

COPY OF REVISED  
**CONSTITUTION**  
and  
**BY-LAWS**  
of the  
**BRETHREN IN CHRIST**  
AS AUTHORIZED BY  
**GENERAL CONFERENCE**

1914  
UNDER ART. 27 PAGE 56 AND 57.

*This tentative edition should be considered in each District and delegates instructed if any changes are desired for consideration at Conference.*

*By the Committee.*

CONSTITUTION OF THE CHURCH  
OF

THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST,  
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS RIVER BRETHREN)

INCORPORATED ACCORDING TO THE LAWS OF THE  
STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA, ON THE  
2ND. DAY OF MAY, 1904.

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ART. I.

*Name*

This Church organization shall be called the Brethren in Christ.

ART. II.

*Object*

The object of this organization is for the worshipping of the Almighty God, for disseminating the Gospel of Christ, and for doing Evangelistic and Mission work in the United States of America and foreign countries.

ART. III.

*Charter Members*

There shall be five charter members.

ART. IV.

*Classification of Membership*

The membership shall be composed of officials and lay members.

## ART. V.

*Officials*

There shall be Bishops, Elders, (or Ministers), and Deacons.

## ART. VI.

*Executive Board*

There shall be a General Executive Board.

## ART. VII.

*Foreign Mission Board*

There shall be a General Foreign Missionary Board.

## ART. VIII.

*Home Mission Board*

There shall be a Home Missionary Board.

## ART. IX.

*Examining Board*

There shall be an Examining Board.

## ART. X.

*Publication Board*

There shall be a Publication Board.

## ART. XI.

*Amendments*

This Association shall have power to make such By-Laws and amend the same as may be necessary for its government from time to time, providing the same are not contrary to the Constitution or laws of this Commonwealth.

## ART. XII.

*Sunday School Work.*

WHEREAS Sunday School work in the Brotherhood has become an important factor in Church extension; and,

WHEREAS, Sunday School work has been considered and dealt with at late General Conferences; therefore,

RESOLVED, that each General Conference from year to year appoint a Sunday School Board not to exceed three members.

BY-LAWS OF THE CHURCH  
OF THE BRETHREN IN CHRIST,  
(FORMERLY KNOWN AS RIVER BRETHREN),

OF PA., INCORPORATED ACCORDING TO LAW  
THIS 2ND. DAY OF MAY, 1904.

## ART. I.

## OFFICIALS AND THEIR QUALIFICATIONS.

*Sec. 1. Bishop.*

There shall be one Bishop for each respective District, providing that District is not under the oversight of another District. The qualifications of a Bishop should be what the Apostle Paul declares in his

first letter to Timothy, in the third chapter, where he outlines the essential qualifications of a Bishop, and he shall be elected only from among the number of Elders, (or Ministers), in such District. Qualifications for a Bishop necessarily should be the same as for an Elder, (or Minister), because no one can be elected as a Bishop unless he first holds the office of an Elder, (or Minister).

*Sec. 2. Elders (or Ministers).*

The qualifications for Elders (or Ministers) should be the same as for a Bishop. However, they necessarily must be in a position to give evidence, first, of a New Birth; second, of an untainted faith in the Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Ghost; third, an untainted faith in the Divinity (or Deity) of Jesus Christ; fourth, an untainted faith in the Personalities of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; fifth, an untainted faith in the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ, which cleanses us from all sin and "filthiness of the flesh and the spirit;" sixth, an untainted faith in the doctrine of Sanctification, and that no salvation is obtained thru works, but that works are an evidence of salvation.

*Sec. 3. Deacons.*

The qualifications for Deacons should be the same as for Elders, and as outlined by Paul in his first letter to Timothy in the third chapter, as contained from the eighth to twelfth verses, inclusive.

## ART. II.

## DUTIES OF OFFICIALS.

*Sec. 1. Bishops.*

It shall be the duty of the Bishop to take the oversight of the Church or congregation in his District or charge; to preside at all Council meetings; to take a general oversight of the work under his supervision in celebrating the Lord's Supper, in the administration of the Ordinance of Baptism, in receiving and excommunicating or expelling members, and in solemnizing marriages.

*Sec. 2. Elders (or Ministers).*

It shall be the duty of Elders (or Ministers) to preach the Word, as implied in the gospel of Jesus Christ; to officiate at funeral services; and in the absence or by advice of the Bishop, or consent of the Church to perform all the duties of the Bishop for the time being.

It shall be the duty of the Elders (or Ministers) to visit the members as often as possible, or consistent, and ascertain their spiritual condition, and give such pastoral encouragement and advice as may be essential for the up-building of the body. If, however, a Bishop has the oversight of a District, the Elders in the Dis-

trict shall be under the jurisdiction of, and act in harmony with the Bishop of the District in arranging such visits.

*Sec. 3. Deacons.*

It shall be the duty of Deacons to visit all the church members in their respective Districts at least once a year; to investigate the conditions of the poor and infirm in their District, and to report it to the Church for disposition; to attend to the local duties of their charge as authorized by the Church; to make collections of moneys as authorized by the Councils, and to make such disbursements as are necessary and essential to the sustaining of the Church Organization, and report all amount of collections and expenditures, and balance on hand, and the general condition of the members, to the respective yearly District Council meetings.

*Sec. 4. Voting.*

In deliberations of Councils which are congregational in form, all members, sisters included, in full fellowship in the given District, shall have a voice or vote in all acts passed on in the Council of said District. Bishops or overseers shall not vote on questions except in case of a tie. They shall have the privilege of expressing their opinion on questions under discussion before a vote is taken.

ART. III.

ELECTION OF OFFICIALS.

*Sec. 1. Election Board.*

The officials in a regular or a Mission District shall be the Election Board, and in case there are no officials in any regular or Mission District, a Bishop shall be called from a nearby District, who, with two brethren in good standing, shall hold such election and decide the results.

It shall not be considered consistent for any official who would be in the mark for election, whether for Elder or Bishop, to be a member of the Election Board. For instance, where an Elder is to be elected, none of the Deacons should be on that Election Board, or where a Bishop is to be elected from among the Elders, no Elder should be on the Election Board, unless by special consent or arrangements.

*Sec. 2. Method of Election.*

All elections for officials shall be held by a private or closed ballot. Every member of a District, or part of a District, as agreed upon, shall be entitled to a vote; and no votes shall be counted until all have had an opportunity to vote, whereupon the votes shall be counted by persons in authority and the result announced by the proper officials.

*Sec. 3. Election Tie.*

(a) In case of a tie vote in the election of Elders (or Ministers), or Deacons, the two brethren being tie shall be set before the congregation as candidates, and the Church proceed to vote again, the same as at first, and the one receiving the highest number of votes shall be declared elected.

(b) In case of a tie on the second election, both brethren shall be declared elected and ordained on a satisfactory examination, as required by Church regulations.

(c) In case of a tie vote for Bishop, the method of determining what disposition shall be made of the election shall be deferred for an indefinite time.

*Sec. 4. Term of Office.*

The officers of the Church, which are elected, shall hold their office during life-time or good behavior.

ART. IV.

SALARIES.

*Sec. 1.*

No stipulated salaries shall be paid any officials for services.

