interpersonal and motivational skills in building upon the strengths of others while developing team work and leadership (Ephesians 4:11).

### Suggested topics:

- a. Studies of Psychology
- b. The Development of Interpersonal Relationships
- c. Personnel Administration
- d. Church Management
- e. Mental Health

4. Knowing the Minister's Task: Ministers should be fully aware of the biblical role of the ministry in order to maximize their skills in the fulfillment of this role.

### Topics to be covered:

- a. Preaching Skills
- b. Evangelism and Church Growth
- c. Comprehensive Knowledge of Denominational Heritage
- e. Denominational Perspective (Doctrine)
- f. Organization and Finance
- g. Stewardship
- h. Leadership Skills
- i. Evangelism and Discipleship
- j. Community Involvement
- k. Christian Education
- l. Missions
- m. Higher Education
- n. Certified Educational and Missionary Tours

## **J. Learning Experiences**

The Free Methodist Church through its colleges, seminaries, and education programs provides basic learning experiences which may be supplemented by nondenominational programs. Pastors will desire to give priority to programs under Free Methodist auspices.

The learning experiences must be under the auspices of a recognized organization.

## **K. Resources**

### Church resources:

- continuing education study at World Ministries Center
- travel-study experiences
- church-growth seminars
- schools of renewal

### College-church resources:

- regional ministers' conferences that utilize a "learning mode"
- accredited correspondence work

### Church-university, seminary resources:

- credit work from an area Free Methodist college, university, or John Wesley Seminary Foundation
- non-credit work from area institution
- directed study programs in conjunction with college, university, or seminary

Local or regional resource agencies:

- university extension
- community classes
- videotape seminars
- mental health
- free university study
- writing courses
- Dale Carnegie course

National resources:

- Billy Graham Schools of Evangelism
- National Association of Evangelicals workshops
- Christian Holiness Association seminars
- National Religious Broadcasters workshops

## **SCHOLARSHIPS FOR FREE METHODIST SEMINARIANS**

### **John Wesley Seminary Foundation Program**

The John Wesley Seminary Foundation (JWSF) exists to provide guidance, counsel, and financial assistance to graduate students preparing for full-time ministry in the Free Methodist Church. There is a foundation office at each of the approved graduate schools, Asbury Theological Seminary (Kentucky), C.P. Haggard School of Theology/Azusa Pacific University (California), Wesley Biblical Seminary (Mississippi), Western Evangelical Seminary (Oregon), Greenville College (Illinois), and the seminary at Roberts Wesleyan College (New York).

The foundation provides financial assistance to qualified applicants through the UMC-Home Ministries budget. An applicant must be a conference ministerial candidate, or beyond, and in the admissions process for a masters degree in biblical, theological, or pastoral studies at one of the approved JWSF institutions. The assistance must be paid back either by five years of full-time service in the Free Methodist Church or by a conventional financial plan. Further information on the JWSF program, including application procedures, is available through the Department of Leadership Development (formerly Department of Higher Education), P.O. Box 535002, Indianapolis, IN 46253-5002.

Individual members of the Association of Free Methodist Educational Institutions (AFMEI), comprised of Azusa Pacific University (California), Central College (Kansas), Greenville College (Illinois), Roberts Wesleyan College (New York), Seattle Pacific University (Washington), and Spring Arbor College (Michigan), may award scholarships to Free Methodist students. Pastors are encouraged to contact the admissions office at each of the AFMEI schools for current



information. For toll free numbers contact the Department Leadership Development at 1-800-342-5531.

## **PREPARING FOR YOUR SUCCESSOR**

A distinguishing characteristic of a successful pastor is the ability to build upon the strengths of one's predecessor. Another is the ability to prepare for an orderly transfer of leadership to a successor.

The pastor who follows you will carry on your good work much more readily if your preparation for transition is both thoughtful and thorough.

Upon arrival the new pastor should have immediate access to the following:

### **A. Looking Ahead**

The current statement of mission and a synopsis of the short-term and long-term goals presently guiding the total ministry of the church.

### **B. Membership Information**

1. The official membership book in which all entries and addresses are up-to-date in each category.

2. The outreach/contact list, sometimes called a "Love-Care" list. The *Light and Life* magazine subscription list should be included.

