

## STANDING BUSINESS RULES

### A. PURPOSE

The National Conference shall meet annually to review the Evangelical Congregational Church's purpose, mission and vision; receive Church and Committee reports; discuss Church business; and act on ministerial certification and leadership selection so as to formulate and implement unity of purpose and mission.

### B. ORDER OF BUSINESS

The Order of Business shall include: Devotions, Reading of the Church *Discipline*, Minutes, Address by the Chair, Orders of the Day, Officers' Reports, Standing and Special Committee Reports, Reports from the National Ministry Team, Resolutions, Elections, Unfinished, Miscellaneous and New Business Items.

### C. MEMBERSHIP

Ministers and duly elected local church lay delegates shall be considered members of the National Conference. Members shall choose their seats at the opening session and shall retain the same during the entire session. Members are expected to be in attendance at each of the daily sessions unless excused by the Bishop.

Duly elected alternate lay delegates may make motions, speak in debate and cast the lay delegate's vote only with the authorization of the lay delegate. This authorization can be given only when the lay delegate is to be permanently or temporarily absent from the National Conference business session.

The National Conference Secretary will prepare an official roll of voting members of the National Conference for each National Conference session.

### D. CONFERENCE BOUNDARY

A Conference Boundary shall be fixed to accommodate seating for all delegates. Members desiring to speak and/or vote on any motion must do so within the Boundary.

The following will be granted the privilege to sit within the Conference Boundary as Advisory Members of Conference: former lay delegates; members of Evangelical Congregational Church Affiliates/Boards (Evangelical Theological Seminary, New Dawn Christian Community, Benefits Corporation, Twin Pines Camp, Rock River Bible Camp, and Camp ECCO) and Communities and the National Ministry Team; National Conference Committee members; Mission Conference Representatives; missionaries not in the itinerancy; Administrators and Faculty of the Evangelical Theological Seminary; the Chief Executive Officer of New Dawn Christian Community; full time administrators of Evangelical Congregational camps; ministerial candidates that will come before the National Conference; ministerial candidates not yet in the itinerancy; representatives of church planting churches; ministry staff persons employed by local E.C. churches; persons employed by the National Conference; National Conference Treasurer; and the Conference Solicitor.

### E. ADDRESSING THE CHAIR

Any member desiring to speak on any motion must do so by rising and respectfully addressing the Chair. In case one or more persons should address the Chair simultaneously, the Chair shall decide who is entitled to the floor, which decision shall be subject to appeal to the National Conference.

## **F. INTERRUPTIONS**

No one shall be interrupted while speaking except when the subject is misunderstood, or the introduction of anything out of order is spoken, and then only when so decided by the Chair, or by a majority of the members of the National Conference present.

## **G. SPEAKING MORE THAN ONCE**

No one shall be permitted to speak more than once on the same motion, until all who wish to speak shall have had opportunity, unless by special permission from the Chair.

## **H. MOTIONS**

All motions/resolutions shall be reduced to writing before being voted upon, when requested by the Chair, the Secretary, or any two (2) members of the Conference. When a motion/resolution is under debate, no other motion shall be received excepting those: to adjourn, to lay on the table, request for the previous question, to postpone to a certain day, to refer, to amend, to postpone indefinitely, which shall have precedence in the order in which they are arranged. When a motion/resolution is made and seconded, or a report presented and is in hand with the Secretary, and stated by the Chair, it shall be deemed in the possession of the National Conference, but any such motion/resolution may be withdrawn by the mover at any time before decision by the consent of the National Conference.

## **I. QUORUM**

A majority of the voting ministers and duly elected lay delegates shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

## **J. VOTING**

Every member of the National Conference seated within the Boundary shall give his vote at the time the question is put, except when the Chair, at his discretion, may permit abstentions. If the Chair is unable to determine which of the "ayes" or "no's" prevails, a standing vote shall be taken, or when five (5) members of the National Conference shall demand the count, in which case the roll shall be called by the Secretary, and each member declare, without debate, his assent or dissent to the question.

## **K. PROTEST**

If at any time, one or more members of the National Conference shall protest against any action of the National Conference, their names shall be subscribed thereto, and the protest shall be entered into the *Journal*. They may also declare the reason for their protest in the *Journal* by consent of one-third of the National Conference membership.

