THE PRINCIPLES OF FAITH

of the

SEVENTH-DAY ADVENTIST CHURCH "REFORM MOVEMENT"

and her

CHURCH BY-LAWS

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BRIEF PRESENTATION

ISSUED BY THE

General Conference of the Seventh-day Adventist Church "Reform Movement"

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during the General Conference Session from July 14-20, 1925, at Gotha

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Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement
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INTRODUCTION

By the grace of God, the last great Reformation of the eternal work of the gospel has begun in all lands to which the message of the return of Christ and the spread of that message according to Revelation 14:6-12 has reached.

The great prophesied apostasy among the Advent people gives us occasion to issue the principles of faith of the third angel's message.

As a distinction from the many branches of Adventists, our name is, in accordance with the Testimonies, "Reform Movement." Hence, our official name is: "Seventh-day Adventist Church, Reform Movement."

May all those who seek for complete salvation in Christ, by testing this decisive stand according to the Law and Testimony, accept the counsel of Jesus in these days of the shaking, elevate the standard for themselves and pour forth the straight truth.

With the prayer that these doctrines and principles may serve to the honor of God and the completion of the work of Christ, we send them out into all the world.

THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

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1. GOD

Elohim, trinity, 3 human attributes

We believe that there is but one God, who, through His infinite wisdom and almighty power, created heaven and earth. (Exodus 20:2, 3; Isaiah 45:5, 6, 18.)

God is a spiritual being (John 4:24), "eternal," without beginning and without end (Revelation 21:6), omnipresent (Psalm 139:1-12), dwelling in the heavens; He cannot be seen by man in his present, sinful state. (1 Timothy 6:16; Isaiah 59:2; John 1:18; Exodus 33:20.) Only through faith are we able to come to God. (Hebrews 11:6.)

2. JESUS CHRIST – dual nature, mediator, creator

We believe that Jesus Christ is the living Son of God and that He is one in nature with the Father. (Hebrews 1:1-3, 5.) Through Him all things have since eternity been created, whether in heaven or in earth. (Colossians 1:15-17.) Christ alone, therefore, can be the Mediator between God and men. (1 Timothy 2:5.) In harmony with the testimony of the prophets, He was conceived by the Spirit of God through the virgin Mary and was born as man on this earth in Bethlehem. (Matthew 1:18-23.) Only through faith in His death and His freely offered grace may we be saved. (Luke 1:77-79; Acts 4:12; John 3:14, 15; Ephesians 2:3-6.)

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3. THE HOLY SPIRIT ✓

We believe that the Holy Spirit is the representative of Christ on earth. (John 14:16.) Without Him it is impossible to comprehend and live according to the will of God. Also, it is not possible to rightly interpret the divine Word without the aid of the Holy Spirit. (John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:11.) He is the power from the Father and the Son and also active through human beings. (2 Peter 1:21; 1 Peter 1:11.)

The Holy Spirit is one with the Father and the Son, and therefore believers are baptized not only in these names but also in the name of the Holy Spirit, after they have become acquainted with Him. (Matthew 28:19; 1 John 5:7; 2 Corinthians 13:14.) ✓

4. THE HOLY SCRIPTURES

We believe that both the New and the Old Testament of the Holy Scriptures are the Word of God and, as such, reveal the will of God. (John 5:39.)

The Bible was written by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16; Romans 2:16; Revelation 1:2) and constitutes our guide and rule of life, in addition to containing all of God's plan of redemption; and no church tradition or catechism is needed. (Isaiah 34:16; Revelation 22:18, 19; John 5:39; 10:35, last part; Matthew 15:9; Proverbs 30:6.)

5. THE LAW OF GOD ✓ 10-1, judgment

(The law of morals and manners of the ten commandments.)

We believe that Christ did not come to improve in any way upon the law as written by God with His own finger on Mount Sinai (Matthew 5:17; Psalm 119:142), because the "ten commandments" are perfect and it is impossible to improve them. (Psalm 19:8.)

Therefore, Christ could not bring any changes to this law, because He is the same now as He was in the Old Testament. (1 Peter 1:10, 11; Colossians 1:15, 16.)

It is thus evident that anyone who teaches that the law of God has been changed or abolished is sinning against God, either consciously or in ignorance. (James 2:10; 1 John 3:10; Matthew 7:21.)

Through acknowledging and keeping the holy ten commandments of God (Psalm 119:153, 142; John 15:10; 17:17), we show our love to God the Father and His Son. (John 14:15, 21; 1 John 2:3-6.)

Transgression, brought on by compulsion or persecution, even coming from higher authorities, will not be approved by God. (Acts 5:29; 4:19; Daniel 3; Matthew 22:21.)

In matters of faith, no man or other power has authority to issue laws. (Isaiah 42:8; John 10:35, first part.)

The "ten commandments" are as follows:

1. "I am the Lord thy God, which have brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before Me.

2. "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of any thing that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate Me; And shewing mercy unto thousands of them that love Me, and keep My commandments.

3. "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain.

4. "Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days shalt thou labour, and do all thy work: But the seventh day is the sabbath of the Lord thy God: in it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor thy stranger that is within thy gates: For in six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore the Lord blessed the sabbath day, and hallowed it.

5. "Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

6. "Thou shalt not kill.

7. "Thou shalt not commit adultery.

8. "Thou shalt not steal.

9. "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.

10. "Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor any thing that is thy neighbour's."

6. THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT—THE SABBATH

We believe that this commandment, like all others, cannot be altered. (James 2:10; Matthew 5:17.) It is only the seventh day of the week which

is distinctly named among all others as "the Lord's day." (Exodus 20:8-11; Mark 2:27, 28.)

This commandment sanctifies the Sabbath day and therefore forbids all secular work and kindred activities that are inappropriate to the sacredness of that day, such as the preparation of food, which should be done on the preparation day (Friday) (Exodus 16:23), occupational work or conversation (Isaiah 58:13), mental work and professional teaching of a secular nature. We also do not send our children to school on the Sabbath day.

Those who are employed by the state, those having their own business, as well as servants and maids—every class of humans—yes, even the stranger that is within one's household and the domestic animals are under solemn obligation to rest on the Sabbath. (Revelation 14:9-11.)

Also, undertakings on the Sabbath, such as traveling by railroad or the selling of missionary periodicals, do not glorify the Sabbath and must therefore be avoided. It may be necessary to travel on the Sabbath in order to reach churches which need our help and to bring them the message they are to hear according to God's will; but as much as possible we must procure our tickets and all things needed the day before. When making a prolonged journey, we ought to put forth effort to arrange our schedule in such a way that we do not reach our destination on the Sabbath.

The object in hallowing the Sabbath is to enter into "a day of joyful rest of the Father with His children." (Genesis 2:2, 3.) It is therefore our special privilege, according to the example of Jesus, to do good on the Sabbath. (Matthew 12:10-12.) The spiritual upbuilding of young and old, the singing of hymns to God's honor, visiting of the sick and study and recreation in nature are appropriate on the Sabbath.