*Sec. 2.*

Any member attending to Church duties which necessitate the outlay of money shall be reimbursed for the same.

*Sec. 3.*

If a brother or sister is called upon to perform Church duties, and while performing such duties is disqualified from earning money for his or her support, he or she should also be reimbursed.

*Sec. 4.*

If a person is in a condition that he needs support while engaged in Church duties, it shall be considered scriptural and ordained of God for the Church to help provide for such things as are consistent for his support.

ART. V.

GENERAL EXECUTIVE BOARD.

*Sec. 1.*

(a) The General Executive Board shall consist of five members, of whom not less than two shall be Bishops, and all of whom shall be members of good standing in the Church. One member of the Board shall be elected each year for a term of five years, subject to re-election. The present Board shall be retired in the following order: Treasurer, 1915, Asst. Secretary 1916, Secretary 1917, Asst. Chairman 1918, and Chairman 1919.

(b) General Conference shall fill the annual vacancy on the Board by holding a nominating ballot

for two persons for the vacancy to be filled, and the two nominees receiving the highest number of votes shall be voted on for the vacancy.

(c) In case of a tie vote, the Moderator shall decide by means of a lot.

(d) In case of death or resignation of a member of the Board, the remaining members of the Board shall elect a substitute to serve the unexpired term until next convening General Conference, when General Conference shall fill the vacancy in the manner as above outlined.

(e) In isolated cases, or where it would be expensive for the members of the General Executive Board to serve, the Board shall have the privilege to substitute members who meet the required qualifications, such substitutes to report their work and decisions to the General Executive Board for record.

### *Sec. 2. Duties of the General Executive Board.*

(a) The Duties of the General Executive Board shall be to consider questions in dispute in any of the respective Districts of the Brotherhood, which shall be submitted to them for consideration, and if the said Board cannot agree or render a decision, and think it advisable, they can refer the matter to General Conference for further consideration, or if their decision does not meet the approbation of the appellants or defendant, either one shall have the privilege to further appeal to General Conference for final decision.

(b) It shall be the duty of the General Executive Board, thru the General Executive Chairman, to call special meetings or councils in a District in the Brotherhood where questions have been appealed to the General Executive Board either by the District or by persons in the District, for disposition of such questions. No questions shall be appealed to the General Executive Board unless General Conference is too remote for immediate action, it being the purpose of the benefit of appealing to the General Executive Board only to relieve matters that should receive immediate attention.

(c) Questions pertaining to a District to be appealed to the General Executive Board must be countersigned by one or more of the officials in the District. If, however, the officials in the District would be arbitrary to submitting the question to the General Executive Board, an appeal can be made by first making a statement to the Board of the conditions and if the nature of the question is considered of such importance as to warrant a consideration by the Board, it shall be at the discretion of the Board to act on it or not. In case of personal questions in the Board which cannot be disposed of by the Church or the offic-

ials, then such person shall have the privilege to appeal to the General Executive Board, providing not less than three members in good standing in the District shall join with him or her in presenting such a petition, and if the Board considers it advisable or consistent, such questions may be entered for appeal. However, it is the sense of the Church at large that no question should be appealed to the General Executive Board until other resources as to Church rules and regulations have been exhausted.

(d) It shall be the duty of the General Executive Board to estimate the expenses of the General Executive Secretary for stationery, traveling expenses to and from General Conference, and traveling expenses for members of the Board when called to attend to General Executive Board work thruout the Brotherhood; and to recommend such apportionments or assessments to General Conference for final approval or correction.

(e) It shall be the duty of the General Executive Board to assist the Permanent General Conference Secretary in tabulating and arranging questions for General Conference, to be forwarded in a tentative edition to the respective Districts not later than the first day of May in each Conference Year.

### *Sec. 3. Duties of General Executive Board Officials.*

(a) Chairman. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Chairman to call regular and special meetings. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Chairman to preside at all meetings. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Chairman to cast the deciding lot in case of a tie vote. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Chairman to sign all legal documents in their proper and legal form, and enter satisfaction of record of any obligations that may require the release of any Church property thru the General Executive Board, by order of General Conference.

(b) Asst. Chairman. It shall be the duty of the Assistant Chairman to preside in the absence of the Chairman, but he is not authorized to sign any legal documents which require public record.

(c) General Executive Secretary. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Secretary to keep a correct record of the different State and District Councils, of questions concerning the Brotherhood at large, which have a bearing on Church polity, doctrine, and tenets. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Secretary to tabulate and index the work of the General Executive Board in a comprehensive form, to locate the work of the Board pertaining to different and local decisions. It shall be the duty of

the General Executive Secretary to keep a record of all different Church property thruout the Brotherhood in general, with the name, location, and approximate value of the grounds and buildings, belonging thereto, together with the names and addresses of the respective Trustees of such Church property, and enter on the general records any changes that are made from time to time, and render a condensed report of the same to General Conference of the Brethren in Christ, setting forth in tabulated form the reports of the different Districts thruout the Brotherhood, in Conference Minutes, which shall be published following each respective General Conference. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Secretary to perform all the clerical work pertaining to reports, correspondence, Executive Board Meetings, and report the work of the General Executive Board thruout Conference year to the following General Conference. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Secretary to preserve and affix the seal of the Church of the Brethren in Christ and attest his signature to all legal documents.

(d) Assistant General Executive Secretary. It shall be the duty of the Asst. General Executive Secretary to serve in the absence of the Secretary and perform all such duties which are enjoined upon the General Executive Secretary, with the exception that the general records shall be kept in custody by the General Executive Secretary, unless otherwise ordered by the General Executive Board.

(e) General Executive Treasurer. It shall be the duty of the General Executive Treasurer to hold such moneys as may be derived from the sale or disposition of the Church or Mission properties, the proceeds of which are to be reinvested for some other Church work or properties; he is not allowed to pay out any money, except on a voucher duly signed by the General Executive Chairman and Secretary.

#### ART. VI.

##### FOREIGN MISSIONARY BOARD.

###### *Sec. 1.*

The Foreign Missionary Board shall consist of seven members, two of whom may be sisters, in good fellowship standing in the Church of the Brethren in Christ, who can be chosen from any part of the Brotherhood, either in the United States or Canada, to be appointed by General Conference, their term of office to be for a Conference year, but can be reappointed from year to year.

###### *Sec. 2. Duty of the Foreign Missionary Board.*

It shall be the duty of the Foreign Missionary Board to consider applicants who have been favorably re-

ported by the Examining Board as to their personal and physical conditions, and if they (the Foreign Missionary Board) see proper, and if there are means at hand, and if there are any needs in any of the Foreign fields to encourage such workers, when, and as to how they shall proceed for moving out for Foreign Mission work, and as to how long they shall be considered as Foreign Mission Workers; and if all such conditions are considered favorable by the Foreign Mission Board, such applicants shall be recommended to General Conference of the Brethren in Christ to go forth as active workers in such fields as shall be designated by the Foreign Missionary Board, and General Conference shall consider such report, and if decided favorable, shall authorize such applicants to be ordained as Foreign Mission Workers.