3. If not included above, a list of all families with occupation and place of employment with names and ages of children.

### **C. Lists**

A complete list of all trustees, officers, leaders, membership of boards and committees, teachers, lay ministers, and local ministerial candidates of the church with terms of office where applicable.

### **D. Plant Operation**

1. Location of keys to: doors, closets, PA system, organ, church vehicles, etc.

*or:*

2. List of persons responsible for all buildings and grounds and related operations.

### **E. Program**

1. Sample of the Sunday bulletin and midweek letter.

2. Church calendar.

3. Copy of minutes of recent meetings of all major boards and committees.

4. Index to plans and correspondence relating to special events planned for the future.

5. Sample packet of materials being used in advertising, visitation, evangelism, discipling, small group ministry, etc.

## **F. Pastoral Care**

1. Pastor's calling list or file with notations concerning shut-ins, unique family situations, best time to call, and spiritual needs.
2. An area map indicating location of members.

## **G. Finance and Business**

1. Copy of the current budget and the most recent audit.
2. Instructions on how the pastor's salary is paid.
3. Record of where all deeds, insurance policies, incorporation papers, and other documents are kept.
4. The file containing contractual agreements, job descriptions, evaluations and salary scale for all employed staff persons.

## **H. Community**

1. Map of the area.
2. List of community agencies with whom the church maintains a relationship, especially those to which referrals are made.
3. List of area ministers with whom the pastor works, along with time and place of ministerial association meetings.
4. Description of all union meetings and cooperative efforts among churches in which the Free Methodist church has participated.
5. Suggested plan for key lay leaders to introduce the pastor to community leaders.

## **I. Personal**

1. Referrals to competent health care people, i.e. doctor, dentist, optometrist.
2. Tips on how to cope with the physical eccentricities of the church and parsonage. (For example, the location of fuse boxes, hard-to-find switches, storm window storage, furnace filters, etc.)
3. Recommendation of best places to shop and the location of a reliable auto repair garage.
4. Explain how utilities function: Are deposits necessary? Is sewer cost included in the water bill?
5. Vacation time and time-away schedule approved by the official board.

Preparing for your successor offers an excellent opportunity for demonstrating the Golden Rule. By anticipating your own transition to the next appointment, then planning carefully for the pastor who follows, you will establish a pattern of practical thoughtfulness worthy of emulation.

(Adapted and condensed from *Ministerial Ethics and Etiquette for Ministers of the East Michigan Conference*, by Dale A. Woods)





## GLOSSARY

### *Anthem*

Sacred choral composition or song of praise usually taken from the Scriptures.

### *Antiphonal*

Devotional verses or song responsively read or sung.

### *Benediction*

Literally the “good word,” a brief blessing used to dismiss a congregation at the conclusion of a worship service; not, strictly speaking, a prayer.

### *Canticle*

From the French *canere* — to sing; biblical hymn or song other than the psalms.

### *Celebrant*

One who performs a public religious rite, particularly the Lord’s Supper.

### *Chancel*

The front part of the sanctuary including altar, pulpit, communion table, and choir loft.

### *Choral Response*

Music sung by a choir or chorus in response to spoken parts of worship.

### *Collect*

Literally, a gathering together of ideas focused upon the purpose of the worship event. An opening prayer or prayers.

### *Credentials*

In the ecclesiastical sense, a minister’s ordination certificate(s).

### *Deacon*

Literally, a servant or minister; the first of two levels of ordination in the Free Methodist Church.

### *Dossal*

Also *dorsal* or *dosser*; an ornamental cloth hung behind the altar or pulpit.

### *Elder*

The second of two ordinations in the Free Methodist Church.

### *Eucharist*

Literally, to show favor or to give thanks; the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

### *Extemporaneous*

Spoken with preparation but not written or memorized.

### *Gospel Song*

Religious song which usually depicts some aspect of personal Christian experience.

### *Homily*

A discourse or sermon prepared in detail but usually shorter than a sermon.

*Hymn*

An ode or song in praise or adoration of God.

*Introit*

Literally, to go into; a hymn or anthem sung or played at the beginning of a worship service.

*Invocation*

A short prayer offered at the beginning of a service inviting the presence of God.