We believe that the prevailing transgression of the holy Sabbath today and the observance of Sunday are a fulfillment of the prophecy of Daniel. (Daniel 7:25.) The great antichristian power of the papacy has dared to attempt to change the law of God and the times. The second and fourth commandments were altered by the Catholic Church with the assertion that it had authority to do so. The Protestant churches are following Rome's example.

While the Sabbath represents the seal of God (the sign of acknowledging the Creator in true worship), the keeping of Sunday represents the mark of the antichristian power. (Revelation 7:1-3; 13:16-18.)

We believe that anyone who transgresses the Sabbath commandment will accept the mark of the beast and must suffer the results of disobedience.

7. THE MOSAIC (CEREMONIAL) LAW

We believe that the New Testament church is released from the ceremonial law. It should no longer be observed, since it contains those ordinances which pertained to the sacrificial system and the ceremonies of the temple service, which typified Jesus Christ's work of redemption. These laws were a shadow and object lesson pointing to coming events. The validity of this law ceased at the moment when Christ, the true

(antitypical) sacrificial Lamb, was nailed to the cross. (Hebrews 10:1; Colossians 2:16, 17.)

8. THE CEREMONIAL SABBATHS

We believe that the holidays, new moons and other sabbaths, of which Paul wrote in Colossians 2:16; Galatians 4:10; and Romans 14:5, were only a shadow and should therefore not be confused with the weekly Sabbath, the seventh day, which was sanctified in the moral law as the "Lord's day." This Sabbath, instituted at creation, has no symbolic meaning referring to the plan of redemption.

The ceremonial law had the following seven shadow sabbaths:

Unleaven Bread

1. The first day of Passover. (Exodus 12:15, 16; Leviticus 23:6, 7.)
2. The seventh day of Passover. (Numbers 28:17, 18, 25; Leviticus 23:8.) Pesech

Feast of Weeks

3. The fiftieth day (Pentecost) after Passover, which was also called the feast of weeks. (Leviticus 23:15, 16, 21; Exodus 34:22.)

Day of Trumpet

4. The first day of the seventh month. (Leviticus 23:24, 25; Numbers 29:1-6.) Rosha shan

Day of Atonement

5. The tenth day of the seventh month. (Leviticus 23:27, 28, 31, 32; Numbers 29:7.) Yom Kipper
6. The fifteenth day of the seventh month. (Leviticus 23:34-36.)

Feast of Tabernacle

7. The twenty-second day of the seventh month. (Leviticus 23:39.)

If Jesus by His death had abolished the weekly Sabbath of the decalogue, He would not have declared, "I am not come to destroy, but to fulfill." (Matthew 5:17.) The apostles, also, could not have written the following: Acts 16:13; Mark 2:27; Matthew 24:20; Acts 13:13, 14, 42-44; 17:2; 18:2-4; Hebrews 4:9, 10.

9. GRACE AND ITS MEANS Acts 15:11

We believe that grace is the covering of our sins through Christ. He is the Founder of the kingdom of grace. (John 1:17; Hebrews 4:16.) We can claim the benefits of redeeming grace only if we shun sin through the power of Christ in conjunction with our own will. (John 5:14; Acts 2:38.) Through grace we are made free. (John 8:31, 32.)

The words, "For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17), do not mean that grace and truth came into existence only at the death of Christ, but much more that they were granted to man through Christ when man fell. Christ existed in heaven before He came to this earth (Psalm 103:17; Exodus 34:6, 7; Lamentations 3:22, 23), even before the foundation of the world. (Colossians 1:15-20.) Soon after the entrance of sin, the kingdom of grace was founded as the forgiveness of Christ was introduced. (Genesis 3:15.) The complete establishment of the kingdom of grace occurred at the death of Christ, when redemption was "finished."

We believe that God has provided various means to draw sinners to Himself and give them the promised redemption through the grace of Christ. (Ephesians 2:8.) These means are:

1. The Word of God. (Romans 10:13-17; Mark 16:15.)
2. The church of God.

All who by the influence of the Holy Spirit have been converted may become members of the church of God through baptism. (Acts 2:38-41; Mark 16:16; Acts 16:15, 33; 10:48.)

3. The Washing of the Feet.

All members of God's church, according to the example of Jesus, may participate in the washing of the feet, which is to educate us in the unity of the Spirit and in the humility of Christ. (John 13:1-13.)

4. The Lord's Supper.

All members of the church may participate in this commemorative supper instituted by Christ and partake of the bread and wine, which reminds us of the death of Christ and the love which exists between Him and His church. (1 Corinthians 11:17-34.)

10. PENITENCE, OBEDIENCE AND REGENERATION

(A) Penitence, or repentance for sins committed and the forsaking of sin, is made possible through the Word and the Spirit of God. (Hebrews 4:12; Romans 1:10-17.) The Word of God is heard through the preaching of human instruments who are called for this purpose. (Romans 10:14-17; Luke 16:29-31.) The distinction between true and false ministers is clearly seen in their adherence to the principles of Christ's kingdom. (John 8:31, 32.) When he hears the divine word, the sinner is aroused from spiritual death. (Acts 2:37.) The Word leads him to genuine faith; namely, to repentance for his evil works, which cause him to feel sad. (Nehemiah 9:1-3; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Jonah 3:5-9.) The sinner seeks for an escape from death (Acts 2:37), and the Word points him to the true Redeemer (Acts 4:12; John 3:36), through whom he perceives that obedience motivated by fear of the Word of God brings no redemption. (Matthew 27:2-5; Daniel 3:28-30.)

(B) Obedience is the fruit of conversion. Repentance is the fruit of faith (James 2:16; Mark 1:15), and faith comes from hearing God's Word. (Romans 10:17.) If one is not totally submissive to the Word of God, his conversion is not yet complete, for he proves by his own works that his connection with sin has not been severed. (Matthew 5:19; James 2:10.)

(C) Regeneration, or the new birth. (John 3:3; 2 Corinthians 5:17.) In order to be born again, of the Spirit, means that we are led by the Holy Spirit, just as a child obeys the father who has begotten him. (Romans 8:9-13.) The old leaven, the deviation from the spirit of the law, must be completely removed. (Galatians 5:19-21; Colossians 3:5-10.) If a person is not born again by the Spirit, he cannot partake of the life of Christ. (John 7:38, 39.)

11. BAPTISM

We believe that baptism for the remission of sins, according to the holy Scriptures, will be performed for the believers as long as the grace of Christ reigns on the earth. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Mark 16:15, 16.) Only those souls who believe in Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour; who

believe in His teachings and those of the apostles and prophets in the Old and New Testaments; and who are converted concerning all things which the Word of God condemns may be baptized. (Matthew 28:19, 20; Acts 2:37, 38.) Children who are not old enough to believe for themselves and cannot distinguish between good and evil are not ready for baptism. (Acts 19:1-12; 1 Peter 3:21.) The act of baptism is performed by an ordained and authorized worker of the gospel. It is a one-time immersion into water in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. This act of baptism represents the burial and resurrection of Christ and in like manner the burial of the old man and resurrection to a new life in Christ. (Romans 6:2-5; Colossians 2:12.)