###### *Sec. 3.*

It shall be the duty of the Foreign Missionary Board to have one of their number as Chairman, one as Secretary, and one as Treasurer. The Secretary to keep a record of the proceedings of the Foreign Missionary Board pertaining to their work at General Conference from year to year, and to inscribe on the annals or records of the Foreign Missionary Board the field work of the different missions established in foreign countries; the names of the different foreign mission workers and date of sailing, time of services on the field, records of returns and furloughs, etc. The Treasurer shall be the custodian of all funds that are intended for Foreign Mission use, and pay out money only on vouchers signed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Foreign Missionary Board, and keep the Brotherhood at large informed of the conditions of the Foreign Missionary Board Treasury, and by order of the Foreign Missionary Board make such general appeals for the strengthening of the Foreign Mission Treasury, as may be consistent from time to time.

###### *Sec. 4.*

It shall be the duty of the Foreign Mission Board to submit a report of their proceedings to the respective General Conferences from year to year, and to accept such rules and decisions of General Conference as may be decided on by that body.

###### *Sec. 5.*

It shall be the duty of the Foreign Mission Board to see that the Bishops of the different Districts thruout the Brotherhood shall appoint brethren in their respective Districts, whose duty it shall be to solicit funds for Foreign Mission purposes and forward such funds to the Treasurer of the Foreign Mission Board.

## ART. VII.

## HOME MISSIONARY BOARD.

*Sec. 1.*

There shall be a Home Mission Board consisting of twelve members, three of whom may be sisters, who shall be members in good fellowship standing in the Church of the Brethren in Christ, appointed by General Conference each Conference Year, who, however, can be re-appointed; and their selection necessarily should be from different parts of the Brotherhood.

*Sec. 2. Duties of the Home Mission Board.*

(a) It shall be the duty of the Home Mission Board to consider the applications of members who were favorably reported by the Examining Board as to their personal and physical conditions, and if they (the Home Mission Board) see proper, and there are means at hand, to encourage them in taking up Home Mission Work, (such as is outlined under Art. 7, Sec. 3), and as to how they shall proceed and for what length of time their commission shall be effective, and if conditions are favorable, shall be reported to General Conference as Home Mission or Evangelistic Workers, and if Conference considers such recommendations favorable, shall confirm such appointments; and in case such applicants have not been previously ordained as ministers, shall be authorized to be ordained by the respective District in which they hold membership, as Home Mission or Evangelistic Workers.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Home Mission Board to carry in connection with the Home Mission Work, a Poor Fund Department, which Department shall have for its executive the Chairman of the Home Mission Board, and a Secretary separate from the Home Mission Secretary, and a Treasurer of the Poor Fund separate from the Home Mission Treasurer, both to be elected from the members of the Home Mission Board.

(c) It shall be the duty of the Home Mission Board, thru the Poor Fund Department, to render an account of all contributions solicited and received during the previous Conference Year, and of all disbursements which shall have been made, and report the same together with the balance on hand, to each respective General Conference.

(d) The operation of this Department shall be subject to the rulings of any former General Conference of the Brethren in Christ, or to whatever rulings that may be adopted for the continuance or discontinuance of this department, by any future Conference.

(e) Any conditions implied in a decision of any former Conference involving this work in another Board or in a number of members, shall have no bear-

ing upon the further work of this Department, unless by a further amendment of these By-Laws.

*Sec. 3. Duties and Qualifications of Home Mission Workers.*

(a) Applicants as Home Mission Workers, who have first been recommended by the District in which they hold membership as Home Mission Workers, to the Home Mission Board, and have passed a satisfactory examination by the Examining Board, and confirmed by General Conference, and ordained as Home Mission Workers shall be authorized to do Home Mission work by visiting the sick and poor, soliciting them about their salvation, presenting the need of salvation to the unsaved, to hold open-air and street meetings, providing there is no regular organization in the District in the Church in that place which is supposed to take charge of that work, and if such work is prosecuted by any District, that such Home Mission Workers shall labor in harmony with the Church in the District.

(b) They are also authorized to conduct prayer meeting appointments in homes, providing there is no church organization in the District that has charge of such prayermeeting arrangements; and if the Church has such arrangements, that such Home Mission Workers shall act in harmony with the church having charge of the religious work in such places.

(c) Home Mis. Workers shall under no conditions operate at any place or in any District, without the knowledge or consent of the Home Mission Board; and if any expense is incurred by Home Mission Workers in the prosecution of their work, such expense shall be regulated as may be deemed consistent by the Home Mission Board. It shall be deemed consistent for the Home Mission Board to exercise jurisdiction over Home Mission Workers so that the work may not be lagging nor over-done by inconsistent methods or persons.

*Sec. 4. Evangelistic Workers.*

(a) No Evangelistic Workers shall be appointed unless they have been examined by the Examining Board and recommended by a certificate as Evangelistic workers to the Home Mission Board, and said Board to recommend such applicants as Evangelistic Workers to General Conference for confirmation. If Conference approves of the recommendations of the Home Mission Board for Evangelistic Workers, and such Workers have not already been ordained as Bishops, Elders (or Ministers) in the Church, then such applicants after having been properly examined by the Examining Board, recommended by the Home Mission Board, and confirmed by General Conference, shall

be ordained by a Bishop of the District in which they hold membership, or any other district that may be recommended by General Conference or by the District where the membership of such applicant is held.

(b) It shall be the duty of Evangelistic Workers to make special efforts by appointments in public services thru the preaching of the Gospel to call sinners to repentance and present the Gospel according as it is understood, accepted, and adopted by the Church of the Brethren in Christ. No Evangelistic Worker shall be authorized to labor in any regularly organized district without the knowledge or consent of the Church in such District, and if called by any District to labor in Evangelistic efforts, such District shall make provision for their needs and support for the time being, as may be considered consistent by the Church in the District.

*Sec. 5.*

If an Evangelistic Worker shall enter into new territory and be instrumental in assembling a body of believers, he shall not be authorized to establish a new District without the consent of the nearest District to such place, or by General Conference, or State or Joint Council. If, however, such Evangelistic Worker shall be a regularly ordained Bishop, he shall have the privilege to organize such new District by making provisions for the ministry and deaconship, according to Church rules and regulations, and report such matters to General Conference for further instructions.

*Sec. 6.*

If any Home Mission Worker or Evangelist should become tainted with any strange doctrines or with a teaching not consistent or in keeping with the adopted tenets of the Church, such person shall be consistently dealt with by presenting the matter to the Home Mission Board who shall investigate at once and if found guilty of teaching foreign to that which is accepted by the Church the commission of such person shall immediately be withdrawn and not allowed to exercise in evangelistic efforts, until the matter can be further investigated by General Conference or by the General Executive Board. Final disposition of such questions necessarily must be made thru General Conference, or the General Executive Board in case of emergency.

ART. VIII.

EXAMINING BOARD.

*Sec. 1.*

There shall be an Examining Board composed of three Bishops, who shall be chosen by General Con-

ference, and may be selected from different parts of the Brotherhood for each Conference year, to officiate as an Examining Board for the purpose of examining applicants for Foreign and Home Mission or Evangelistic Work.

*Sec. 2 Duty of Examining Board.*

It shall be the duty of the Examining Board to examine such persons, either male or female, who may come recommended either by the Foreign or Home Missionary Board, as to their faith in God and their fellowship with the Church, and as to their qualification or designs for Foreign and Home Mission, or Evangelistic work.

