

**DUNKARD BRETHREN**  
**CHURCH MANUAL**

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# **CHAPTER 1**

## **CHURCH MEMBERSHIP, COVENANT AND BAPTISM**

The Church is composed of persons who covenant to be loyal to the principles of the Gospel, as understood by the church.

By conviction of sin, conversion and confession of our sins, by faith in Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, as revealed to us by the Holy Scriptures, and baptism by trine immersion, we enter into covenant relation with one another, as one body in Christ Jesus. Thus, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, we mutually agree to walk together in Christian love, to strive together for the advancement of the church in knowledge, holiness and prosperity; to promote spirituality, humility and peace; to sustain its worship, ordinances, and doctrines, and cheerfully to contribute of the means that God gives us, for the building of churches, for supporting the ministry when needed, for missionary work, for supporting the poor, and every other good work that tends to the enlargement of Christ's kingdom on earth and the good of its subjects.

We also engage to live truthful and exemplary lives before the world; to have private devotions in our family; to religiously instruct and educate our children; to labor for the physical and spiritual good of our neighbors and those with whom we associate; to be honest and upright in all of our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment, to watch over each other in brotherly love, pray for each other and aid each other in sickness and distress, ever remembering that best of all rules, "Do unto others as you would have others do unto you."

An applicant for membership from another denomination, who has knowingly been disowned, or left that denomination because of offenses caused by him, be required to right the wrong committed in that denomination before being taken into membership in the Dunkard Brethren Church.

Members may be accepted into the Dunkard Brethren Church from religious groups of similar faith and practice, who have been baptized by trine immersion for the remission of sins, after being fully instructed, as are all applicants for membership, and are to be asked to make the usual answer acceptance, approved by the Church Council.

Baptism – Baptism is administered in water, and this, entered into sincerely, and in the answer of a good conscience toward God, is succeeded by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. Being born of water and of the Spirit is the entrance into the Kingdom of God here on earth.

The applicants, or persons, applying for baptism, after answering that they are willing to conform to the scriptures as understood by the church, that they, after hearing the reading of Matt. 18:10-22, are willing to be governed by that scripture in the adjustment of personal difficulties that may arise, are taken into water of proper depth so that when they kneel down the water will immerse the body when bowed forward in the name of each of the Holy Trinity.

When properly settled upon the knees, the applicant is asked the three following questions, which are answered "Yes".

1. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and that he brought from Heaven a saving Gospel?
2. Do you willingly renounce the Devil with all the sinful pleasures and practices of this world?
3. Do you covenant with God through Christ to be faithful unto death?

Then the Elder or Minister administering the baptism says: On this confession of faith which you have made before God and these witnesses I baptize you for the remission of sins, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, timing the three immersions of the body under the water to the words as spoken.

While the applicant retains the kneeling posture, the administrator lays his hands on the head of the one baptized and prays for the forgiveness of his or her sins, the bestowal of the Holy Spirit and His comforting influence and guidance, and that his or her name be written in the Lamb's Book of Life.

On coming up out of the water the one baptized is received by hand and kiss into church fellowship.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THE CHURCH VISIT**

For the church visit there is no direct Scriptural authority, but it has always been a practice in the church as a means to an end. The end desired is that all the members may be in unity and peace, so that they may participate in the Communion services in a worthy manner. I Cor. 11:27.

The visit is made by the deacons of the church, it being a part of their official duty. Ministers have the liberty to make, or assist in making, the visit if they think it best that they should do so, especially in cases where deacons have had no experience in this kind of church work. In cases of necessity, lay members may also be called upon to assist in the visit.

The design of the visit is to determine the spiritual condition of the members, and if there is any trouble existing in the minds of any in regard to their faith, or any trouble between member and member, it is the duty of those making the visit to inquire into the nature of such troubles, and, as far as possible, assist in having them satisfactorily adjusted and removed. If this cannot be done, they must be reported to the church.

The visit is made prior to the Communion meetings, and it is thought best that two should go together and go from house to house. The importance of this visit cannot be overestimated, and therefore it should be made with great care, taking time enough at each house, when practicable, to have a season of worship with the family.

As a guide to the character of the visit, the following form of questions has been submitted:

1. Are you still in the faith of the Gospel, as you declared when you were baptized?
2. Are you, as far as you know, in peace and union with the church?
3. Will you still labor with the Brethren for an increase of holiness, both in yourself and others?
4. Liberty should be given to members to bring anything they may desire to, and which they may think the good of the church requires, before the visiting brethren.