## **L. CHAIR DEBATE**

The Chair shall not debate any subject while in the chair, but may be requested by the National Conference to express his opinion and/or answer questions on any subject.

## **M. MINORITY REPORT**

A minority report of a Committee may be offered as an amendment to a majority report, and if so offered, shall be disposed of first.

## **N. QUESTION OF CONDUCT**

No member shall be convicted of any moral offense or of any official misconduct by less than a two-thirds vote of the National Conference.

## **O. MINUTES/REPORTS**

The National Conference Secretary shall keep the minutes of all Conference sessions. The Assistant Secretaries shall read and correct the minutes during the sessions of Conference. A final and full report of a Conference sessions minutes shall be given to the next meeting of the National Executive Committee for approval. Reports to the National Conference by Committees, Communities, Associates, and Affiliate Boards shall be distributed to the National Conference membership prior to the opening of the annual session. Representatives of these ministries shall be available to answer questions and/or receive recommendations from the National Conference.

## **P. BINDING ACTIONS**

Actions recommended for consideration by the National Conference and approved by the members as recorded in the minutes shall be considered binding upon the local church.

## **Q. ROBERT'S RULES**

In all cases not provided for in these rules, the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall serve as the authority.

# **200 National Conference - Annual Meeting**

**201 Date/Location.** The National Conference dates and location shall be set by the Conference Services Committee.

**202 Program.** The program shall be planned by the Conference Network Team. The observance of the Lord's Supper shall take place at an appropriate time during the Conference sessions and shall be conducted by the presiding Bishop.

**203 Expenses.** The Conference Services Committee shall establish the budget for program, meals, and all pertinent expenses. Local churches will pay a registration fee for their pastor(s) and lay delegate to cover the cost of lodging, meals, and the program expenses. Alternate delegates may attend at the expense of the local church. Any additional persons attending conference shall pay a per diem amount. The Conference Finance Office shall collect all fees and pay all expenses.

Ministry Funds will pay for subsidies provided to churches requesting assistance for delegate travel expense. These subsidies may be requested through the Conference Services Committee.

**204 Conference Offerings.** In matters relating to finances during the sessions of National Conference, the following shall apply:

**204.1. Andrew Fund.** An offering for the Andrew Fund will be received. The Andrew Fund shall be used to meet the genuine financial needs of our pastoral families at the discretion of the Bishop, Executive Director and appropriate District Field Director.

**204.2. Episcopal Fund.** An offering for the Episcopal Fund will be received. See 704.2.2. for an explanation.

**205 Conference Membership Roll.**

**205.1. Definition.** The membership of the National Conference is defined in the *Discipline* as follows: "The ministerial membership of the National Conference shall consist of the Elders who are in the itinerancy. Voting

privileges shall be granted to those holding Local Pastor, Local Elder, or Licensed Pastor credentials and are assigned by the Stationing Committee to a charge. (par. 401.1) "The lay membership of the National Conference shall consist of one lay delegate from each congregation in the Conference..." (par.401.2).

**205.2. Alternate Lay Delegates.** A congregation may elect an alternate delegate who would take the place of the delegate as a voting member of the Conference in the event the lay delegate is unable to attend the sessions. The alternate delegate may attend the annual meeting at the expense of the local church. If a lay delegate is absent for a session, the alternate delegate may be seated in his/her place for that session.

**205.3. Advisory Members.** Any person whom the National Conference chooses to appoint as an advisory member may serve in that capacity without the privilege of voting.

**205.4. Establishing the Lay Delegate Roll.** It shall be the responsibility of the pastor to report the name(s) of his lay delegate(s) to the Church Center Office using a form provided for that purpose. A lay delegate membership roll shall be prepared and included in the program booklet for approval by the Conference at its opening session. Changes to this roll shall be reported to the Church Center Office. The National Conference Secretary shall report these changes at the opening session.

**205.5. National Executive Committee Members.** National Executive Committee members will all be afforded voting rights at National Conference and National Ministry Team.

## **206 Conference Officers.**

The officers of the National Conference shall be as provided for in para. 403 of the *Discipline*.