*Sec. 3. Certificates.*

After the examining Board finds such applicants worthy to be accepted as workers, as requested in their application, they shall grant them a certificate setting forth their qualifications pertaining to their application; such certificate to be signed by the three members of the Examining Board, and to be referred to the respective Board for disposition, as embodied in their application.

*Sec. 4. Examinations.*

The Examining Board necessarily should meet at General Conference, where all such applications should be made if possible; however, such an examination can be made by correspondence if the Board is satisfied to accept the same and the parties so applying are too remote from the Board for immediate action.

ART. IX.

PUBLICATION BOARD.

*Sec. 1.*

The Publication Board shall consist of seven brethren who can be selected from any part of the Church in the United States or Canada, and whose appointment shall be made by General Conference for a term not exceeding one year, but if found satisfactory, can be reappointed.

*Sec. 2. Duties of Publication Board.*

(a) It shall be the duty of the Publication Board to organize at each General Conference as soon as appointed by Conference, as follows: Chairman, Assistant Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Publication Board to inquire into the business conduct and qualifications of the Editor, and report such inquiry to General Conference.

(c) It shall be the duty of the Publication Board to recommend such person, as in their estimation will meet the required qualifications for an Editor, and submit said recommendation to Conference for approval or rejection.

(d) It shall be the duty of the Publication Board to recommend an Associate Editor or Editors to General Conference for approval or rejection.

(e) It shall be the duty of the Publication Board to fix a stipulated compensation for the Editor from year to year and to report to General Conference for approval or amendment.

*Sec. 3. Duties of Officials of Publication Board.*

(a) It shall be the duty of the Chairman or assistant Chairman to preside at all meetings.

(b) It shall be the duty of the Secretary to keep a record of the reports of the Editor of the Evangelical Visitor, as well as all other business transactions referring to the publication of the Evangelical Visitor, and render such reports to General Conference for record on Conference Minutes.

(c) It shall be the duty of the Treasurer to receive all moneys for subscriptions to the Evangelical Visitor, or sale of Visitor products and to make payments of expenses incurred by the publication of the Evangelical Visitor, as well as other expenses; with the condition that the Treasurer, by an action and consent of the Board, shall be privileged to appoint the Editor to be the custodian of such funds and act on behalf of the Treasurer.

ART. X.

BUSINESS MEETINGS AND CHURCH DIVISIONS.

*Sec. 1.*

The Church shall be divided into Districts or Missions in each State. A properly organized District shall consist of at least one Bishop, one or more ministers, and one or more deacons, and shall have at least one Council meeting in each year; and until such officers are chosen, it shall be considered not fully organized and shall be under the control of the State or Joint Council or under the Bishop of a nearby District and shall be called a Mission. At these meetings, the Bishop of the District, providing there is one, shall preside and a Secretary or Secretaries shall be appointed to keep a record of all the proceedings, and all matters of a local nature shall be considered and adjusted, and if a question cannot be decided, each respective District or Mission shall have the privilege to appeal said question to the General Executive Board, State or Joint Councils or General Conference.

*Sec. 2.*

Delegates shall be elected at each yearly Council, with the privilege to send a number equal to one delegate for each fifty members or fraction thereof to represent said District at General Conference for

that year, whose traveling expenses necessarily should be paid.

*Sec. 3.*

If a District should be composed principally of poor members, who would not consider themselves able to bear the expenses of a delegate, they shall appeal to the General Executive Board, and if considered proper, shall be authorized to appoint a delegate from some other District, who is going to General Conference, and authorize him to present their report and petitions.

ART. XI.

STATE COUNCIL.

*Sec. 1.*

There shall be a State or Joint Council previous to General Conference each year, wherein matters pertaining to the State in general, and also questions appealed from different Districts, shall be considered. Said Councils shall be presided over by three Moderators, who shall be selected from among the Bishops of such State. If, however, there are not enough Bishops, at least one shall be a Bishop and the assistants may be chosen from ministers of the, or from some nearby District. There shall also be one Reading Clerk, one Secretary and one assistant, who shall keep a record of the proceedings of said Council. If such Council cannot decide on questions pertaining to the Church in the State, or on appeals from Districts, such questions shall be further referred to General Conference for final decision, but in no case shall any questions be appealed to General Conference that can be properly adjusted by either District, State or Joint Councils.

*Sec. 2.*

State, as well as District Councils, shall be congregational, unless otherwise agreed on by such Councils. However, officials are especially requested to be present.

*Sec. 3.*

Each State or country not including Foreign Mission fields having a special State or Joint Council, shall send a delegate-at-large to General Conference from year to year, who shall have charge of the petitions and work of the State Councils as pertains to General Conference in making such statements to General Conference as are necessary for the proper consideration of the different questions and petitions, who shall not be eligible to any restrictions from the State or Joint Council which he represents, pertaining to voting on any questions considered; and whose expenses necessarily should be paid by the State at large.



## ART. XII.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE.

*Sec. 1. Organization of Conference.*

(a) There shall be a General Conference, held beginning on the third Thursday of May of each year, continuing to and including the following Sunday, and continued until the work of General Conference is fully disposed of, at such place that may from year to year be designated by Conference for the following year, and presided over by three Moderators—Moderator, First Assistant, and Second Assistant Moderators.

(b) There shall be a Permanent General Conference Secretary, who shall be appointed or elected for lifetime or good behavior, or as Conference may decide.

(c) There shall be a Recording Clerk, Assistant Recording Clerk, and Reading Clerk.

*Sec. 2. Method of Organization.*

(a) Preliminary meeting and Sunday School services. There shall be a preliminary meeting on the first day of Conference, where an organization shall be effected by the election of a Chairman and Secretary, conducted by the Permanent General Conference Secretary, at which meeting the rolls of the members of the different Boards shall be called by the Permanent General Conference Secretary, and vacancies shall be temporarily filled from such members that are present, and reports of the different Boards and Committees having unfinished business shall be considered and tabulated for presentation to Conference. At the close of the preliminary meeting, the Sunday-School work, under the supervision of the Chairman of the Sunday-School Board, shall be taken up and such work considered as may have been previously arranged by the Sunday School Board.

(b) Ministerial Meeting. There shall be a Ministerial Meeting in the evening of the first day, the program of which shall be arranged by a Committee appointed by a previous Conference for arranging of the Conference meetings.

(c) Conference Proper. On the second day of Conference, not later than nine o'clock a. m., the Conference proper shall be opened by a short Scripture lesson and prayer by one of the retiring Moderators, following which the Permanent General Conference Secretary shall proceed with an organization as follows:—

A nominating ballot shall be held for Moderators, from amongst the Bishops present, by an election board consisting of three brethren, to be appointed by the Permanent General Conference Secretary for the

time being. Every member of Conference, including delegates and all officials, and members of the different Boards, shall have a voice in the organization, voting for one person only from amongst the Bishops, for Moderator. The five of those voted for having the highest number of votes shall be considered the nominees, whereupon a second ballot shall be held from the five nominees, and the one having the highest number of votes shall be declared the Moderator; and the one the next to the highest, the First Assistant Moderator; and the one second to the highest, the Second Assistant Moderator; with the condition that if there should be a tie vote for either Moderator, or First and Second Assistant, that the result shall be decided by the drawing of lots by placing papers in a book with the words "Moderator", "First", or "Second Assistant," as the case may be.