After all the members have been visited, the deacons, or those who make the visit, report what they have found, or the condition of the members, at a church meeting appointed for the purpose and to make the necessary arrangements for Communion services.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **CHURCH OFFICIALS**

The Eldership of Bishopric is the highest office in the Church. Elders are advanced from the ministry to the Eldership in the congregation where they reside and hold their membership. The authority to ordain elders shall be and is vested in the elders of the District; the request may originate in the official body of the congregation, the presiding elder of the congregation, or in the District Elders' Meeting.

The Elders assembled at District Meeting, or when called together at any other time, shall consult as to the ordination of all Elders to be effected in the District. If a majority of the Elders decide that the ordination should be made, they shall appoint a committee of two or more elders who shall go to the church and, in council with it, if they find no Gospel objections, the ordination shall be made.

Elders when conducting an election for any official position or in ordaining an elder should inform the congregation as to disqualifications, such as divorce, separation from wife, lack of faithfulness and not being in order. If any members desire to vote for one so disqualified they should be informed accordingly. In all cases the appropriate scripture pertaining to the work in hand should be read. (I Pet. 5:1-4; I Tim. 3:1-13; Titus 1:1-11; II Tim. 2:1-4; II Tim. 4:1-5).

#### **The Ordination Charge**

Dear brother (naming him), the Church having called you to the ministry of the word, and on trial found you faithful, now proposes to ordain you an Elder or Bishop, by the laying on of hands of the presbytery. In ordaining you an Elder, the church gives you all the rights, authority and responsibilities of the office. You are authorized to preside in council meetings in which official members are tried, at home, or in other congregations when called to do so; to preside in District Meeting or in General conference; to give the charge to ministers and deacons and install them into their respective offices. It will be your duty to faithfully preach the word,

and to care for the spiritual needs of all the members, being yourself an example to the church in all holiness and purity of heart, walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.

It will be your duty in all the affairs of the church, when presiding over a congregation, to counsel with your official brethren and the church, taking the oversight not by constraint, but willingly, not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind, and in no way to lord it over God's heritage. In restoring transgressors to membership in the church, you will require them to make acknowledgement of their errors, and ask forgiveness of the church, and promise thenceforth to live faithfully to their vows.

Being in the Eldership or Bishopric, you are equal with all other Elders; this phrase nevertheless, in the apostolic injunction, "Ye younger submit yourselves to the elder," still applies to you. The church will not allow you to depart from the order of the general Brotherhood in faith and practice, but will hold you to the faith and practice of the Scriptures as defined by the Brotherhood in General Conference assembled. Should you manifest an arbitrary, self-willed and domineering spirit, the church will hold you subject to her councils, and suspend you, and take from you all the authority she now gives you and reduce you to the ministry, the laity, or even expel you from membership if necessary.

Now, dear brother (naming him), do you willingly accept the position into which the church hereby proposes to put you? And do you, in good faith, without any mental reservation, accept and adopt all the doctrine and practice of the General Brotherhood, in her plainness of dress and non-conformity to the world? And do you promise to unite your labors with all your faithful brethren, everywhere, to observe and enforce all the faith and practices of the General Brotherhood?

After the one being ordained has answered satisfactorily the foregoing questions, his wife, if a member, should be asked the following:

Having heard the charge to your husband, do you as his helpmeet, freely and unrestrainedly, covenant to stand by him and support him in the duties and responsibilities now placed upon him?

Both should then be asked to kneel and hands should be laid upon the one being ordained, accompanied by prayer; after which they are received by the members of the congregation by the right hand of fellowship and the kiss of charity, in the usual orderly way.

### **Election For Officials**

1. Before an election for any church official is called for in a congregation, a majority of the officials must be in favor of holding said election.
2. According to the Apostolic example and the custom or practice of the early church, our ministers and deacons are chosen from the congregation. It is thought best not to give opportunity for electioneering; so when the official council has approved the election, the work should proceed.
3. In all meetings for an election, the presiding elder should have charge, either conducting the opening devotions or choosing another to do so.