**206.1. Chairman.** The presiding Bishop shall serve as the chairman and president.

**206.2. Vice Chairman.** Elected by and from the Conference Network Team, the Vice Chairman's term shall be concurrent with the term of the presiding Bishop. He shall serve as the vice chairman and vice president.

**206.3. Secretary.** Elected from a ballot provided by the Nominating Committee, the secretary's term shall be concurrent with the term of the presiding Bishop.

**206.3.1. National Conference Journal.** The Secretary shall oversee the editing of the rules of the National Conference as directed by the Conference and coordinate the publication of the *Conference Journal*.

**206.4. Treasurer.** Elected from a ballot provided by the Nominating Committee, the treasurer's term shall be concurrent with the term of the presiding Bishop.

**206.5. Executive Committee.** The chairman, vice chairman, secretary and treasurer shall constitute the National Executive Committee. The Executive Director shall be an advisory member without vote. The committee shall have the power between meetings of the National Ministry Team to take actions on behalf of the National Ministry Team in emergency circumstances which require immediate action. The National Ministry Team may direct the committee to take other specific actions.

**206.6. Assistant Secretaries.** It shall be the prerogative of the secretary to appoint up to four assistant secretaries to carry out the administrative work at the National Conference sessions. One of the assistants shall function as the Conference Reporter.

## **207 Executive Sessions.**

**207.1. Definition.** The National Conference may adjourn an open session and enter into an Executive Session during which time only the lay and pastoral members of the Conference may be present. In this sense it is a closed session. Ministers, not members of the itinerancy, who have served appointments during the year preceding the meeting of the National Conference, shall be permitted to sit in the Executive Sessions of the Conference. The minutes are not published.

**207.2. Agenda.** The following items will be considered in Executive Session: examination of ministers and lay delegates as to their moral and official conduct; consideration of candidates for licentiate, local preacher's license, elder's orders, and itinerancy; transfer of credentials from other E.C. Conferences or other denominations; requests for Approved Elder credential; and other such ministerial credentialing and classification actions that the Ministerial Development Community or Bishop deems necessary for an Executive Session.

**207.3. Ballots.** The results of ballots taken in an Executive Session shall be announced in an open session.

**208 Implementation of Approved Motions.** The Conference Secretary or a named assistant shall be responsible to record and forward all approved motions of the National Conference to the appropriate person or body for implementation.

**209 Conference Journal.** Copies of the **Conference Journal** shall be printed and made available to the churches at cost. A copy shall be made available on the denominational web site. One copy of the Journal on CD shall be provided to each church at no cost.

**210 Conference Records.** A certified copy of the **Conference Journal**, proofread and corrected by the Conference Secretary, shall become the Official Record of the Conference. The Secretary shall copy the minutes of the Executive Sessions into the Official Record. A certified copy shall also be supplied to the Heritage Committee for inclusion in the archives.

**211 Conference Statistician.** The Bishop shall appoint a Conference Statistician. He shall prepare statistical analysis reports to be used in long range strategic planning. The staff of the finance office will have the responsibility of gathering statistics. The value of all denominational property shall be included in the statistical report of the National Conference. The statistical report shall also include the value of bequests received by denominational boards, agencies and communities.

**212 Conference Parliamentarian.** The Bishop shall appoint a Conference Parliamentarian. He shall be a resource to the chair responsible for making sure that the National Conference follows the correct procedures when discussing and enacting on the business of the Conference according to the Rule of Conference and Roberts Rules of Order.

**213 Memorial Secretary.** The Conference Secretary shall appoint a Memorial Secretary. He shall gather information during the conference year concerning the deaths of our ministers, ministers' wives or widows, and lay delegates. The Memorial Secretary shall present the necrology to the National Conference session at a time determined by the Chairman and shall give the Conference Secretary a complete copy of the report.

**214 TEACH Representatives.** The Evangelical Alliance of Churches International (TEACH) is the organization of E.C. Conferences worldwide.

**215 Resolutions.** Congregations wishing to propose a change to the denominational program or polity must present the proposal to their district. If a majority of the District Ministry Team agrees with the proposal, the district may bring a resolution to the National Conference for consideration and adoption. Resolutions which would result in changes to the *Discipline* will be processed as amendments and must be submitted to the Amendments Committee which will present the resolution to the National Ministry Team. The NMT will debate the merit of the amendment and decide by majority vote whether it should be recommended to the National Conference.