(d) The Permanent General Conference Secretary, who shall have been previously appointed, shall select as a body of his co-laborers, a Recording Secretary, an Assistant Recording Secretary, and a Reading Clerk. These selections necessarily need not be confirmed by Conference.

*Sec. 3. Method of Proceedings.*

(a) Opening. The Moderator-elect, (or with his consent, one of his assistants) shall read a passage of scripture suitable for the occasion, following which comments shall be made instructing the members of Conference as to their duties, conduct, etc.

(b) Roll Call. The Permanent Con. Secretary shall call the roll of all the delegates present from the different districts, and if any are absent, Conference shall consider the advisability of substituting brethren from the same or a nearby District.

(c) Nominating Board: The Moderators-elect shall appoint a Nominating Board consisting of twelve representative brethren, who shall nominate members for the Home and Foreign Mission, Examining, Publication, and Sunday-School Boards, and the Board of Trustees and Board of Managers of the Messiah Bible School and Missionary Training Home, which nominations shall be presented to General Conference at a later session for confirmation, organization, and apportionment.

(d) Report of unfinished business. Report of Foreign Mission work; General Church work; report of the Publication Board; report of institutions, including Homes, Orphanages, School City Missions, etc., report of Nominating Board; organization of the different Boards; report of organizations; apportionment of territory for Home and Foreign Mission Boards; recommendations for Foreign Mission work-

ers; recommendations for Home Mission and Evangelistic workers; Miscellaneous business; conclusions.

(e) Home Mission Services. There shall be a meeting on the evening of the second day of Conference, (Friday, for the purpose of considering Home Mission Work, and shall be entirely under the supervision of the Home Mission Board.

(f) Communion and Foreign Mission Services. General Conference shall be temporarily dismissed sometime during the third day of Conference (Saturday), giving a privilege for general and communion services during the noon, afternoon, and evening of the third day, (Saturday), and the forenoon of the fourth day, (Sunday), followed by general Missionary services on the afternoon and evening of the fourth day, Sunday. Such Missionary meetings shall be under the supervision of the Foreign Missionary Board.

(g) Miscellaneous Services. There shall be general meetings arranged for the remaining evenings, unless such time is necessarily needed for the consideration of Conference work.

*Sec. 4. Duties of Gen. Con. Officials, Boards, etc.*

(a) Moderators. It shall be the duty of the Moderator to preside at all Conference sessions; to call to order and dismiss Conference sessions; to put motions and questions to vote; in case of a tie vote to cast the deciding lot; and to see that Conference rules and regulations are respected. It shall be the duty of the Moderator, or Assistant, presiding, to recognize all speakers before they are privileged to speak. It shall be the duty of the Moderator to see that announcements of the different arrangements are properly made.

(b) Permanent General Conference Secretary. It shall be the duty of the Permanent General Conference Secretary to prescribe in proper form for consideration, all questions for Conference, and submit them to the General Executive Board for arranging for Conference, not later than the fifteenth day of April preceding Conference; and to see that all questions pertaining to general church work, et. are properly arranged and forwarded to the overseers of the respective Districts thruout the Brotherhood, in a tentative form, so that the different Districts shall have an opportunity to consider such questions before their delegates shall proceed to General Conference. It shall be the duty of the Permanent General Secretary to organize the Preliminary Meeting on the first day of Conference, and to conduct the organization for the election of Moderators on Conference proper opening. It shall be the duty of the Permanent Gen-

eral Conference Secretary to select three workers, one to act as Reading Clerk, one as Assistant Recording Clerk, and one as Reading Clerk. It shall be the duty of the Permanent General Conference Secretary to arrange for Conference all questions that have been properly presented for consideration, and see that they are properly recorded as disposed of by General Conference, and have the general clerical oversight of General Conference. It shall be the duty of the Permanent General Conference Secretary to tabulate, arrange, print, and distribute Minutes of the General Conference, as may be ordered by the respective Conferences from year to year.

(c) Boards and Committees. Duties of the various Boards and Committees having been previously outlined, are, however, open for temporary changes to suit conditions for the time being.

(d) Summary of general duties: It shall be the duty of General Conference to select a proper place for General Conference for the following year, and to make and authorize whatever arrangements that may be considered consistent for arranging and providing for such Conferences. It shall be the duty of General Conference to consider the advisability of how proceeds may be provided for bearing the expenses and contingencies of General Conference.

*Sec. 5. Members of Conference.*

Delegates, all church officials, and members of the different Boards shall be considered as members of Conference, and shall have a voice in all the work of the Conference, wherein a vote is required. All deliberations of Conference may be congregational, but respect should be given to Paul's admonition in I Cor. 14: 34, 35; and I Tim. 2: 11, 12. Members of Conference, or the laity, shall not undertake to speak before they have addressed the Moderator, and before they are recognized by the Moderator; and anyone speaking must necessarily confine him or herself to the subject before Conference for consideration; and anyone speaking who shall transgress any of the adopted Conference regulations, shall be called in question, and not proceed without consent of the Moderators. No member of Conference should be allowed to speak more than twice on the same question nor longer than a limited time prescribed by Conference; and that each respective Conference shall, before proceeding with the regular work of Conference, formulate and adopt certain local regulations for the governing of the same Conference.

*Sec. 6.*

General Conference shall positively be considered the highest tribunal of the Church, and from which

no matter can be appealed by any person or District, without the consent of General Conference.

### ART. XIII.

#### REAL ESTATE AND PERSONAL PROPERTY.

##### *Sec. 1. Ownership of Property.*

The Church as incorporated shall have no capital stock, and all the property, whether real or personal, acquired either by bequest or by purchase, shall be taken and held to inure to it, subject to the control and disposition of the lay members of the Church as incorporated, or such constituted officers and representatives thereof as shall be composed of a majority of lay members, citizens of Pennsylvania or any other State and any disposition made of any real or personal property in their respective States shall be made by virtue of the majority of the laity, either by popular or representative consent.

##### *Sec. 2. Trustees.*

All real estate or personal property belonging to the Church, as acquired and outlined in section one of this article, shall be held in trust by trustees, numbering either three or five as may be decided by the respective Districts, who may be appointed by the respective Districts wherein such property is located, but must be confirmed by General Conference and their names and post-office addresses must be subscribed on the record of the General Executive Secretary of the Church at large, and any vacancy that shall occur, either by death or resignation of any Trustee, shall be supplied as soon as possible; however, the majority shall be considered a quorum of such Board of Trustees, who shall be able to transact business whenever they have a quorum.

##### *Sec. 3. Use of Church Properties.*

Trustees shall have the oversight of church buildings in their respective District, together with the consent of the officials of the District, and in no case shall any church or Mission building be desecrated for any other but for regular religious services; such as regular worship, protracted gospel meetings, District, State or General Councils, Sunday School, Ministerial, or general Missionary meetings; it being the standard of the Church to prohibit any church fairs, festivals or any entertainments that in any wise partake of the nature of levity.