4. After the opening devotions are concluded, the presiding elder announces to the congregation the purpose of the committee's presence and turns the service over to them.
5. The committee proceeds with the work as follows: In privacy they receive the ballots of each individual in a ballot box. (A two-thirds majority must favor an election before it can be held and only members twelve years old and older are eligible to vote.)
6. If a favorable vote is obtained, the committee then announces an election making such remarks as are appropriate and stating that the election is for the number of ministers and/or deacons requested by the officials (one, two, or three, etc.)
7. The committee proceeds with the meeting reading II Timothy 2:1-4 and II Timothy 4:1-5 for ministers and I Timothy 3:1-13 for deacons, followed by comments as the Spirit may lead, also stating disqualifications such as divorce, separation from wife, lack of faithfulness, not in the order of the church, and not upholding Conference decisions. Following this, a special prayer is engaged in by the congregation, seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit in the election.
8. The voice of the church is then taken in privacy by ballot vote. Ballots are to be dropped in a box in the presence of the Election Committee.
9. When voting for one official, one name is placed on the ballot. When voting for two officials for the same office, two names are to be placed on the ballot. When voting for three officials for the same office, three names are to be placed on the ballot.
10. For an election to be effected when voting for officials, a majority vote is necessary.
11. When voting for one and two are tied (or nearly so) each shall receive at least 40% of the votes cast on ballots. Only those having the required number of votes to be installed after a 2/3 majority of the congregation approves of such action.

### **Charge to Minister**

Dear brother, (naming him), the church having chosen you for the ministry, and having confidence in your fidelity and integrity, authorizes you to preach the Gospel, appoint meetings for preaching according to the general order and practice of the Dunkard Brethren Church, to administer the ordinance of baptism, and also to give the instructions preceding baptism when requested by the presiding elder to do so; to take the counsel of the church on the admission of applicants for baptism, to officiate at lovefeast in the absence of an elder, or when requested to do so by the elder or elders present; to solemnize the rite of marriage according to the laws of the State and the usages of the church; to conduct funerals, and to assist in anointing the sick when a second elder is not procurable. You are not authorized to install officers in the church, nor to give an official charge, such as I am now doing; nor to preside in council when an official of the church is being tried or dealt with; nor to make appointments in any congregation unless specifically so authorized by the presiding elder.

You will understand that while the church now invests you with the rights and privileges enumerated, she will hold you to the Apostolic injunction, "Ye younger, submit yourselves to the elder; yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility; for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." (I Peter 5:5.) You are, if possible, more than ever amenable to the councils of the

church; and if you manifest an arbitrary selfwill, and domineering spirit, the same authority which now gives you these privileges will, if need requires it, suspend you, and take from you all the authority she now gives you, and even deprive you of membership.

Do you promise to respect the responsibilities and authority now vested in you, and to abide by the instructions which you have just received?

After the one being installed has answered satisfactorily the foregoing questions, his wife, if a member, should be asked the following:

Having heard the charge to your husband, do you as his helpmeet, freely and unrestrainedly, covenant to stand by him and support him in the duties and responsibilities now placed upon him?

Both should then be asked to kneel and hands should be laid upon the one being installed, accompanied by prayer; after which they are received by the members of the congregation by the right hand of fellowship and the kiss of charity, in the usual orderly way.

### **Charge of Deacons**

Dear brother (naming him), feeling the need of help in the deacon's office, the church has seen fit to call you into that important service. In serving in this capacity, it is your duty to visit the sick, the poor and distressed, and report their condition, that their wants may be attended to. In the work of administering to the needy, a correct account should be kept and reported to the church. It is also your duty to attend to the annual visit, from house to house.

When matters of importance are to be investigated, it is your duty, when requested, to accompany the Elder or minister, or you may be sent alone to investigate the matter and report.

At Lovefeast time it is your duty to see that the necessary preparations are made, that the tables are served, and that everything is attended to in proper time and order. Likewise, also when a District Meeting is held in your congregation.

It is your duty to assist the ministry, when called upon by reading the Scriptures, leading in prayer, and to bear testimony to what has been said by the minister. When there is no one in the ministry present, it is your duty to take charge of the meeting, conducting the services in the regular way, even to commenting on the Scriptures and exhorting, if it can be done to edification.

After the one being installed has answered satisfactorily the foregoing questions, his wife, if a member, should be asked the following:

Having heard the charge to your husband, do you as his helpmeet, freely and unrestrainedly, covenant to stand by him and support him in the duties and responsibilities now placed upon him?