Believers from other churches who were baptized in the Biblical manner and who in true faith in Christ confess that they have always been willing to walk in the commandments of God need not be re-baptized. Before one is baptized, he needs to make a confession of his faith in Jesus Christ and acceptance of Biblical principles. (Acts 8:37, 38; *Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 6, p. 95, "Examination of Candidates.")

In every case, acceptance into God's church should be done carefully and after thorough examination. When accepted for baptism or acceptance, every soul is to have left every former church body or denomination.

Baptism is adminstered only once (Ephesians 4:5), while other means of grace, such as the feet washing, the Lord's Supper and prayer, are repeated in the life of faith.

Baptism is performed a second time only if it was not done in harmony with Biblical rules the first time or the person did not truly believe. (Acts 19:2-6.

12. THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that in partaking of the unleavened bread and unfermented wine, as it is served in the Holy Supper, the death of Christ is symbolized. This partaking of the bread and wine does not impart forgiveness of sin, but the Communion Supper is a supper commemorating the sufferings and death of Jesus to strengthen the church and preserve it in meekness, love and unity until Jesus' coming. (1 Corinthians 10:16, 17; 11:27-29.)

We believe that the bread symbolizes the body of Christ; and the wine, His blood, as the Lord said.

The Holy Supper is served only to those who have been baptized. (Matthew 28:19, 20.)

13. THE WASHING OF THE FEET

(John 13:1-17.)

We believe that this service of Christ is binding upon all Christians. (John 13:14, 15, 17.) This service, which teaches humility, was introduced by Jesus. It is not a Jewish or oriental custom but a new commandment. This is evidenced by the resistance which Peter and the other disciples at first revealed. A general washing of the feet was customary before entering the house, and this would not have caused the disciples to wonder. "What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter"—these

words of Jesus verify that the feet washing is a sacred act which cannot be performed in spirit but needs to be done in reality. In John 13:17, all who follow the example of Jesus in the washing of the feet are declared happy.

14. THE 2,300 DAYS

We believe that the great prophetic time period of the prophet Daniel (chapter 8:14) ended in the year 1844, and that the "cleansing of the sanctuary" is synonymous with the beginning of the investigative judgment in heaven. (Ezekiel 4:6; Numbers 14:34; Daniel 9:24-27.) This time period began, according to Ezra 7:11-26, in the year 457 B.C.

A few years prior to the end of the 2,300 days (years), when Christ was to enter as High Priest into the Most Holy Place of the heavenly sanctuary, a worldwide revival began in preparation for Christ's second coming. The faithful Advent believers recognized in Revelation 14:6-8 the message entrusted to them by God. Although the majority among the Christian denominations resisted the solemn messages of preparation and thus became part of Babylon (confusion), the second angel's message, serving as a warning, prepared the way for the third. (Revelation 14:9-12.) Since 1844, the holy requirements of God—His commandments—have been proclaimed to all mankind, all peoples, all nations and all tongues and constitutes the gathering of the latter-day church for the coming of Christ.

15. THE THREE ANGELS' MESSAGES

We believe that the message of Revelation 14:6-12 represents the last "present truth" of the plan of redemption. Ever since the appointed time—1844—men have been called to keep God's commandments, especially the Sabbath, and are warned against the worship of secular religious systems (the beast) which demand obedience through means of the state.

The object of this last message of grace is to prepare a people from all nations to meet Jesus at His second coming. It will shelter them from the plagues, which will fall upon apostatized Christendom as the wrath of God without mixture at the close of probation. (Revelation 15:8; chapter 16.)

16. THE LOUD CRY

(Revelation 18:1-4.)

We believe that the present-day revivals among the Advent people, who have backslidden from the three angels' messages, lead to fulfillment of the following prophecies:

Early Writings, pp. 85, 86: " And at the commencement of the time of trouble, we were filled with the Holy Ghost as we went forth and proclaimed the Sabbath more fully. . . .

" 'The commencement of that time of trouble,' here mentioned, does not refer to the time when the plagues shall begin to be poured out, but to a short period just before they are poured out, while Christ is in the sanctuary. At that time, while the work of salvation is closing, trouble will be coming on the earth, and the nations will be angry, yet held in check so as not to prevent the work of the third angel. At that time the 'latter rain,' or refreshing from the presence of the

Lord, will come, to give power to the loud voice of the third angel, and prepare the saints to stand in the period when the seven last plagues shall be poured out."

Early Writings, p. 277: "The message of the fall of Babylon, as given by the second angel, is repeated, with the additional mention of the corruptions which have been entering the churches since 1844. The work of this angel comes in at the right time to join in the last great work of the third angel's message as it swells to a loud cry."

L a o d i c e a — the people of the judgment, described by the Faithful Witness in Revelation 3:14-22, as the Israel of the last days, is being called to a Reformation by "serious trials of faith," as Israel was in the days of Jesus, to proclaim the last warning in the fullness of the Spirit of God to bring people to a decision.

Since the loud cry is a continuation of the three angels' messages, and in a special measure a swelling of the third angel's message, a weakening of the same and erroneous interpretations must occur prior to the last message.

In nearly all lands of the earth to which the three angels' messages have spread, the Advent people have, as a majority, so conformed and submitted to the world in terms of the standards of obedience that in "public declarations" to the authorities the Sabbath as well as other requirements of God have been nullified.

All testimonies of the Spirit of God declare that the loyal Sabbath-keepers will separate themselves from those who have let the banner of the last message fall into the dust.

17. THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY

or The Testimony of Jesus

We believe that Christ spoke to His church in the Old and New Testaments by means of prophets. (1 Peter 1:10, 11; Revelation 19:10; Colossians 1:15-20; 2 Chronicles 20:20.)

All who desire to keep God's commandments, if they do not have the warnings and enlightenment of the prophets, will walk in darkness and stray from the path of God.

Every true church will have all the spiritual gifts, among which is the gift of prophecy (with visions and dreams). The gift of prophecy is the eye of the body (the church). (Ephesians 4:11-14; 1 Corinthians 12:6-11.) As soon as a church loses this gift or disregards it, it will apostatize and become darkened. (Proverbs 29:18.) There will be prophecy in God's church until the second coming of the Lord. (1 Corinthians 13:8-13; Matthew 28:20.) Since the year 1844, when the last church was raised to the obedience of Christ, it was blessed with revelation of the divine will through Sister Ellen G. White.

Although God at this time could avail Himself only of a physically frail sister among His people, yet often in the plan of redemption faithful women were chosen for this sacred office. (Exodus 15:20; Judges 4:4; 2 Kings 22:14-16; Luke 2:36; Acts 21:9.)

The revelations of the prophets, through divine counsel and aid, have always been carefully preserved and kept close to God's people. (Habakkuk 2:2; Jeremiah 30:2.)