##### *Sec. 4.*

The Trustees of the Church or Mission properties shall hold their office during life time, good behavior, or until it becomes necessary to make such changes as may develop from time to time.

### ART. XIV.

#### ORGANIZATION OF NEW DISTRICTS.

##### *Sec. 1.*

When a community composed of twelve or more members, having the proper qualifications, shall think it more expedient for the purpose of developing religious instruction and disseminating of the gospel work, and shall desire to form a separate District, they shall petition either the State or Joint Council or General Conference, setting forth in their petition their reasons for becoming a separate District, and if their request, after due consideration by either State or Joint Council or Gen. Con. is granted, a committee of not less than three shall be elected, one of whom at least must be a Bishop of a nearby District, whose duty it shall be to call together the members composing such proposed Mission or regular District, and if upon examination, they are satisfied that the cause of Christ would be promoted by creating a separate District, they shall order the said members of such proposed District to proceed with the election of officers.

##### *Sec. 2.*

If there are no Elders or Deacons there, the committee so appointed shall proceed to the election of one or more Deacons of Elders, as they in connection with the members of the Church, composing said Mission District, shall think best, by first announcing the fact and reading that portion of the Scriptures which refers to the qualifications of the officers of the Church, after which the Bishops, (or if only one is present, he) with some one of the older brethren from some other District, shall receive votes according to the regular method of voting, and after each one has had an opportunity to vote for such officers as they in their consideration found necessary, they shall count the votes and shall afterwards declare the person elected who has received the most votes. If the members of the Mission are not all present, then shall an opportunity be given to those who are absent to cast their votes. After the result has been declared, those elected shall be examined by the Bishop in the presence of other members with regard to their character and the soundness of their faith and doctrine, as believed in, and taught by the Church, and if found blameless, they may be ordained, either at that time or at some subsequent time, according to the regular custom of ordination.

##### *Sec. 3.*

If the members of a Mission District consider it advisable that a Bishop should be elected in the District and if there is a Deacon and two or more Elders, they

shall make application to General Conference for a fully organized District, and General Conference shall appoint a Committee of three brethren from some other District, one of whom necessarily must be a Bishop, who shall investigate the conditions and if upon consultation and inquiry, it is found advisable that they shall have a Bishop, and if the properly qualified person resides there, then they shall proceed with the election in the same manner as in the election of other officers of the Church. The choice shall be made only from among the ministers.

## ART. XV.

## ADMISSION OF NEW DISTRICTS, STATES OR COUNTRIES.

*Sec. 1.*

Any branch of the Brotherhood at present being located in any State, Territory, or foreign country, which already is a part of the Church of the Brethren in Christ, by virtue of the Confession of Faith and former co-operation in gospel and mission work should make a special application to the original Church as incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania by making application for the same to General Conference, thru a majority number of their Bishops, Elders (or Ministers), deacons, and some lay members, therein setting forth their desire to become a part of the original Church organization, as incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania, and also setting forth the names of their different houses of worship, together with the names and addresses of the Trustees of such respective places of worship, the same to be placed on record on the annals of the Church as kept by the General Executive Secretary.

*Sec. 2.*

If any branch of the Church that now exists, or may be created hereafter in any District, State or foreign country, desires to become a representative part of the original Church organization as incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania before any following Conference, the same can do so by sending a petition, as outlined under Sec. one of this Article, to the General Executive Board. Said Board to take recognition of such petition and the General Executive Secretary to make note of the same on the annals of the Church for presentation and confirmation by the following Conference. However, said District is qualified as a part of the original Church organization before confirmation by Conference.

*Sec. 3.*

Questions in dispute thruout different parts of the Brotherhood, pertaining to Church organization, etc.,

can be submitted to the General Executive Board for consideration, whose decision, however, is not final, if not satisfactory to the parties petitioning.

## ART. XVI.

## AMENDMENTS AND REPEALS.

*Sec. 1.*

All decisions of General Conference that were recorded prior to the adoption of this Constitution and By-Laws, shall remain in full force and effect the same as tho adopted since, but the same can be re-considered, amended or repealed by any subsequent Conference.

*Sec. 2.*

No amendment or repeal can be made to the Constitution of the Church of the Brethren in Christ as originally adopted, except by an appeal to and consent of the Court thru which the original Charter was obtained; and no amendment or repeal can be made to the By-Laws of the Church of the Brethren in Christ as originally adopted, except by a two-thirds vote of all members of Conference for two successive Conferences.

## ART. XVII.

## ADMISSION OF NEW MEMBERS.

*Sec. 1.*

Persons who have a consciousness of the pardoning of their sins thru the atoning blood of Christ, and peace with God, should be diligently sought out by the Church and disciplined as to the necessity of their spiritual progression by the observance of baptism and fellowship with a body of believers; and upon their confession as to their harmony with the doctrine of the Bible as taught by the Church and if found in faith the right hand of fellowship should at once be extended, even tho the ordinance of baptism cannot immediately be observed; however, wherever possible and consistent, the ordinance of baptism should accompany the rite of fellowship.

*Sec. 2.*

The applicant, together with those who are not members, shall then retire from the room, or if more convenient, the members present shall retire to some private place, after which the Bishop or his substitute shall inquire whether there are any objections to receiving such applicant or applicants in the Church, and if there are any they shall make them known. If there are no objections, or if there are some, and are satisfactorily answered or removed, they shall be received into the Church and baptized by Triune immersion.

*Sec. 3.*

If they have been previously baptized upon the evidence of the pardoning of their sins by Triune immersion, and have not fallen into sin, and are satisfied with their baptism, they may be received into the Church without being rebaptized by extending the hand of Christian fellowship.

*Sec. 4.*

If they have been previously baptized by Triune immersion upon the evidence of the pardoning of their sins but have fallen and lived in gross sin and have become convicted of their sinful condition, and have renewed their covenant by a thoro repentance, and have again obtained the remission of sins; and since baptism is held as an evidence of an inward wrought work in the heart it is the sense of this body of believers that a rebaptism by Triune immersion is essential.

## ART. XVIII.

## BAPTISM.

*Sec. 1.*

After reading the 18th chapter of St. Matthew (or the part referring to the subject of the Christian walk) and making such comments as may be profitable, the Bishop or administrator shall ask the candidates, who shall be called to stand, the following questions:

1. *Ques.* Do you believe in an Almighty Triune God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and in Jesus Christ (the Son) as the Savior of a lost and ruined world, and that He brought a soul-saving gospel from heaven? Applicant to answer *Yes*.

2. *Ques.* Inasmuch as you have professed to have received the pardon of your sins, do you now publicly renounce the world, the devil and your own corrupt nature; do you promise allegiance to God and fidelity to the Church? Applicant to answer, *Yes*.

3. *Ques.* Do you promise that if your brother or sister should trespass against you that you will go and tell him (or her) his (or her) faults between him (or her) and you alone, as taught in Matthew 18th chapter, 15th and 16th verses? Applicant to answer, *Yes*.

4. *Ques.* Inasmuch as we are all fallible, if you should trespass against a brother or sister, and he or she would come and tell you of your fault (according to Matthew 18) are you willing to receive it? Applicant to answer, *Yes*.