Resolutions which could result in changes to the Standing or Special Rules of Conference, or resolutions which could influence the work of the denomination without impacting the rules would be presented by the district directly to the National Conference and require a majority vote for approval. These resolutions must be submitted to the Church Center Office two months prior to the Conference sessions.

#### **216 Indemnification of Officers**

**PENNSYLVANIA'S NEW DIRECTORS' LIABILITY ACT**, January 27, 1987 as it relates to our denomination.

The Directors of the Corporation shall not be personally liable for monetary damages as a result of any action taken, or failure to act, unless such action or inaction constitutes both:

(a) a breach of or failure to perform his duties in compliance with the standards of fiduciary care described in the Directors' Liability Act (i.e., in good faith, in a manner he reasonably believes to be in the best interest of the corporation, and with such care, including reasonable inquiry, skill and diligence, as a person of ordinary prudence would use under similar circumstances) and

(b) self-dealing, willful misconduct or recklessness, subject to exceptions provided by said Act for his responsibility or liability under any criminal statute and his liability for payment of taxes.

Every director and every officer of the Corporation shall be indemnified by the Corporation against all expenses and liability, including counsel fees, reasonably incurred by or imposed upon him in connection with any proceeding to which he may be made a party, or in which he becomes involved, by reason of his being or having been a director or officer of the Corporation, or any settlement thereof, whether or not he is a director or officer at the time that such expenses are incurred, except in such cases wherein the director or officer is adjudged by a court guilty of willful misconduct or recklessness in the performance of his duties, provided however, that such indemnification shall be given in any case wherein the act or failure to act was authorized or later approved by the Board of Directors. In the event of a settlement, the indemnification herein shall apply only when the Board of Directors approves such settlement and reimbursement is deemed for the best interest of the Corporation.

In the event that a director or officer is adjudged guilty of willful misconduct or recklessness, the Board of Directors may, in specific cases, apply the foregoing indemnification.

In a proceeding brought as a derivative action on behalf of the Corporation, the above indemnification shall apply only to expenses and counsel fees unless otherwise specifically authorized by the Board of Directors.

The foregoing right of indemnification shall be in addition to and non-exclusive of all other rights to which such director or officer may be entitled.

The Corporation may on an individual basis, in specific cases, apply the above indemnification to an employee of the Corporation.

## **300. National Conference – Communities**

### **301 Church Health Community**

#### **301.1. Purpose:**

**301.1.1.** To communicate and encourage a health mindset and strategy for advocating healthier church ministries

**301.1.2.** To assess local church health-related needs and potential within their contexts (based on eight essential qualities)

**301.1.3.** To deliver up-to-date resources and workshops that provides creative church health solutions

**301.1.4.** To assist churches in adopting concepts that will ultimately produce health within their contexts

#### **301.2 The Community will:**

**301.2.1.** Discuss the latest church health concepts—stirring the team’s thinking through reading books and exploring web-related resources together.

**301.2.2.** Discuss opportunities and solutions for church health concepts in our cultural setting.

**301.2.3.** Discuss issues derived from district cohorts concerning church health concepts.

**301.2.4.** Explore together church health concepts for congregations in our cultural setting.

**301.2.5.** Focus a segment of the National Conference gathering to church health—providing a district or national level speaker as requested.

#### **301.3. The Scope:**

**301.3.1.** Empowering leadership

**301.3.2.** Gift-oriented ministry

**301.3.3.** Passionate spirituality

**301.3.4.** Functional structures

**301.3.5.** Inspiring worship

**301.3.6.** Holistic small groups

301.3.7. Need-oriented evangelism

301.3.8. Loving relationships

**301.4. Membership:**

301.4.1. The Church Health Associate shall be the chairperson.

301.4.2. The Bishop and the chairman shall appoint the members who are to serve on the community. The National Conference may, by its rules, populate each community by assigning various groups, committees and entities into existing communities based on their assigned work and create new communities when practical. The Bishop and the chairperson may choose to expand or reduce the size of membership within the community or its parts in order to provide for better functionality and the need for growth and flourishing within the community.