Sister White writes concerning this: "The volumes of Spirit of Prophecy, and also the Testimonies, should be introduced into every Sabbathkeeping family, and brethren should know their value and be urged to read them. It was not the wisest plan to place these books at a low figure and have only one set in a church. They should be in the library of every family and read again and again." (*Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 4, p. 390, 1880.)

We believe that these testimonies of the Spirit do not stand above the Bible or form an addition to it. They are counsels of God to lead us to the truth of the divine Word. God will give us additional testimonies only when the light already given has prepared us through sanctification for further revelations.

18. MARRIAGE

We believe that marriage is ordained by God and that it is a blessed and sanctified institution which is valid from paradise to the end of the world (Genesis 2:24; Hebrews 13:4; Ephesians 5:22, 23):

(a) so the human race could multiply but not satisfy its lust (Genesis 1:27, 28);

(b) so husband and wife could complement each other in love (Ephesians 5:22-25);

(c) to avoid adultery and fornication. (1 Corinthians 7:1-9.)

It is the will of God that a man should have only one wife, and a wife to have only one husband. (Matthew 19:4-6; 1 Corinthians 6:16.)

We believe that Christians should observe the principles of temperance (moral purity) and not sacrifice their physical and spiritual strength upon the altar of low carnal sensuality.

The counsels given in God's word in this respect point us to complete purity. Because of great temptations, the Holy Scriptures teach that, according to one's physical tendencies, he should either marry or remain unmarried. (1 Corinthians 7:1, 2, 37, 38.) In every case, acceptance of a church member into church fellowship is dependent upon a confession of "moral purity in Christ."

We also believe that Christians should be united in marriage only with those of like faith. The Holy Scriptures and the *Testimonies* consider marriage to an unbeliever a serious sin and a departure from Jesus. In such a case, *Gospel Workers,* p. 498 ("Church Discipline") must be applied. (1 Corinthians 7:39; Joshua 23:12, 13; Nehemiah 13:23-28.)

Divorce is not according to the will of God. (Matthew 19:6-8; 1 Corinthians 7:10, 11.)

Adultery and persecution against the believer in marriage is the only ground for separation, and then one is to remain single until the death of the other party of the marriage. (1 Corinthians 7:12, 13, 15.)

By remaining unmarried in such separation, proof is furnished that the reason for divorce is a matter of conscience and not sinful adultery with the desire to marry another person. (Romans 7:1-3.)

We believe, furthermore, that marriage is to be contracted in

accordance with civil law (Romans 13:1) and also in religious ceremony (before the Registrar's Office and also before the church).

Furthermore, all who intend to unite in wedlock should carefully weigh their decision before God and act in accordance with the counsel of their parents or guardians and spiritual advisors. In view of the requirements of the 5th commandment and the example of the patriarchs, this will prove a great blessing for the marriage institution in the church of the end days.

19. TEMPERANCE OR HEALTH REFORM

We believe that it is God's will that every person should enjoy both spiritual and physical health. (1 Corinthians 6:19, 20.) Anyone who ruins his body through intemperance and transgresses the laws of nature in his being sins against God's law and must bear the early consequences of God's judgments. (1 Corinthians 3:16, 17.)

Health reform is to make prominent the acceptance and presentation of hygienic, medical, vegetarian principles. Health reform is "the right arm of the third angel's message." —*Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 1, p. 486.)

As John the Baptist observed strict temperance in his life before the first coming of Christ for the fulfillment of his life's special mission, so, in a special manner, it is necessary for the people waiting for the second coming of Christ to practice healthful living. Temperance means abstaining from foods and drinks which are injurious to the body, such as: Flesh foods, fish, animal fats, alcoholic drinks and those containing cocaine, sharp condiments, ill-smelling, rotten cheeses, coffee, tea, indigestible baked goods, tobacco. opium, morphine, etc. We reject poisonous medicines, according to the *Testimonies,* and unnecessary vaccinations.

Christian temperance also includes dress reform. Articles of luxury, fashion craze, unnecessary, showy trimmings, morally offensive dress, such as the cutting out of parts of the dress or the use of transparent material, unhealthful and ill-fitting footwear, health-destroying lacing of the body, or the baring of neck and shoulders are unbecoming to a Christian.

Yet it is the Christian's duty to set a good example in the wearing of healthful, neat, becoming, appropriate clothing.

20. THE GOVERNMENT

We believe that all government is ordained of God and that it is God's servant for the protection of all who do good. (Romans 13:1-4.)

We believe that we must fulfill our duties toward the government, not from compulsion, but for conscience' sake. It is our duty to pay taxes and to honor the authority of the state. (Romans 13:5-7; Titus 3:1-3; 1 Peter 2:13, 14, 17; Matthew 22:21.)

We also believe that governments should allow their citizens freedom in practicing their religious beliefs. Compulsion of conscience and the issuing of laws that are contrary to the will of God nullify the authority of such governments, because Christians are then compelled to declare, "We ought to obey God rather than men." (Acts 5:29-42; Daniel 3:8-30.)

We also believe it necessary to pray for the government so that peace and order may abound among men, every man may live his faith, and the gospel of Christ may not be hindered.

In keeping with the teachings of Christ, we, as His followers, cannot take part in any political activity, war, rebellion or the shedding of blood.

21. THE SEALING OF THE 144,000, ACCORDING TO REVELATION 7

We believe that the sealing of the number of the 144,000 in the end times is synonymous with the restoration of the character of God, through the gospel of Christ, in His church, based upon all the requirements of His holy law.

The outward sign, or seal, of all faithful soldiers for God is obedience to the Sabbath. The willing obedience of the believers to this commandment has been tested all through the ages. (Ezekiel 20:20.)

The sealing work of the 144,000 has begun with the proclamation of the third angel's message, which requires full obedience to the commandments of God, including the keeping of the Sabbath, before the second advent of Christ. From all nations, people who worship the King of Heaven in willing obedience and freed from all human entanglements are being gathered. (Revelation 14:6-12.)

We believe the sealing will continue until the close of probation. The number of all who are sealed will be 144,000. This spiritual Israel (perfect overcomers) is in a marvelous manner chosen from all peoples, races and tongues. (Revelation 7:2-8; 14:1-5; 15:1-5; *The Great Controversy,* by Ellen G. White, pp. 637, 645, 648, 649.)

All the "sealed ones" who have died during the proclamation of the third angel's message—all the overcomers who have kept the Sabbath since the end of the 2,300 days in 1844—are included in the number of the 144,000.

The sleeping ones who were sealed will, during the time of the plagues, be united with the living sealed ones by a special resurrection before the coming of Christ; and after the close of the covenant of peace, they will be translated with the great multitude as "first fruits" of the redemption and will be accepted by Christ. (Daniel 12:2; *Early Writings,* by Ellen G. White, p. 285; *The Great Controversy,* chapter entitled "God's People Delivered.")

22. THE CHURCH OF THE LORD

We belive that the church (congregation) is the divinely appointed union and assembly of the believers, an establishment ordained from the beginning of the plan of redemption of Christ. Jesus Himself restored the "tabernacle of David," rebuilding it through His own work and the work of the apostles. (Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 16:19.)