*Lectionary*

A collection of Scripture lessons for use on specific days in divine worship. Often sets forth selections for every Sunday of the year or may cover several years. Used to assure broad exposure to all of Scripture.

*Lectern*

A reading desk, in some churches, from which the Scripture lessons are read.

*Litany*

A series of invocations and supplications usually spoken alternately by clergy and congregation.

*Narthex*

The vestibule or foyer of a church.

*Nave*

The larger area of the sanctuary where the worshipers are seated.

*Offertory*

Prayer said before or after, or music rendered during, the receiving of an offering.

*Offertory Sentence*

A brief statement in either prose, verse, or Scripture given by the minister to introduce the offering.

*Officiant*

An officiating minister.

*Orders*

The several grades or ranks of the Christian ministry.

*Ordinand*

A candidate to be received into the order of deacon or elder.

*Parament\**

Ecclesiastical vestment or hanging.

*Parchments*

In the ecclesiastical sense, a document certifying a minister's ordination.

*Parish*

The territory in which the members of a congregation live, also the members of the congregation without regard to their location.

*Postlude*

Music at the close of a worship service.

*Processional\**

Hymn sung during the entrance of choir and clergy.

*Prudentials*

Guidelines to Christian behavior reasoned from principles in Scripture and confirmed by consensus of the church.

*Recessional\**

Hymn sung during the departure of choir and clergy from the sanctuary.

*Ritual*

The form of conducting worship.

*Transept*

That part of the church at right angle to the sanctuary aisles directly in front of the chancel or altar. Usually found only in cathedrals built in the shape of a cross.

*Vestibule*

A passage or hall between the outer and inner doors of a building.

*Vestment\**

A liturgical garment of the ceremonial attire and insignia worn by ministers during the divine service as appropriate to the occasion and indicative of their ecclesiastical rank.

*\*Distinctive to liturgical churches and not ordinarily used by non-liturgical bodies.*

## THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH ~ NEW DAY ~ UNITED IN MISSION; TOGETHER IN HARVEST

The mission of the Free Methodist Church is to make known to all people everywhere God's call to wholeness through forgiveness and holiness in Jesus Christ and to invite into membership and equip for ministry all who respond in faith.

1. The chart below represents the Board of Bishops' commitment to placing mission ahead of method.
2. Responsibility for leadership in achieving the expected outcomes rests with the pastor.
3. Below are expressed the parameters and outcomes expected in every Free Methodist Church.

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### Non-negotiables

- May not live in violation of the Scriptures.
- May not live in violation of the Articles of Religion, the membership covenant, or the mission of the Free Methodist Church.
- May not live in violation of ordination vows.
- May not lead the church in ways which detract from our mission.

### Leadership Initiatives

- Pastors and churches are free to strategize and minister in ways which produce the expected outcomes.

### Expected Outcomes

- Every local church a worshipping community.
- Every local church an enfolding congregation producing disciplined, growing, holy people.
- Every local church a reproducing congregation.
- Every local church regularly reaching the lost for Christ.
- Every local church engaged in our world missionary movement.
- Every local church ministering to the poor and disenfranchised.
- Every local church bringing structures into the service of its mission.



**A CALL TO ACTION**  
Addressed to the Church

In order for the Free Methodist Church to achieve its destiny under God, we must rid ourselves of spiritual lethargy. We must allow the God of power to direct us as we end the 20th century and enter the next. We, as leaders gathered here in St. Petersburg, Florida, on December 10, 1995, commit ourselves and call our people to:

1. **SALVATION:** Celebrating the forgiveness of sins, freedom from shame and guilt, cleansing from the power of sin by the Holy Spirit, and the assurance of salvation;
2. **PRAYER:** Calling ourselves to the practice of prayer, recognizing our total dependence on God for the revival, health and growth of His church;
3. **SCRIPTURE:** Understanding and obeying the Word of God for growth and wholeness in Him;
4. **OBEDIENCE:** Obeying joyfully the Lordship of Christ and ruling out any form of casual Christian living;
5. **WORSHIP:** Experiencing the presence of God through worship which is pleasing to Him and meaningful to the people;
6. **COMMUNITY:** Pursuing a climate of love and trust which makes possible partnership in our common mission;
7. **RECONCILIATION:** Laying aside all prejudice and bigotry and taking the Gospel and love of Jesus to people of all groups and every level of society, leading them to the knowledge of Christ and to full incorporation into His church;
8. **LEADERSHIP:** Honoring the God ordained role of leadership in the church and carefully identifying, developing, and supporting gifted and competent women and men who are called to lead;
9. **MISSIONS:** Pledging ourselves to the global mission of the church ministering worldwide the goodness and grace of Jesus Christ;
10. **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Fulfilling our mission to the glory of God with excellence and careful accountability.