**302 Global Ministries Community**

**302.1. Purpose:**

302.1.1. To serve the local church by providing resources for fulfilling the Great Commission to the ends of the earth.

302.1.2. To assist in identifying those whom God is calling to this specialized form of ministry.

302.1.3. To help to develop a prayer support network.

302.1.4. Partner with and assist in the development of national (self-governing, self-directing, self-supporting, and self-propagating) churches.

302.1.5. To cooperate with inter-denominational mission boards, so as to develop channels, through the provision of personnel and resources, toward the effective communication of the gospel, without necessarily exporting the name of the Evangelical Congregational Church, nor its form of government.

**302.2. The Scope:**

**302.2.1. Field Committees:**

302.2.1.1. Japan

302.2.1.2. India/Nepal

302.2.1.3. Mexico

302.2.1.4. Liberia

302.2.1.5. Chaplaincy

**302.2.2. Function Committees:**

302.2.2.1. Executive Committee

302.2.2.2. Finance Committee

302.2.2.3. Volunteer Services

302.2.2.4. Work Teams

302.2.2.5. Mission Minded Kids

302.2.2.6. Short-term Mission Rep

302.2.2.7. Missionary Prayer Partner Coordinator

**302.3. Membership:**

302.3.1. The Global Ministries Associate shall be the chairperson.

302.3.2. The Bishop and the chairperson shall appoint the members who are to serve on the community. The National Conference may, by its rules, populate each community by assigning various groups, committees and entities into existing communities based on their assigned work and create new communities when practical. The Bishop and the chairperson may choose to expand or reduce the size of membership within the community or its parts in order to provide for better functionality and the need for growth and flourishing within the community.

**303 Kingdom Extension Community**

**303.1. Purpose:**

303.1.1. To communicate and encourage a kingdom mindset and strategy for extending the kingdom

303.1.2. To assess local church potential for extending the kingdom within their contexts

303.1.3. To deliver up-to-date resources and workshops that provide creative solutions for extending the kingdom

**303.1.4.** To assist local churches in adopting concepts that will ultimately extend the kingdom within their contexts

**303.1.5.** To facilitate discussions among pastors and church leaders in district cohorts about kingdom extension within our cultural setting

**303.2. The Community will:**

**303.2.1.** Discuss the latest kingdom extension concepts—stirring the team’s thinking through reading books and exploring web-related resources together.

**303.2.2.** Discuss opportunities and solutions for kingdom extension in our cultural setting.

**303.2.3.** Discuss issues derived from district cohorts concerning kingdom extension.

**303.2.4.** Explore together kingdom extension for congregations in our cultural setting.

**303.2.5.** Focus a segment of the National Conference gathering to kingdom extension—providing a district or national level speaker as requested.

**303.3. The Scope:**

**303.3.1.** Apostolic Training (recruitment, assessment, & coaching)

**303.3.2.** Local Church/Context Facilitation

**303.3.3.** Publicity & Partnering

**303.4. Membership:**

**303.4.1.** The Kingdom Extension Associate shall be the chairperson.

**303.4.2.** The Bishop and the chairperson shall appoint the members who are to serve on the community.

The National Conference may, by its rules, populate each community by assigning various groups, committees and entities into existing communities based on their assigned work and create new communities when practical. The Bishop and the chairperson may choose to expand or reduce the size of membership within the community or its parts in order to provide for better functionality and the need for growth and flourishing within the community.

**304 Ministerial Development Community**

**304.1. Purpose:**

**304.1.1.** To serve and support the denomination’s mission for ministerial leadership

**304.1.2.** To oversee and maintain an integrated process for credentialing

**304.1.3.** To deliver up-to-date resources and workshops that provide lifelong learning opportunities for our ministerial leadership