Only by faith, conversion and baptism may we become members of the church of Christ, or members of His body. (1 Corinthians 12:13; Matthew 28:19, 20.) Only after fulfilling these conditions may the believer participate in the Holy Ordinances and the washing of the feet, as well

as in all other gifts of mercy with which the church has been endowed.

We believe that no child of God who has been enlightened by faith in the Word of God can stand separate and independent from the blessings of the church and still grow in the grace of God. All must learn by universal teaching, experience, exhortation and comfort in the school of Christ—His church—in order to be prepared for the church of eternity. As no member of the body can live without the other, so the members of Christ cannot live without Christian unity. (1 Corinthians 12:12-26).

The unchanging standard of Christ's church is the law of God. By this means it has been possible at all times to recognize any apostasy in the church and remain with the only true body of Christ. (Ephesians 2:20-22; Colossians 2:1-5; 1 Corinthians 3:9-11.

23. OFFICES IN THE CHURCH

We believe that, in accordance with God's Word, the church is to elect its own officers. (Acts 6:1-6; 20:28; 13:1-5.) The primary officers of the church are:

1. The Ordained Minister (also called Apostle)
2. The Ordained Elder (also called Overseer or Shepherd)
3. The Ordained Deacon (also called Distributor of Alms)

After being duly examined for their worthiness and usefulness, they are ordained for service by the church through prayer and the laying on of hands. (1 Timothy 5:22; Titus 1:5.)

In regard to their position, they are, as are all members of the church, subject to order and solemn obligations, with one exception; namely, attention, honor and respect are conferred upon them by all members, due to their office and responsibility. (1 Timothy 5:17, 19.)

Ordination to these offices is according to need. Such ordination imparts no capability or rank, since these have to be proven to be present in their prior service. The act of ordination merely bestows the authority of the church for greater responsibility, and the blessing of God is invoked upon the office.

Only these ordained servants are called to lead out in the gospel work and church activities (organization of groups), to conduct baptisms and to administer the Holy Ordinances.

24. ACCEPTANCE INTO THE CHURCH

Acceptance can occur only if every soul who so desires membership has come to a thorough knowledge and conviction of the principles of our faith and the church has no objection to such acceptance.

The church, furthermore, expects a testimony to be given before the assembly. By means of this testimony and the extending of the hand of fellowship by the ordained servant, acceptance into the church is confirmed. (Acts 2:37, 38, 41; 1 Timothy 6:12.) All members of the church meet each other as brethren and sisters in Christ and greet each other, brother to brother, and sister to sister, with the holy kiss. (2 Corinthians 13:12.)

Life insurance is contrary to Christ's teachings and therefore cannot

be engaged in by the followers of Christ. (1 Peter 1:17-19; Isaiah 53:4; Proverbs 17:16; Colossians 3:2-4; 1 Corinthians 6:19, 20; *Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 1, pp. 549-551.)

Acceptance into the church necessitates stepping out of every other religious organization, as well as all secret societies and labor unions. (2 Corinthians 6:14-18; Revelation 18:4; James 5:7-9; *Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 2, p. 84.)

25. DUTIES OF CHURCH MEMBERS

Members' duties are based entirely upon mutual love. (John 13:34, 35.) Every member of the church regards it as a privilege and duty to be present at the washing of the feet, the Holy Ordinances, the meetings to hear the Word (Sabbath school), the divine worship on the Sabbath and other meetings. Only sickness and circumstances that give real occasion are reasons for not attending. (Psalm 116:18.)

26. CHURCH DISCIPLINE

Such discipline is based upon the ordinance given by Jesus in Matthew 18:15-17. This rule is to be regarded by every member of the church very painstakingly, without respect to persons.

Every member should feel it his duty to receive the admonition of love. (Proverbs 15:31, 32; 10:17.) Disfellowshipment from the church is the only act which gives the members and the church as such a right to regard the mutual relationship as brethren and sisters in Christ as dissolved.

27. DISFELLOWSHIPMENT

1 Cor 5:4-5.

Disfellowshipment is based upon the ordinance of Christ. (1 Corinthians 5:11-13.) The church is under duty, before God, to disfellowship those members whose conduct is in open and continued contradiction to Christian principles.

As in the case of acceptance, only the church as a body is authorized to confirm a disfellowshipment in a lawful manner and in harmony with the Word of God. (1 Timothy 1:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; Titus 3:10, 11; 1 Timothy 6:3-5.)

28. TITHE

We believe that the giving of tithe was ordained by God in the beginning of the plan of redemption. In the Old as well as the New Testament, the giving of this tax to the church is shown to be for the service of the gospel. (Genesis 14:18-20; Numbers 18:20-24; 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; 2 Corinthians 11:8.)

Every believer has the privilege and is duty-bound to give the tithe from all the property and income with which the Lord has blessed him. (Nehemiah 13:10-12.)

We believe that the tithe is not a gift but that it is the "sacred property of the Lord." To use the tithe personally for any good purpose or to withhold it is regarded by the Lord as a "curse-worthy fraud." (Malachi 3:6-18.)

The tithe is to be turned in to the treasurer elected by the church.

The treasurer gives a receipt for every sum received, and the appropriations for the furtherance of the gospel are made according to the resolutions made by the church for the sole purpose of spreading the gospel by the ministry. No one but the organized church is authorized to accept or appropriate the "holy tithe."

29. FREEWILL OFFERINGS

We believe that these are offerings ordained by the Lord to help the church within and without. (Luke 6:30-36; Deuteronomy 15:1-15).

(a) The first-day offerings, according to 1 Corinthians 16:1-3, are ordained to be for the poor. Every member, according to his ability, lays means aside for this purpose on the first day of the week (Galatians 6:9, 10) and turns this offering in to the treasurer every month.

(b) The Sabbath school offering is a thank offering for the precious gems of truth which the Lord gives us in the Sabbath school. These gifts serve in a special sense to spread the principles of our faith in word and writing. The Sabbath school teacher gathers them at the close of the Sabbath school and turns them in to the treasurer.

(c) The Mission offerings are freewill offerings of members and strangers used for missionary work.

(d) The General collection is taken at the end of every meeting and especially after the Lord's Supper has been celebrated. From these gifts the rent, fuel for the meeting place and all other needs of the local church and groups are paid.

30. THE OATH (SWEARING)

We believe, according to the Word of God, that the false and unnecessary use of an oath is an abomination before God. (Matthew 5:34-37; James 5:12.)

Ordinarily the language of the true Christian is, "Yes, yes; no, no." Nevertheless, the required oath in agreement with the gospel, calling upon God as a witness that the spoken word is the truth, is sanctioned by God. (Romans 1:9; 2 Corinthians 1:23; Galatians 1:20; *Thoughts from the Mount of Blessing,* by Ellen G. White, pp. 66, 67.)