Both should then be asked to kneel and hands should be laid upon the one being installed, accompanied by prayer; after which they are received by the members of the congregation by the right hand of fellowship and the kiss of charity, in the usual orderly way.



Good loyal, faithful and true officials, after accepting the instructions and requirements applying to all applicants for membership in the Dunkard Brethren Church, may be accepted in their respective office as follows:

- A -Ministers and Deacons, in the same office.
- B -Elders may be accepted as ministers only.
- C -Their placement in office is to be approved by an affirmative vote of the Congregation.
- D -The method of placement into office in such cases is the regular installation service as given in the church manual.
- E -In all Councils involving officials, the Discipline Committee of the District shall be in charge, with the cooperation of the presiding elder, so as to avoid accusations of congregationalism.

### **Church Officers**

In addition to elders, ministers, and deacons, each congregation should have a presiding Elder, three or five Trustees, a Treasurer, and a Clerk.

PRESIDING ELDER – Paul’s instruction to Timothy was to ordain Elders in all the churches, and when practicable this is to be desired and practiced.

The church, in order to avoid confusion and uncertainty as to responsibility, and to secure proper oversight of the congregation; uses the method of choosing from among the Elders one to preside over the congregation. It is thought best to have a fixed term of office of 2 or 3 years for the presiding eldership.

No Elder shall be elected as presiding Elder of any congregation without the majority of votes of members present, at the time of the election.

TRUSTEES – The duties of the trustees are to have oversight of all church property, and to see that all deeds are properly made, recorded, and preserved.

TREASURER – The Treasurer shall receive all funds and pay all bills as directed by the church. He shall keep a correct book of accounts, and as often as called for, shall lay before the church council a statement of funds so received and paid. Once a year he shall make a written report, same to be audited by two auditors appointed by the church for that purpose.

CLERK – The clerk shall keep an accurate record of the proceedings of all church councils, fill out certificates of membership, take charge of all records, and keep a record of the membership of the congregation. Or a congregation may designate a separate clerk to keep the record of membership.

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **ANOINTING THE SICK**

We believe the anointing of the sick to be an appointment of the Lord, and that it was intended to be perpetuated in His church, and should be attended to, at the

request of the sick, by the elders of the church. "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church; and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord." James 5:14

The Scriptural specification is for the anointing to be performed by two Elders. In practice, the church has permitted a minister, or even a deacon in extreme cases, to assist an elder when a second elder is not at all available.

The anointing service appropriately consists of singing a hymn, in whole or in part, and reading of James 5:10-18 with comments thereon, followed by prayer. This prayer may well include petition for the spiritual preparation of the one to be anointed, those performing the anointing, as well as in behalf of all humanity.

When deemed expedient, the applicant for the anointing should be questioned as to his or her desire, purpose, or object in calling for the anointing, followed by such other questions as may seem profitable in light of the Scriptural teaching on anointing.

The sick member is then raised to a sitting posture, if convenient, and the elder leading in the work holds forth his hand and the one assisting pours oil into the hand of the leading elder who applies it to the head of the sick. Similarly, this is done a second and a third time, the leading elder using the words, successively, We anoint you dear brother (or sister) in the name of the Lord unto the perfecting of your faith, unto the healing of your body, and unto the forgiveness of all your sins. This is followed by the laying on of hands on the head of the one being anointed, by the two brethren and closing with the Lord's prayer.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **COUNCIL MEETINGS**

Council Meetings are of two kinds, the Official Council and the Church or Congregational Council.

**Official Council.** The official council consists of all the officials of the congregation present, and is presided over by the presiding elder of the congregation or some other elder designated by him. In the absence of an elder, a minister may preside in the official council but only to consider matters within the scope of the charge given to him as a minister.

The business of the official council is to prepare the program of business for the church council; a majority of officials favoring an item of business makes it business for the church council. Also to give attention and appropriate care to other matters pertaining to the welfare of the church.

**Church Council.** Church councils are composed of all members present belonging to the congregation.

The presiding elder of the congregation shall be the moderator in all church councils. In his absence, or by his request any elder or minister present may act as moderator.