**304.1.4.** To oversee the administration of the credentialing process when needed

**304.1.5.** To resource local churches and pastors for proper sponsoring of candidates

**304.1.6.** To direct the Pastoral Assessment Center

**304.1.7.** To identify, recruit, train, and support itinerants for the work of interviewing and screening candidates

**304.1.8.** To maintain the relationship between the denomination and the seminary programs

**304.1.9.** To coordinate the field training and coaching of candidates

**304.1.10.** To help to provide lifelong learning opportunities for active pastors

**304.1.11.** To provide resources for those involved with transitional ministry situations

**304.2. The Scope:**

**304.2.1.** Pastoral Assessment Center

**304.2.2.** Board of Examiners

**304.2.3.** Seminary Relations (Church Partnership/Student Aid)

**304.2.4.** Pastoral Coaching & Personal Health

**304.2.5.** Lifelong Learning

**304.3 Membership**

**304.3.1.** The Ministerial Development Associate shall be the chairperson.

**304.3.2.** The Bishop and the chairperson shall appoint the members who are to serve on the community.

The National Conference may, by its rules, populate each community by assigning various groups, committees and entities into existing communities based on their assigned work and create new communities when practical. The



Bishop and the chairperson may choose to expand or reduce the size of membership within the community or its parts in order to provide for better functionality and the need for growth and flourishing within the community.

### **305 Missional Alignment Community**

#### **305.1. Purpose**

**305.1.1.** To assist the Bishop to cast the vision for the denomination in keeping with God's mission for his church

**305.1.2.** To assess local church needs and potential for missional alignment within our current culture setting

**305.1.3.** To deliver up-to-date theological approaches in order to provide missional alignment for our churches

**305.1.4.** To assist churches in staying the course that will ultimately translate missional alignment to our current culture setting

**305.1.5.** To facilitate discussions among pastors and church leaders in district cohorts about missional alignment within our cultural setting

**305.1.6.** Discuss the latest missional alignment concepts—stirring the team's thinking through reading books and exploring web-related resources together.

**305.1.7.** Discuss opportunities and solutions for missional alignment in our cultural setting.

**305.1.8.** Discuss issues derived from district cohorts concerning missional alignment.

**305.1.9.** Explore together missional alignment for congregations in our cultural setting.

**305.1.10.** Focus a segment of the National Conference gathering to missional alignment—providing a district or national level speaker as requested.

#### **305.2. The Scope:**

**305.2.1.** Faith & Doctrine

**305.2.2.** Denominational Heritage

**305.2.3.** Amendments to Journal

**305.2.4.** Social Response and Action

**305.2.5.** Prayer Mobilization

#### **305.3. Membership:**

**305.3.1.** The Bishop shall be the chairperson.

**305.3.2.** The Bishop shall appoint the members who are to serve on the community. The National Conference may, by its rules, populate each community by assigning various groups, committees and entities into existing communities based on their assigned work and create new communities when practical. The Bishop may choose to expand or reduce the size of membership within the community or its parts in order to provide for better functionality and the need for growth and flourishing within the community.

## **400. National Conference - Committees**

*The standing committees of the National Conference have a continuing existence and are appointed to give a task more attention than is possible in a larger body. The special committees are assigned a specific task which does not fall within the assigned function of a standing committee. The special committee ceases to exist when the task is complete. Unless otherwise noted, all committees and their chairpersons and secretaries are appointed by the Bishop in consultation with the Conference Network Team with no limitations placed on membership. The Bishop shall serve as an ex-officio member of standing committees. The standing committees are as follows:*

**401 Amendments** - The committee receives and prepares amendment proposals which will be presented to the National Ministry Team for consideration according to the amendment process set forth in the *Discipline*.

**402 Episcopacy** - The committee shall counsel, confer and consult with the Bishop concerning his relationships with the Church and its leaders, and matters related to the personal and family needs of the Bishop. They may also assist the Bishop in formulating performance standards. Its members are appointed by the Bishop in consultation with the Conference Network Team. There are no limitations on membership but the NMT may direct that certain persons are appointed by virtue of their position.

**403 Finance** - The committee receives budgetary requests and prepares a budget that provides for the overall ministry of the National Conference. The budget and annual ministry funds rate are recommended to the National Conference by this committee. It quarterly reviews all financial functions of all National Conference Funds and recommends policies to the National Conference. The committee recommends minimum salary levels and benefits packages for pastors, the Bishop, the Executive Director, Associates, District Field Directors, and the Stationing Elders. The membership shall include the treasurer who shall serve as chair. The Executive Director shall serve as an advisory member.