31. PREACHING OF THE GOSPEL Gospel Comission

We believe that the commission of the Lord, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world" (Matthew 28:19, 20), is in a special way valid today. We feel it is our duty to participate in the spreading of the gospel in word and writing in the whole world. (Mark 16:15, 16; Ecclesiastes 11:1-6; Matthew 11:29, 30.)

32. OBEDIENCE AND SUBMISSION OF CHURCH MEMBERS

All church members will submit to the order of the church and to the arrangements of the leaders and officers, as long as they remain true to the principles of faith according to the Word of God. (Hebrews 13:7, 17; 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 13.)

33. THE SECOND COMING OF CHRIST

We believe that Jesus' coming is very near. (Luke 21:25-27; Matthew 24:3, 4; 16:27; 25:31.) Christ will come with great power and glory. (Matthew 24:30.)

We believe Christ will come the second time in person and visibly. (Matthew 24:30; Acts 1:8-11; Mark 13:26; 14:62.) When this occurs, all who have died in Christ will arise first, while the living will be translated. (1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 1 Corinthians 15:51, 52.)

34. STATE OF THE DEAD

We know from the Holy Scriptures that all the dead remain in an unconscious, inactive state until the hour of Christ's second coming. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6; Psalm 146:4.)

We also believe that man does not possess an immortal soul. (Ecclesiastes 9:5, 6.)

35. THE RESURRECTION

All who are in the prison house of the grave will come forth in a bodily resurrection. The righteous will be awakened at the first resurrection—at Christ's coming—but the unrighteous will rise after 1,000 years are past; this is called the second resurrection. (John 5:28, 29; Acts 24:15; 1 Thessalonians 4:15, 16; Hebrews 11:13; Revelation 20:4-6.)

36. THE THOUSAND YEARS (MILLENNIUM)

We believe that, after the second coming of the Lord in glory with His holy angels, the righteous, who partake of the first resurrection, will be caught up with the Lord to heaven. (1 Thessalonians 4:17.) But the ungodly will be destroyed at His coming. (2 Thessalonians 1:6-8; 2 Peter 3:10; Revelation 6:14-16; 19:17-21; Isaiah 24:3-20.) After the righteous have been caught up to heaven in the clouds, they will travel to the Holy City, where they will sit upon judgment thrones with the Saviour to judge the unrighteous during the thousand years. (1 Corinthians 6:3.) The punishment of the ungodly will be in the lake of fire. (Revelation 20:11-13.) During this time the earth will also be devastated, and no human being will be found upon it. At the conclusion of the judgment in heaven, the Saviour will come down with His saints to the Mount of Olives, followed by the Holy City, "New Jerusalem." Following the second resurrection, a consuming fire will cleanse the whole earth, at which time Satan and all the ungodly with him will be forever destroyed. The erection of the blessed and eternal Kingdom of Peace will then be completed. (Zechariah 14:3-5; Malachi 4:1-3; Revelation 20:13-15; 21:8.)

37. THE NEW HEAVEN AND EARTH

We believe that the old earth will be cleansed by fire and that there will be a new earth and a new heaven. The new earth, along with the New Jerusalem (Revelation 21:1-4), which is called the Holy City, will be the eternal heritage of the saints, a place where the redeemed will live in eternal happiness. (2 Peter 3:13; Isaiah 65:17, 18, 25; Psalm 37:11, 29.)

THE CHURCH BY-LAWS

(1 Corinthians 14:33.)

1. CHURCH

A church is composed of several believers of the three angels' messages who are led by an ordained church Elder (or church Chairman), a Deacon, a Treasurer and a Secretary.

These officers of the church, in conjunction with other members of the congregation, form, according to necessity, a Committee of 3 to 7 members which carries the responsibility for the prosperity of the church, within the framework of the principles of the denomination.

2. GROUP

A Group is a church, as described above, but without an Elder; it is directed by a Leader.

3. RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF THE CHURCH OFFICERS

(a) The ordained Elder has the right to baptize in his church and to serve the Lord's Supper, in harmony with the Conference President of the church as a whole. Furthermore, he occupies the chairmanship in church business meetings and, according to need, calls in the Committee. He is, in general, responsible for the spiritual welfare of the church.

(b) The 1st Deacon serves in close conjunction with the church Elder. Upon him and the associate deacon is placed the care of the poor, the sick and the erring ones.

The Deacon also sees that order and cleanliness are maintained in the church and attends to the preparation for the feet washing ceremony, the Lord's Supper and baptism.

He directs the appropriations for the poor and the church funds.

(c) The church Treasurer accepts the tithes, the first-day and Sabbath school offerings, gifts for missions and other gifts for the church and sends these monies weekly, or at least monthly, to the authorized Conference Treasurer of the church body. The Treasurer also gives his report to the church every quarter.

(d) The church Secretary keeps the church register. It contains a faithful record of the church members, giving their names, date of birth and date of acceptance into the church. A notation is also made from which church the members came and whether by baptism or accepted by vote.

When members move, the Secretary writes a church recommendation, after obtaining the decision of the church Committee. He, likewise, requests the same for believers who move in, if it has not been automatically received. In no case should the moving member receive a church letter personally.

At the end of the quarter, the Secretary reports to the church all special happenings and writes the minutes of the quarterly meetings. Five days after the end of the quarter, he sends the church report, examined by the Committee, to the authorized President of the church organization.

The report is to contain the following data:

1. Number of members according to the last report.

2. Report of the number and names of souls accepted by baptism, vote and church letter; furthermore, the number and names of those who left the church through disfellowshipment, death or transfer.

(e) The Committee of the church may number three, five or seven members. The church officers should always be in the Committee. The ordained minister always has the right to be present at the sessions of the Committee. Bible workers, when in town, should be invited.

The Committee should assemble monthly to:

1. discuss the spiritual welfare of the church;

2. counsel concerning the appropriation for the poor, the Lord's Supper, rent funds, collections and missionary activities and monies;

3. make motions concerning acceptance or disfellowshipment;

4. settle disputes between believers and admonish members.

4. RIGHTS OF THE CONGREGATION

(a) *Election of Church Officers*

The congregation votes for its church officers at the end of each year in the presence of the Conference President or his representative. A Nominating Committee is formed to select nominees in consultation with the Conference President or his representative.

(b) *Acceptance of New Church Members*

Acceptance can take place only after those concerned have been examined and recommended by the church. The names of those who are to be accepted by baptism or vote are made known to the church before their acceptance.

(c) *Issuance and Acceptance of Church Letters*

The church Committee grants each transferring member a letter of recommendation which is to be sent to the church involved.

The church Committee also examines the church letters of incoming members and places them before the congregation for consideration in the business sessions or following regular church services.

(d) *Disfellowshipment of Members*

Disfellowshipment can be carried out only by the congregation in agreement with the recognized Conference President or an ordained Minister of the denomination (never by the Committee or a Minister alone). Before a member is disfellowshipped, it is necessary that the rules set forth in Matthew 18:15-17 be carried out. When the personal work of admonition from the church officers is fruitless, the case is to be considered by the Committee. In such a case, it is in the interest of the members to accept the invitation of the Committee; for if he does not listen to them, then the case, with clearly furnished evidence, is referred

to the church for a final decision. In all cases, the member in question must be notified in ample time verbally or in writing by the Elder or Secretary to appear before the church. In complicated cases, the presence of the Conference President or his representative is recommended.