*12/10/95*

## A SOCIAL, URBAN AND ETHNIC AGENDA FOR THE FREE METHODIST CHURCH IN THE NINETIES

The agenda given here is both a description and a strategy. It describes social and demographic realities to which the Church in the nineties must respond. It also challenges the Church, under God, to redemptive applications of the Great Commission in its world. It seeks to integrate evangelism and social justice into a pattern of kingdom obedience.

Is this a comprehensive New Day agenda, including all that the church can do? The answer is no, because this is a focused document. As a focused document, it deals particularly with only certain aspects of the church's life.

Can this agenda bring vitality to the whole church? The answer is yes, because, on the other hand, every aspect of the church's life will be touched as an extension of these challenges.

1. **The future of the Free Methodist Church (as of our society in general) is increasingly an urban, culturally diverse future.** The church prepares for its future by examining the opportunities, obstacles and characteristics of an increasingly urban and multi-ethnic church. This future belongs to those who adequately prepare for it.
2. **The Free Methodist Church cherishes the growing cultural, ethnic and racial diversity of our church.** Cultural diversity and urbanism will be reflected in all denominational materials, media and events.
3. **As Free Methodists, we are recovering the profound biblical convictions on social consciousness, which are part of our history.** We rejoice in our heritage, rejoice to make it known, and rejoice to live it in today's world.
4. **The challenge before Free Methodists is to face the reality of ingrained cultural prejudice, paternalism, and sexism.** All sectors of the church are encouraged to embark on a course of education for acceptance of those who are racially or culturally different.
5. Recognizing that the world is shrinking and there are global dimensions to social, urban and ethnic ministry, **overseas missions and North American ethnic ministries will network in planning initiatives within linguistic groups and in productive exchange of leadership.** The World Fellowship and the Area Fellowships can contribute to this system.
6. **Ethnic/urban/minority leadership development are a priority of the church.** Recruitment, cultivation and training of these leaders will be accelerated. (Increased resources will be devoted to providing opportunity for the development of ethnic/minority and urban leadership with a minimum of social dislocation.)
7. **Regional metropolitan strategies are being developed** to allow groups of churches in a major metropolitan area to network,

strategize and give mutual support. Such strategies encompass the whole metropolitan unit from the inner city to suburbia, and generate awareness of movements and trends within that geographical area. The advantage of this plan is to move problem solving strategy and initiatives closer to the operational arena so that urban, ethnic, and suburban churches are working together to reach the whole metropolitan area for Christ.

8. **The thrust of social, urban, ethnic ministries is in church planting.** A portion of the new churches planted in the 1990s will be urban and/or ethnic. City churches in difficulty and urban/suburban churches in transitional neighborhoods are candidates for re-birth, essentially as new church plants. The techniques of new church planting are more appropriate to these situations than any revitalization strategies currently known.
9. **Successful models of social, urban and ethnic ministries are being analyzed and the insights shared.** We focus on winners and share the news. We plan to invest creativity, personnel and financial resources to create successful models of our own.
10. **New Free Methodist Social Service agencies will be launched to meet people's felt needs as an integral part of evangelism.** These new agencies will be a part of metropolitan strategies, working hand in hand with local churches. A social service agency may serve as the beachhead to establish and multiply new churches in cities without a Free Methodist witness. The Olive Branch Mission in Chicago is a model that could be "franchised" all across the country.
11. **Every local church is challenged to get involved in some significant, intentional social ministry to their community as a part of their outreach to the world.**
12. **Social, urban, and ethnic ministries carry the gospel into many strongholds of evil and thereby require vigorous prayer, great faith in God and the overcoming power of the Holy Spirit.** Direct power encounters with evil seem to occur more frequently and more violently in these circumstances, therefore prayer support like that focused on world missions is necessary to undergird social, urban, and ethnic ministries in the United States.