*Sec. 2.*

As soon as convenient and consistent, the applicant shall be taken into the water, and, while kneeling, shall be baptized by the administrator by Triune immersion, with the following expression:

"Upon the confession of thy faith in the Son of God, which thou hast professed before God and many witnesses, thou art baptized into the death of Jesus Christ in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."

After this ceremony, and before the applicant rises from the knees, the administrator shall pronounce God's blessing on the ordinance, and the candidate's future life.

## ART. XIX.

## UNFELLOWSHIPING OF MEMBERS.

*Sec. 1.*

No members shall be unfellowshipped without first observing due diligence in love and forbearance, as outlined in the gospel of St. Matthew, 18th chapter.

*Sec. 2.*

Members shall be unfellowshipped only by the Bishop of the respective district, or by the one who has the oversight of such District, unless inconvenient, when the Bishop may authorize some other member to make the announcement. However, diligence should be given that the expressions used in unfellowshipping members do not taint after enmity, prejudice or anything that would show as tho the Church organization would not be concerned about the spiritual welfare of the member unfellowshipped.

## ART. XX.

## ORDINATION OF BISHOPS OR ELDERS, (OR MINISTERS).

*Sec. 1.*

After examination with regard to doctrine and soundness of faith, and finding no charge or charges against the person or persons to be ordained as Bishops, Elders (or Ministers)—the time of ordination having been duly announced—the service on the occasion shall be especially on the subject of the occasion, after which the candidate or candidates, standing in the presence of the congregation, shall be asked the following questions by the officiating Bishop:

Ques. 1. Do you believe in the Trinity—Father, Son and Holy Ghost?

Ques. 2. Do you believe that Christ, thru the Covenant, became the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world?

Ques. 3. Do you believe that Christ was incarnated by the Holy Ghost into flesh, and thus became Jesus Christ, and thru His birth, ministry, suffering, death, resurrection, and ascension to the right hand of the Father, brought about and completed the plan of salvation?

Note:—Since Bishops can only be elected from among the Elders (or ministers) the qualification is already implied in the required qualifications as given in Art. I, Sec. I.

The candidate or candidates shall then kneel, face forward, accompanied by their wives, if they have any, and the Bishop shall then lay on hands and invoke the blessing of God and the Holy Spirit upon them, after which as they rise to their feet, the Bishop shall offer to them the right hand of fellowship and the salutation of the Holy Kiss, and shall say, "Take to thyself the office of a Bishop, or Elder (or minister) in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost." After this, the members present shall follow in extending their good will and wishes by saluting them.

## ART. XXI.

## ORDINATION OF DEACONS.

1. *Ques.* Will you accept the office of deacon and solemnly promise in the presence of these witnesses and before God, that to the best of your ability you will faithfully discharge all duties incumbent to this office which are especially named in Art. 2, Sec. 3, General Conference Minutes which reads practically as follows: "It shall be the duty of the Deacons to visit all the church members in their respective District at least once a year; to provide for the poor and infirm of the Brotherhood; to attend to all the local duties of their charge; to make such collections of moneys as authorized by Councils, and to make such disbursements as are necessary and essential for the maintenance of the needy and for the operations of the local church work; and report all such collections and expenditures with balance on hand; and give the general spiritual condition of the members to the respective District Council Meetings?"  
Answer, *Yes.*

2. *Ques.* Will you endeavor by the grace of God to meet the required qualifications as set forth by the holy apostles in Acts 6: 3, which reads as follows: "Men of honest (or good) report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom;" also I. Tim. 3: 8: "Deacons must be grave, temperate, not double-tongued, not greedy of filthy lucre?"  
Answer, *Yes.*

3. *Ques.* Will you cheerfully obey them to whom the charge of government over you is committed, following their godly admonitions?  
Answer, *I will.*  
After this, proceed the same as in the case of Bishops and Elders (or ministers).

*Ques.* 4. Do you believe in a spiritual New Birth according to Gospel and Apostolic tenets?

*Ques.* 5. Do you believe in Repentance for committed sins; and Justification by faith in the atoning blood of Jesus Christ; and in the resurrection of the righteous dead, and also in the resurrection of the wicked dead?

*Ques.* 6. Do you believe in the Church Militant, or the Mystical Body, of which Christ is the head?

*Ques.* 7. Do you believe in the second coming of Christ for His saints, etc?

*Ques.* 8. Do you believe that there is no salvation obtained thru doing or thru works, but only thru faith in Christ and His work of atonement and that works are an evidence of salvation?

*Ques.* 9. Will you promise before God and man and these witnesses that you will teach all the forgoing doctrines and tenets with an untainted effort?

*Ques.* 10. Do you promise to uphold and teach the doctrines and tenets as upheld and taught by the Church of the Brethren in Christ, and thus uphold what you promised, i. e., allegiance to God and fidelity to the Church?

*Ques.* 11. Are you convinced that the Word of God as recorded in the Bible is inspired of Jehovah; that holy men wrote as they were moved and actuated by the Holy Spirit, and that Jesus Christ, in His death became our Substitute and Redeemer; in His burial our scape-goat; in His resurrection our Justification; in His ascension our Head and Intercessor; and in His promised Second Coming our Hope? *Ans. I am.*

*Ques.* 12. Will you deny all ungodliness and worldly lusts, and live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world, that you may show yourself in all things an example of good works unto others, that the adversary may be ashamed, having nothing to say against you? *Ans. I will.*

*Ques.* 13. Will you show yourself gentle and merciful for Christ's sake, and help and assist those of your co-laborers, and who may have the oversight of your District, and assist the poor and needy, as far as it is consistent with your calling? *Ans. I will.*

*Ques.* 14. Will you be faithful to all things that pertain to your calling as a Bishop or Elder, showing fidelity and humility of mind, serving the Lord and the Church and occupy yourself as a pastor, overseer or feeder of the flock in spiritual things, to visit the members of the flock of which you have charge or part of a charge, with consistency and avoid all appearance of evil; and if your condition should become such that would require assistance, will you be submissive to the Church in whatever may be administered by way of support? *Answer, I will.*

## ART. XXII.

## CHURCH DEDICATION.

*Sec. 1.*

The meeting shall be opened in the usual way, after which the subject of Church buildings and their proper use shall be the subject of their discourse, at the close of which the Bishop shall read a passage of Scripture, and the congregation sing a hymn, suitable for the occasion. Then the Bishop shall dedicate the Church building in the following manner: "It is right and appropriate, as we learn from the Holy Scriptures, that houses erected for the public worship of God should be especially set apart and dedicated for religious uses. For such dedication we are now assembled with gratitude to Almighty God, who has signally blessed his servants in their enterprise of erecting this Church. We dedicate it to his service for the reading of the Holy Scriptures, and the preaching of the Word of God; the administration of the sacraments, and for all other exercises of religious worship and service according to the usages of the Brethren in Christ, with the understanding that no musical instruments and no entertainments partaking of a worldly or light-minded nature shall ever be admitted. With this understanding, we do this day and date solemnly dedicate this place to the worship of God, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." After which the building, if thought proper, can be named, and service concluded with prayer and singing an appropriate hymn.