5. CONGREGATIONAL MEETINGS

These are divided into religious services and business meetings. The latter are the consecutive quarterly meetings and special business meetings. The date of the quarterly meeting and the business meetings is to be made known to the entire congregation in ample time. Proposals and motions on the part of members are to be presented, if possible in writing, in advance to the Elder or to a member of the Committee for a session of preliminary discussion.

6. BAPTISM

Baptism is administered to candidates after they have received thorough instruction in all points of present truth, been introduced by the evangelist to the Committee members and been examined before the church. The church, if possible, should secure suitable dark-colored baptismal robes.

The solemn act of baptism should be performed in a flowing stream, if possible.

7. THE WASHING OF THE FEET

This ordinance precedes the Lord's Supper. The church is to secure the necessary number of basins and towels. The basins are refilled with clean water after each washing. The brethren wash their feet separately from the sisters. It is held as self-evident that the feet washing, according to the Biblical record, is not to be regarded as cleansing but as a sacred act.

8. THE LORD'S SUPPER

The Holy Supper is to be served only to members of the church. The bread should be unleavened; and the wine, non-alcoholic. The Lord's Supper bread and wine should, if possible, be divided in such a way that nothing will remain. The utensils recommended are: a pitcher, a plate and cups or glasses. It is desirable to have a clean tablecloth and several napkins.

The number of members participating in the Lord's Supper should be established. The date for the Lord's Supper shall be made known to the church in ample time, and those members who live at a distance should be notified in writing. Members who are prevented from attending should not neglect to make the reason for their absence known to the Elder.

9. TITHE

The tithe is to be transferred systematically to the church Treasurer (every month, if possible). Members have the right to examine their own tithe account, but under no circumstances may they see the accounts of their fellow believers. Also, it is not permissible to give oral information

concerning the tithe of others. The Elder alone (or Leader) and the Conference President or his authorized representative have the privilege of receiving and seeing such information. Quarterly receipts should be issued and given to each member. Once tithe is paid or gifts of any kind are given, they cannot be reclaimed.

10. FREEWILL OFFERINGS

Such offerings consist of Sabbath School, First-day and Week of Prayer offerings, as well as all other special gifts for missions. In addition, there are offerings for the Home Missionary Department.

11. SABBATH SCHOOL

The Sabbath school consists of all church members and regular visitors; its object is to deepen the understanding of present truth and promote spiritual growth. The officers are: The Superintendent, an Assistant Superintendent, a Secretary and, if needed, a special Treasurer. The Sabbath school is divided into classes of from 6 to 8 students. The instruction is derived from specially prepared printed lessons. Twenty minutes are given for the review lesson; and twenty to thirty minutes, for the day's lesson. The entire period of the Sabbath school should not exceed more than one hour. The Secretary, each time, makes a short report covering the course of the meeting, the participation of the members and the amount of offerings received for the Sabbath school; this is read the following Sabbath after the opening of the school.

The election of teachers usually takes place every half year and is preferably done by the church Committee in the presence of the Sabbath School Superintendent or by a nominating committee elected by the church.

12. MISSIONARY SOCIETY

Its purpose is to stimulate the interest of all church members in the distribution of literature and to lead them into soul work. The net sum remaining from the sale of literature, after the bills have been paid, may be used by the church. The officers are: a Leader, a Manager (Treasurer) and, if needed, a Secretary. The Society is directed by the Leader. The missionary meetings may be held weekly or semi-monthly. The distribution of periodicals and the keeping of a record of expenses is the duty of the Manager, who also maintains an account with the publishing house. At the quarterly meetings, he gives a report to the church Committee and the church. The report consists of a record of missionary work accomplished and information regarding the funds, as follows:

(a) the monies received for the missionary society (sales and offerings);

(b) the expenses, especially the sums sent to the publishing house or its subsidiary;

(c) the indebtedness remaining, or the credit of the society;

(d) the balance in cash remaining in the treasury;

(e) the inventory value of tracts, books, Bibles, periodicals and other papers in stock;

(f) the outstanding debts from believers.

All of the "gifts for the Missionary Society" are to be sent as "missionary offerings," together with the other monies, to the duly authorized Conference Treasurer by the local church Treasurer. The net sum remaining from the sale of literature remains the property of the local church.

The final balancing of the accounts with the publishing house takes place after examination by the Committee.

13. YOUTH SOCIETY

The purpose of this society is to unite our youth under the supervision of older members of the church for prayer, Bible study and missionary and educational work. This society meets, if possible, once a week.

The Youth Society is a department within the church and works with and for it.

The members report their work to the Secretary of the Youth Society. He, in turn, gives a final report of the missionary activities of the members of the Society to the church at the end of each quarter. This report is merged by the Manager of the Missionary Department with his report of the missionary work of the church.

If possible, every Youth Society should have a library containing young people's literature for their own use.

14. CHILDREN'S CLASS AND SABBATH SCHOOL

Its aim is to create in the hearts of the children of our church members a rudimentary knowledge of present truth, directing their young lives toward a career in God's work.

At least once a week, if possible, the children of the church members of an age up to 14 years should receive Biblical instruction in the Children's Sabbath school.

The officers are: a Leader of the Children's Sabbath school, Assistant Leader and Secretary.

The offerings taken in the children's meetings are part of the Sabbath school offerings and are to be surrendered to the church. The net gain from the missionary work of the children flows into the mission treasury of the Children's Sabbath school. The papers needed are to be secured from the Missionary Department at cost.

15. ELECTION OF OFFICERS FOR SABBATH SCHOOL, MISSIONARY DEPARTMENT, YOUTH SOCIETY AND CHILDREN'S CLASS

This takes place annually along with the election of church officers.

16. CHURCH LIBRARY

As soon as possible after organization, every church should set up a library to make it possible for all believers to read our books. To both maintain and expand the library, a lending fee is recommended.

All worn books and important business papers are to be surrendered to the official President of the Field.

17. CHURCH PROPERTY

In all cases in which any facility has been given to the church by the denomination, it remains the property of the denomination; but the church is permitted, by paying the value, to become the owner. Individual persons never have a right to own church property, not even if it pertains to articles they themselves have given as gifts.

If a church is dissolved, all inventory falls to the denomination of which it is a part.

The inventory consists of all property of the church, such as chairs, tables, lamps, draperies, etc. A list of the inventory, along with the value, is to be kept in an appropriate book.

In like manner, spiritual works, articles and books given to the church can never be asked back by the writer.

18. CHURCH MEETING PLACE

The house of worship is to be kept clean by the deacon's office, which is also responsible to see that the worship services are quiet.

In winter, care must be given to see that heating and lighting are turned on in plenty of time. A half hour before the begin of the service, the Deacon or his assistant should be in the church to welcome the believers and friends. Visitors should be supplied with church hymn books for singing. Everywhere special care should be taken to begin all meetings punctually.