It shall be the duty of the Moderator to keep order, and state and explain propositions. He shall cause the meetings to be opened and closed with prayer, and shall call for the business of the meeting in the following order:

1. The reading of the minutes of the previous meeting as may be needed for information.
2. Receive letters of membership of members who have moved into the congregation.
3. Give letters of membership to those who have moved out of the congregation.
4. Hear reports of committees and other unfinished business.
5. New business.
6. Reading of minutes for correction and approval.

Matters affecting the local church, the district or the general Brotherhood are proper subjects for the church council to handle, and its decisions are final or purely local matters.

A minority when acting in harmony with decisions of General Conference cannot be overruled.

On all important matters each member 12 years of age and older should vote, "Silence for consent," not sufficient.

### **RULES OF ORDER**

#### **Officers and Members**

1. The Moderator having taken the chair and called the meeting to order, the other officers shall, at his direction, take their respective seats.
2. The Moderator shall restrain the members with parliamentary usage.
3. The Moderator shall have the preference to speak on points of order, but should always give an opportunity to any member to express his opinions.
4. Any person addressing the meeting or Chair shall rise.
5. A member is not entitled to the floor until he has addressed the Chair, and has been recognized by the Chair.
6. If two or more members rise and address themselves to the Chair at the same time, or nearly so, he should give the floor to the member whose voice he first heard.
7. The person by whom a motion is made should be entitled to the first speech.
8. If a member be misrepresented by a speaker, he should be entitled to the floor to defend himself.
9. A member shall not be interrupted while speaking, except to call him to order, to ask leave to explain, or to state a matter of privilege.
10. A member, digressing from the matter of the question, or using improper language against the meeting or any member, shall be called to order.

11. A member called to order shall take his seat until the point is decided (unless he is permitted to explain), after which he may continue his remarks if the meeting does not object.

### **Appeals**

12. If the decision of the Chair is not satisfactory, an appeal may be made immediately after the decision has been rendered by the Moderator.
13. An appeal must be made by motion, seconded by three members.
14. The question is then stated by the Moderator: "Shall the decision of the Chair stand as the decision of the meeting?" After having been open for debate, it is decided as any other question.
15. The Moderator is allowed to take part in the debate, either from the Chair, or by appointing a Chairman pro tempore while he occupies the floor.
16. A motion to lay an appeal on the table is always in order.

### **Motions and Resolutions**

17. When a motion, made and seconded, has been stated by the Moderator, or caused by him to be read, it is in the possession of the meeting.
18. Before a motion is in the possession of the meeting, it is not in order for any other motion to be made, or for any member to speak on it.
19. After a motion is in the possession of the meeting, it cannot be withdrawn by the mover, if objections are made to the withdrawal, unless he obtains leave to do so, by a motion made and seconded as in other cases.
20. Before a motion has been stated or read, it is competent for the mover to withdraw or modify it without any motion for the purpose.
21. When a motion is regularly before the meeting, no other motion can be received unless it is privileged.
22. No motion can be made without rising and addressing the Chair, and being called to by the Moderator.
23. When a question has been decided, a motion to reconsider it cannot be made before some other motion or business has intervened.
24. Motions to suppress a useless or inexpedient proposition, are the previous question and indefinite postponement. Motions to defer the consideration of a question are postponement to some future time and to lie on the table.
25. A question of order may be raised by any member, and is decided without discussion by the Moderator, as follows: "The point is well taken, or, "The point is not well taken," as the case may be. If his decision is not satisfactory, however, any member may appeal from it and have the question decided by the meeting, subject to the rules for appeal.

### **Debate**

26. No member shall interrupt another while speaking, except in accordance with Rule No. 9.
27. No person, in speaking, shall be allowed to mention a member then present by his name; but shall describe him as the member who spoke

- last, or last but one, or on the other side of the question, or by some other equivalent expression.
28. No person shall digress from the matter of the question under debate, to fall upon the person of another, and to speak reviling, nipping, or unmannerly words of, or to, him.
  29. All motions, resolutions, etc., are debatable, except: (1) A motion to adjourn; (2) a motion to lie on the table; (3) a motion for the previous question; (4) a motion to read a paper, pending a question.

### **Order And Succession of Question**

30. When a question is regularly before the meeting, no other question can be put except: (1) Privileged Questions: Motion to adjourn, question of privilege, motion for orders of the day; (2) Incidental Questions: Questions of order, motion for the reading of papers, withdrawal of a motion, suspension of a rule, amendment of an amendment; (3) Subsidiary Questions: Motion to lie on the table, postponement to a day certain, commitment, amendment, postpone indefinitely.