**403.1.** The Finance Committee shall serve as the Audit Committee. The committee receives and reviews the audit of the National Conference financial records as well as the audit reports of all affiliated agencies and institutions.

**404 Nominating** - The committee secures nominations for Conference officers and other elected positions as directed by the National Conference. The bishop shall serve as an ex-officio member.

**405 Stationing** - The committee appoints pastors to the congregations of the Evangelical Congregational Church following the procedures set forth in section 900. Chaired by the Bishop, the membership includes two Stationing Elders elected from and by each region of the denomination, and one District Field Director from each region elected by the Conference Network Team. The term is five (5) years with no term limit.

**406 Assignment Privilege** - The Bishop and the National Conference may assign such other duties to a committee as either deems appropriate.

## **600. National Conference – Elections and Evaluations**

### **601 Election of a Bishop**

#### **601.1. Composition of the Election Body**

The National Conference shall elect the Bishop.

#### **601.2. The Meeting of the Election Body**

The election body shall meet to elect a bishop every five years. The Bishop will chair the sessions of the election body. In the absence of the Bishop, the conference shall elect a Presiding Officer from among the Itinerant Elders (*Discipline*, Para. 403.1)

#### **601.3. The Process of Election**

The balloting will be preceded by an extensive period of prayer to seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The election will be conducted by secret ballot and the ballots will be counted in open session. Balloting will continue until one person secures a majority of the votes cast.

Prior to the meeting of the election body, the National Ministry Team will appoint a Special Nominating Committee to secure the names of qualified candidates and prepare a ballot of the nominees. This committee will interview candidates and decide on the persons to be placed on the ballot. The ballot will be distributed to the electors at least one month prior to the election. The slate of nominees will contain a sufficient number of candidates (preferably more than two) to insure a range of styles, visions, etc. Included with the name of each candidate will be a

biographical sketch, a description of the candidate's leadership style, comments from each candidate on his view of the current state of the Evangelical Congregational Church, and his vision of her future.

Individual electors may submit the names of additional qualified persons for inclusion on the ballot provided the elector secures the permission of the candidate, the necessary documentation (see above), and the support of at least seven other electors. These additional nominations must be submitted in writing to the Church Center Office at least two weeks prior to the election.

#### **601.4. Other items related to the transition**

Other items that relate to the transition, such as the date the bishop-elect shall assume office, provision for interim Episcopal leadership if needed, and items related to the retiring Bishop, will be cared for by the National Ministry Team at a meeting to be held as soon as possible after the election.

### **602 Election of Stationing Elders**

#### **602.1. Meeting of the Election Body**

The pastors and lay delegates of the respective regions of the Evangelical Congregational Church will elect their Stationing Elders at a designated meeting during the sessions of the National Conference of the entire Church.

#### **602.2. The Process of Election**

When Stationing Elders need to be elected the elders from the respective regions shall be notified and invited to apply. The resumes of the men who apply shall be distributed to the Conference delegates and a secret ballot shall be taken with all pastoral and lay delegates from the respective regions voting.

**602.2.1.** – Due to the geographical size of the Great Lakes Region, there shall be one Stationing Elder elected from among the Elders of the Illinois District. The second Stationing Elder shall be elected from among the Elders of the Buckeye and Allegheny Districts.

### **603 Vacancies**

When a vacancy occurs among the employed leaders of the Evangelical Congregational Church because of death, resignation, retirement or suspension, the vacancy will be filled by the Executive Committee of the elections body which will appoint a person or persons to assume the responsibilities of the office until the next meeting of the electing/affirming body at which time a successor will be elected/affirmed. If the position has a term limit, the person elected/affirmed would begin his first five-year term.

The appointment of a person to fill a vacancy in the office of Bishop will take place according to the provisions of paragraph 406.1.1.2 of the *Discipline*.

### **604 Evaluations**

The performance of each of the persons holding these positions will be evaluated every three years. The National Ministry Team will be responsible for the evaluation of the Bishop. The Bishop shall not be involved in the appointment of his own evaluation team. In each case there shall be input in the final appraisal by members of the constituencies being served by the position holder. It is assumed that each leader will also make a self-evaluation. The results of evaluations should be presented to the subsequent session of the National Conference by the National Ministry Team for all positions.