## ART. XXIII.

## FORM OF MARRIAGE CEREMONY.

*Sec. 1.*

After the bridal pair have presented themselves before the officiating minister, he may make suitable remarks in reference to the occasion, after which, and while the bride and groom are standing, the minister shall ask the following questions in an audible manner, commencing with the bridegroom: N— Do you take this woman, N— to be your wedded wife, to live together after God's ordinance; will you love, honor, comfort and keep her, in sickness and in health, in adversity and in prosperity, forsaking all others, will you cleave only unto her as long as you both live? If so, answer, *I will.*

Then also with the bride. N— Do you take this man, N— to be your wedded husband, to live together after God's ordinance; will you love, honor, comfort and be loyal unto him in sickness and in

health, in adversity and in prosperity, forsaking all others, will you cleave only unto him as long as you both shall live? If so, answer, *I will.* The bridal pair will then join their hands. The minister will say:

"Since this man and this woman have covenanted with each other to live together in Holy wedlock, and have witnessed the same before God and these witnesses, I, as a minister of the gospel, pronounce them husband and wife in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen. What, therefore, God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." Then close with prayer and congratulations.

## ART. XXIV.

## RITUAL FOR BURIAL.

*Sec. 1.*

After the corpse is lowered in the grave, the officiating minister shall solemnly say:

"Man that born of woman is of few days and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower, also as a shadow, and continueth not. Of whom may we seek for succor but of Thee, O Lord! And, forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God, in His wise Providence, to allow the removal of the soul of the departed, we therefore commit the body to the tomb (earth to earth, ashes to ashes, and dust to dust) in sure and certain hope of the resurrection of the dead, and the life to come thru our Lord Jesus Christ."

After this, while the grave is being closed, if suitable, a hymn may be sung, and the service closed by a short prayer and benediction.

## ART. XXV.

## SACRAMENT OR THE ORDINANCES OF THE CHURCH.

*Sec. 1.*

These shall be attended to at stated times and should be frequent. They may be observed with, or without, furnishing the whole congregation with provisions. But it is urged that where it can be done without disorder and without too much of a burden to those holding the love feast, that the Church should not forget the time-honored custom of supplying those at least, who come from a distance to attend the service of God, with provisions for the supply of their temporal needs. When they meet together to attend to the ordinances, they should devote the time previous to the observance of the same to social or covenant meeting, in which much time should be given to the experience of the members as a preparatory work for the

full enjoyment promised in participating in the ordinances of the house of the Lord. In the evening, after the opening services, the reading of that part of the 13th chapter of the Gospel by St. John, which gives an account of the Savior's washing of the disciples' feet, should be followed by such comment as may be considered necessary. Upon this, the washing of the saints' feet shall follow, and be observed by the single mode. After this, that part of sacred writ shall be read (John 19:1-30) which gives account of the crucifixion and death of our blessed Lord and Savior and suitable comments shall be made upon the occurrence. Then, as an introduction to the commemorative ordinance, the custom has been, as a token of filial love and union to salute each other with a holy kiss, after which the breaking of the bread (which shall be unleavened) shall follow, by first asking a blessing upon the emblems of the broken body of our Lord and Savior, and then give it to the communicants by the administrator to be broken for each other and to be continued from brother to brother and sister to sister by the following or similar words:

"Beloved brother (or sister) this bread which we break is the communion of the body of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ." Likewise also, the cup, which shall be the fruit of the vine, the pure juice of the grape, after asking the Lord's blessing upon it, shall be partaken of in the same manner, saying:

"The cup which we drink is the communion of the blood of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ."

## ART. XXVI.

### THE PRAYER COVERING.

#### Sec. 1.

As taught by the inspired Apostle Paul, I. Cor. XI:3-16, has always been accepted; and the Church holds that this implies that a woman professing godliness shall not appear in public nor in any way engage in praying or prophesying without having a plain and modest head covering. This is not worn simply as a headdress, but in reverence to the man and a sign of authority.

## ART. XXVII.

### ESSENTIAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR A CHRISTIAN LIFE.

#### Sec. 1.

The Bible plainly teaches that God's people are a separate people from the world. First, it is shown in the condition of the heart. The Lord says:

"A new heart will I give you, etc.," Ezek. 36 chap., 26-7 v., and the Apostle says, II. Cor. 6 chap., 17 v.: "All things are new," "A new creation, etc." And it is also shown in our profession as well as in the language of the Apostle to the Romans, 10th chap., 10th v. Also it is shown in our daily walk, I. John 1st chap., 7th v. But our separation should also be manifested by our holy lives, and this will lead us to put away, and divest ourselves of everything that is sinful, and to live pure lives in Christ Jesus, and to be "sanctified wholly, etc." I. Thess. 5: 23, and it will also lead us to "not fashion ourselves after our former lusts." I. Peter 1: 14. For the lust of the eye, the lust of the flesh and the pride of life are not of the Father, I. John 2: 16. Likewise in this separation the Christian should divest himself of "all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness, in the fear of the Lord." Our apparel should be sanctified and made meet for the Master's use, as well as what we eat and drink.

#### Sec. 2.

Our apparel is therefore to be plain, not costly, but such as becometh those professing godliness. We have no express command in God's word as to what the cut of our clothing shall be, yet it does teach that we should not be conformed to this world, and uniformity, as much as possible, is essential to maintain the simplicity and plainness, which is so necessary among God's people as a mark of separation from the world.

#### Sec. 3.

It is evident also that God's people should be free from the pollutions of the world, and that the body which is said to be God's temple, should not be desecrated and polluted by making it the receptacle of that which is filthy and sickening, or that which intoxicates and destroys the reasoning powers, and no one professing godliness can traffic in tobacco or alcoholic drinks, neither in their production, nor business, nor use consistently; and total abstaining is the only safe ground for a Christian to stand upon.

We, the undersigned Executive Board of the Church of the Brethren in Christ, as incorporated this second day of May, 1904, and approved and adopted by the first State Council of Pennsylvania under the present incorporated organization for the future government and spiritual welfare of the Church, do hereby subscribe our respective names and trust that General Conference may accept the same in the fear of God, as the standard of the



Church of the Brethren in Christ as already established thruout the United States of America, Canada and foreign countries.

MARTIN H. OBERHOLSER, *Chairman,*

JONATHAN WERT, *Asst. Chairman,*

JACOB K. KREIDER, *General Treasurer,*

S. R. SMITH, *General Secretary.*

ELI M. ENGLE, *Asst. General Secretary.*

*General Executive Board 1904 and 1905.*

We, the undersigned Moderators of Pennsylvania State Council, held at the Messiah Rescue and Benevolent Home, in the city of Harrisburg, Pa., on May 4, 1904, do hereby approve on behalf of Pennsylvania State Council, the report of the General Executive Committee as pertaining to the Constitution and By-Laws as a Standard for the Church of the Brethren in Christ as incorporated according to law in the State of Pennsylvania on the second day of May 1904, and certify that the contents of the same were prayerfully considered, and therefore pray General Conference of 1904 of the Brethren in Christ in the United States of America and Canada, to accept and ratify the same in the fear of God.

JONATHAN WERT,

AARON MARTIN,

HENRY B. HOFFER,

*Moderators, Penna. State Council, 1904.*

ATTEST:

S. R. SMITH,

ELI M. ENGLE.

S. cy.