These motions are arranged in their order of precedence among themselves.

31. A motion to adjourn, unqualified, takes precedence of all others, and is always in order, except (1) When a member is speaking; (2) when the meeting is voting; (3) when no business has been transacted since a motion to adjourn has been decided in the negative.
32. When no other business is before the meeting, a motion to adjourn may be amended. When it supersedes the pending question, it must simply be to "adjourn," without any particular day added, and cannot be amended.
33. A motion to adjourn except to a day certain is not debatable.
34. A motion to lie on the table, decided affirmatively, removes the matter before the meeting, until by a motion and vote it be again taken up.
35. A motion to lie on the table cannot be amended, nor can it be debated.
36. When a member moves the previous question, and this is seconded, the Chair must immediately put the question: "Shall the main question be now put?" A negative decision suppresses the main question for the day. If decided in the affirmative, the main question is to be put immediately.
37. A motion for the previous question cannot be amended or debated.
38. A motion to postpone to a day certain may be amended by substituting one day for another.
39. A subject should be referred to a committee when more careful consideration is required than can be given in the meeting. A subject may also be recommitted.
40. A motion to commit or recommit may be amended by substituting one committee for another, by altering the numbers, or by instructions.
41. In form, an amendment may be made by: (1) Inserting or adding certain words; (2) striking out certain words; (3) striking out certain words, and inserting or adding others.
42. An amendment may be amended, but an amendment to an amendment cannot be amended.

43. An amendment to an amendment must be decided first.
44. A vote either adopting or rejecting an amendment cannot afterward be altered, except to reconsider.
45. A motion to postpone indefinitely may be amended by making it to a day certain. A matter indefinitely postponed cannot be renewed.
46. All doctrinal queries or petitions with their answers, be voted on by ballot. All other business optional, by ballot or otherwise.

Doctrinal queries shall require a two-thirds majority to pass.

### **Committee**

47. A Committee may be appointed to consider any particular subject, to obtain information, or to perform certain duties.
48. A Committee may be instructed by the meeting at the time of appointment, or while in the performance of its duties, if necessary.
49. The number on a special Committee shall be determined by the Moderator, or by the members of the meeting.
50. The member first named by the Moderator shall act as Chairman, or the Committee shall elect its own Chairman, unless he be designated by the mover of the motion to appoint.
51. A Committee once discharged may be revived. A Committee appointed for one purpose, may perform other duties of the same or different character.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **RULES IN CASE OF OFFENCES**

Our rules are based on those given in the 18<sup>th</sup> chapter of Matthew, and are as follows:

1. When an offence is given to a member, in language or conduct, if the offense relates only to himself, the offended shall, without consulting any one, go to the offender with an honest purpose to be reconciled, if possible. If satisfaction is given, he shall forgive and no more be said about it.
2. If satisfaction be not given, it shall be the duty of the offended to select one or two to go with him, choosing such as he may deem best adapted to effect a reconciliation, with whom he shall again converse with the offending brother. If satisfaction then be given, the matter shall be forgiven and no further complaint be made.
3. If these efforts both fail to secure a reconciliation, it shall be the duty of the offended to lay the matter before the church, and submit to her action in the case.
4. If any member of the church shall be publicly guilty of any crime or gross impropriety, it shall be the duty of the member, knowing the transgression, to inform the elder, who shall see or write to the offender, and inform him that the matter will be laid before the church, that he may appear in his own defense.

5. When common report charges a crime against a member, it shall be the duty of the one hearing it to report it to the elder, who shall have the member visited or informed of the report, and if there is reason to believe that it is true, to have the most judicious steps taken to ascertain its correctness, and then lay the report and its evidence before the church for action in the case.
6. When circumstances are impracticable to have a member who is reported to have been guilty of crime visited, it shall be the duty of the elder hearing of such crime, to take the most judicious measures to ascertain the truth in regard to the report, and lay the matter before the church.
7. If a member, having erred, shall voluntarily confess it to the church, and manifests satisfactory repentance, no further proceedings shall be taken against him except in cases of public scandal or gross immoralities.
8. Every member against whom any charge is preferred, shall have the privilege of speaking in his own defense.
9. Written testimony of individuals who are not members, and have good moral characters, may be admitted as confirmatory evidence in cases of discipline.
10. If members fail to give satisfaction to the church in relation to charges preferred against them, or persistently refuse to appear before the church when notified to do so, they shall, by a majority vote be expelled.