In all divine services and meetings, the directions given in *Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 5, pp. 491-500, "Behavior in the House of God," should be followed.

19. CHURCH OF ISOLATED MEMBERS

The church at large is composed of scattered believers who reside too far away from churches to participate in person in church activities.

Its officers are: The President, the Secretary and the Treasurer of the Field to which they belong.

20. TRAINING OF COLPORTEURS AND WORKERS IN THE CHURCH

The church has the duty before God of training colporteurs to distribute literature and instructing workers in saving souls. Instructions are given by Ellen G. White in *The Colporteur Evangelist* and other volumes of the *Testimonies.*)

ORGANIZATION OF THE DENOMINATION

(A) THE FIELD CONFERENCE

The Field Conference is formed by all well-organized churches and groups during a Conference Session. These churches and groups, as a whole, must be spiritually and economically united and must furthermore be in a position to carry out the work of the gospel through employed ministers and officers in their territory.

The object of this organizational unit is to advance the interest of the denomination through united counsel and well-ordered, well-planned work.

The Field Conference plans its work, gives account and elects its officers in the same manner as does the church. Every church and group which is part of the Field Conference sends one delegate for the first ten members, and for each additional ten members another one, to the yearly Conference. Only duly elected delegates, who have been reported to the Conference and acknowledged by it, are entitled to vote at the conference.

The officers of the Field Conference are:

1. President
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer (In all countries having the same monetary standard, all Field Conferences have a general Treasurer in the Union.)
4. Committee

The President, with the Committee, carries the responsibilities during the entire year in the same manner as does the head of a local church.

The order of the Field Conference is as follows:

The President places his, the workers' and all officers' responsibilities for all spiritual and financial work and all spiritual and financial undertakings during that year in the hands of the delegates. In doing so, he transfers his own and his co-workers' offices into the hands of the delegates and the President of the Union, who is over the Field Conference, for examination purposes and possible re-election.

For the purpose of examination and new elections, the following are chosen from among the delegates:

1. A Nominating and Credentials Committee. It is responsible for the examination of all the spiritual work and motions concerning it and makes motions for re-elections or new elections and recommends ordination (a) of the officers and all workers of the Conference and (b) of all colporteurs, and (c) chooses the delegates for the next Union Conference.

2. A Motion Committee serves for the discussion of proposals received from the delegates, officers and workers. It formulates Conference resolutions and places them before the delegates for consideration.

3. An Auditing Committee examines the books and the general church accounts.

All tithes and Sabbath school offerings of the Field Conference go to the Union.

The workers of the Field Conference are, in their activities, subject to the Field President.

The installation, discharge and transfer of workers is to be conducted only in agreement with the Union Conference.

Capable colporteurs may be appointed at any time by the President of the Field Conference as co-workers by the day, but they remain colporteurs.

The President, under all circumstances, must be an ordained Minister. Each Field Conference also employs traveling Ministers and Bible workers.

All Conference Business and Committee meetings are to be recorded in the books kept for minutes, and all minutes must be signed by the assigned Secretary and President.

(B) THE MISSION FIELD

The Field is composed of all the churches and groups in a mission district which, because of language or money standards, can work and counsel most effectively in a united manner for the purpose of spreading the message. The Mission Field is organized in the same manner as the Field Conference, but its supervision rests in the hands of the Union President or the minister appointed by him.

In each Mission Field, if possible, an annual report is to be given. If this is not possible, this report and the work report should be given in conjunction with the Union Conference, when the groups and churches of the Mission Field are represented, just as the local churches of the Field Conference are.

(C) THE UNION CONFERENCE

The Union is made up of the Field Conferences and Mission Fields. The object of this organizational unit is the same as that of the church or the Field Conference.

All Field Conferences and Mission Fields which are subject to the Union Conference are superintended by it in regard to all the interests of the entire work, especially in regard to:

1. the proclamation of right doctrines and principles;

2. systematic work and the faithful discharge of appointed duties in every respect, including the financial matters.

A part of the organization which disregards the gospel order, forming plots against the denomination, may be disbanded by the Union Conference at any time.

The Union Conference, for its part, is subordinate to the General Conference.

Every Conference and Mission Field is entitled to one delegate to the

yearly Union Conference, irrespective of its membership, and one further delegate for each 50 additional members.

The officers of the Union Conference are:

1. Union President
2. Union Treasurer
3. Union Colporteur Leader
4. Union Publishing Business Manager
5. Union Secretary
6. Union Auditor
7. Union Committee

The Union Conference President superintends all officers and carries out the resolutions with the Committee. According to necessity, the Committee is called together by the President of the Union Conference.

The order of the Conference is the same as that of the Field Conference.

The Union President presents reports and documents for the Nominating and Credentials, Motion, and Auditing Committees, for the purpose of answering any questions and giving information; and the Treasurer likewise is present as needed.

The Treasurer, Colporteur Leader and Business Manager of the Publishing Dept. present their reports at the Union Conference.

The Field Conference President and the Mission Field President are under the supervision of the Union President; their working conditions are supervised by the Union.

While every minister, evangelist and Bible worker sends a monthly report of his work and expenses to the Field Conference President and a fanancial balance report to the Treasurer, the Field and Mission Field Presidents, in like manner, present a report and account balance to the Union President every month.

While the churches and groups report quarterly to the Field Conference or Mission Field President concerning the entrance and departure of members and their financial standing, the Field Conference and Mission Field Presidents report quarterly to the Union President in like manner concerning membership, income and expenses.

The monies of the Union Conference consist of all tithes and gifts of the Field Conferences and Mission Fields. In addition, the Union Conference pays the tithe of the tithe, First-day and Sabbath school offerings to the General Conference.

(D) THE GENERAL CONFERENCE

The General Conference is the joint connection of all Union Conferences and hence of the entire denomination. "God has ordained that the representatives of His church from all parts of the earth, when assembled in a General Conference, shall have authority." —*Testimonies for the Church,* vol. 9, p. 261.

The object of this joint connection is for the distribution of the everlasting gospel throughout the entire world. It is, therefore, the special object and care of the General Conference to work in new areas.

Besides this, the General Conference is the highest appointed agency for the decision of all matters pertaining to the principles of truth.

The officers of the General Conference are:

1. President
2. Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Committee

The President, along with the Committee, directs the work and carries out the resolutions made at the biennial General Conference Session. The President calls for the Session, and the Unions send one delegate for each 250 members to the General Conference Session which is authorized and announced at an early date.

A Mission Field or a Field Conference which is established by the General Conference may also be represented by one delegate at the General Conference, providing this body has not already been merged with a Union Conference.

In addition, all Union Conferences report to the General Conference every quarter concerning their membership, their work and all other details.

The order of the General Conference Session is the same as that for all other Conferences.

The income for the General Conference consists of the tithes of the tithe from the Unions, the tithes of the First-day and Sabbath school offerings, and the Week of Prayer offerings.

The General Conference funds are to be sent to the Treasurer quarterly.