### **Church Trials**

Church trials are conducted with fairness and equality.

The accused shall be supplied a copy of the charges, signed by the author, at least ten days before trial, unless a shorter time is agreed upon.

Gospel evidence is necessary to conviction, outside testimony may be used corroboratively.

Matt. 18 applies to all matters strictly personal. Trespasses of a general nature are handled on general principles.

All actions of the church are to be respected by the membership.

### **Rehearing And Restoring**

1. Restoration may be effected where the petitioner resides or where the rehearing is had. In case a member is disfellowshipped or an official is deposed, and moves into another congregation, the Church where the member was disfellowshipped or deposed must give her consent before the member is restored to full membership or official position.
2. The rehearing may be had where the party resides, by mutual agreement.

### **Committees**

1. General or District Conferences may grant request for committees when they feel every reasonable effort to settle difficulties, has failed.

2. Committees report their work to the body appointing them. In case of appeal the work of committees becomes final when ratified by the body appointing them.
3. Committees shall say who shall pay their expenses, except in case of appeal, the expenses shall be borne by the party losing the case. Committees may, in case of appeal, require the appellant to deposit sufficient funds with the proper treasurer to cover the estimated expense.
4. Elders shall be tried by a committee of three elders, as shall be provided for in advance by the District Elders' Meeting. The following shall be the method of procedure. Where an elder persists in a course not in harmony with the usages and general order of the brotherhood as defined by General Conference, he shall have a fair trial before the church where his membership is held. If he refuses to be tried or persists in being insubordinate when tried, they shall, whether favored by a majority of the church or not, depose him from office, and if need be, relieve him of membership, and such action shall be respected by all the churches until it is overruled by a committee from General Conference, or until he is reinstated by a majority of the church where his membership is held, favored also by a majority of the Elders of the District.

It is to be understood in this connection that the Elders, having the oversight of the Brotherhood at large (Item 3, Church Officials, Polity Booklet), have full authority, when acting as Standing Committee, to send committees on their own initiative or otherwise, whenever they deem that the welfare of the Brotherhood requires it, and the authority of a committee when so sent extends even to the hearing of charges against Elders and action thereon.

Individual Elders have neither authority nor justification to go into other congregations and interest themselves in trouble there, nor to meddle in it in any way.

## **CHAPTER 7**

### **SUNDAY SCHOOLS**

General Conference has established the following methods for organizing and conducting Sunday Schools.

- Art. 1. Wherever practicable, nominations are to be made by the official body of the church.
- Art. 2. Where Article 1 is practicable, Church Council to vote by ballot for choice from the nominations, the one receiving the highest number of votes to be the superintendent; then from not less than two nominations, the assistant superintendent is to be elected in the same way. Children under twelve years of age not to vote.
- Art. 3. Where Article 1 and 2 are practicable, other officers and teachers to be elected by Church Council. All such to be in the order and good standing in the church.



- Art. 4. Brethren having the above qualifications should be preferred for adult and intermediate classes as teachers; while sisters might be used for juvenile classes.
- Art. 5. All library books, or periodicals, used by the school should pass careful censor of the official board of the church.
- Art. 6. Sending of delegates to County, State, National or World-wide conventions is misleading and an injury to the best interests of the School and should not be allowed.
- Art. 7. Pageants, Cantatas, Pantomimes and Dramatizations of any kind and performances having special costumes, banners and such like are following stage life and should not be tolerated.
- Art. 8. Contests, games and plays of any kind, should be very carefully guarded against, because of serious injury to the church interests.
- Art. 9. The Sunday-school should be conducted exclusively for the training of the pupils for consecrated church life and the salvation of their precious souls.
- Art. 10. Teachers' meetings are helpful when properly conducted. "Let all be done decently and in order." God being witness to all that we do.
- Art. 11. Organized classes lead to harmful practices and therefore should not be tolerated.
- Art. 12. Teach all Sunday-school scholars to stay for church services when there is any, following the school hour.

## **CHAPTER 8**

### **THE MARRIAGE RELATION**

First of all, the Elder or Minister requested to perform a wedding ceremony, should assure himself that the parties thereto are scripturally and legally marriageable.

The marriage relation is of Divine appointment, being instituted by God and recognized by Christ and his apostles. The power and wisdom of our Heavenly Father was not more strikingly displayed in the framing of the material universe, than in his plan of placing the inhabitants of the earth in families. The constitution of the sexes, and their mutual dependence upon each other, were, as our Saviour clearly showed, designed and appointed from the beginning. Hence the sacredness of the marriage relation. Established in Eden, it has been perpetuated in successive dispensations, by which God has sought to promote the welfare of the human race. In all history, examples both positive and negative, have been accumulating to prove that the highest interests of humanity center in the family. It is an institution of most sacred importance, and therefore should be entered into understandingly, having in view all the sacred obligations belonging to it. The minister of the Gospel, in performing the ceremony, should try to impress upon the minds of those entering the marriage relation, the sacredness of the institution, and the grave responsibilities that they assume as they enter the new relation.

As a guide, and for the convenience of our ministers, the following forms of the marriage ceremony are submitted.

## **Form No. 1**

When the parties present themselves before the minister, he may say:

Marriage is an institution of Divine appointment, sanctioned by Christ and his apostles, and designed to increase human happiness and support social order.

In the Bible, which should be your constant companion, you will find all needed instructions as to your duties toward each other.

As you have now presented yourselves before me for the purpose of being united in holy matrimony, in token of your decided choice for each other, as partners for life, you, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, will please join right hands.

(Joining of hands.)

Do you solemnly promise, before Almighty God and these witnesses, to receive each other as husband and wife, agreeing to perform the duties, growing out of this relation, pledging yourselves to love each other, and to make every reasonable exertion to promote each other's happiness, until the union into which you are now entering is dissolved by death?

(Both answer in the affirmative.)

In view of the promises you have now made, I do, by virtue of the authority vested in me as a minister of the Gospel, pronounce you husband and wife. And what God hath joined together, let no man put asunder.

The ceremony is concluded by offering a short prayer.

## **Form No. 2**

After meeting the parties on the floor for the purpose of marriage, the minister says, addressing the man:

"Do you take this woman to be your lawful wedded wife, performing towards her all the moral and Christian functions of the marriage state, forsaking all others and cleaving to her alone until separated by death?"

Answer by the man, "I do."

Addressing the woman:

"Do you take this man to be your lawful wedded husband, performing towards him all the functions of the marriage state, forsaking all others and cleaving to him alone until parted by death?"

Answer by the woman, "I do."

The parties now join hands and the minister will say:

Upon the promises which you have made before God and these witnesses, I do now, by the authority vested in me as a minister of the Gospel, pronounce you husband and wife, and what God hath joined together let no man put asunder.

The minister now lays his right hand on the parties married, and offers an appropriate short prayer.

## **CHAPTER 9**

### **BURIAL SERVICE**

The services held at the grave differ in localities, in accordance with the forms learned by those who officiate. Hence, we have no form, that has received the general sanction of the church, to give, but for the accommodation of those who wish something as a guide on these solemn occasions, we offer the following as suggestions:

Our funeral services are conducted about the same as the general public preaching services, except that the subject used should be in harmony with the occasion, and part of the discourse should be directed to the family of the deceased and the immediate friends.

**SERVICES AT THE GRAVE** – After the body has been placed in or over the grave, an appropriate Scripture may be read. We suggest the following:

“There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars; for one star differeth from another star in glory. So also is the resurrection of the dead. It is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly. And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly. Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. Behold, I shew you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruption must put on incorruption and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written. Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. I Cor. 15:41-58.

When convenient and practicable, a suitable hymn or hymns may be sung at the grave.

At the proper time, the following committal of the body to the Earth may be used:

“Forasmuch as it has pleased Almighty God in his wise providence to remove from us the soul of the departed, we therefore commit \_\_\_\_\_ body to the ground, earth to earth, and dust to dust, looking for the general resurrection in the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ, at whose second coming in glorious majesty to judge the world, the earth and the sea shall give up their dead, and the corruptible bodies of those who sleep in them shall be raised and changed and made like unto his own glorious body, according to the mighty working whereby he is able to subdue all things to himself.”

Following this, a short prayer may be offered, and then dismiss the congregation.