

**SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT
OF THE
ASSEMBLIES OF GOD
MINIMUM CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS
INCLUSIONS FOR
DISTRICT AFFILIATED ASSEMBLIES**

1. **PREAMBLE:**
A preamble that is in harmony with the General Council and District Council Preambles.
2. **DEFINITION:**
A district affiliated assembly is one that is still developing, maturing and striving to meet the requirements for becoming a General Council assembly or one that the district holds a financial liability.
3. **AFFILIATION:**
Affiliation with the Southern New England District of the Assemblies of God must be indicated. In the event the termination of affiliation with the Southern New England District is under consideration by the affiliated assembly, the pastor and/or the board shall invite the district officary to participate in a specially called business meeting for the express purpose of giving the district officary the opportunity to present the case for continued Southern New England District affiliation.
4. **TENETS OF FAITH:**
Be in harmony with the General Council.
5. **ORDINANCES:**
State the ordinances of Water Baptism and Communion.
6. **MEMBERSHIP ELIGIBILITY:**
Include a statement of membership eligibility which is in harmony with the General Council.
7. **VOTING MEMBERSHIP:**
Include this category of membership stating the age requirement.
8. **OFFICERS:**
Pastor, secretary and treasurer or secretary-treasurer.

9. **BOARD:**

There shall be an official Board made up of the pastor and not less than three church members who shall transact the administrative affairs of the assembly. The district superintendent, executive director of church development and the sectional presbyter shall be ex-officio members of the official Board.

10. **BUSINESS MEETINGS:**

At the annual business meeting elections shall be held and reports given. All Board members will be duly notified of all meetings.

11. **FINANCES:**

Funds for maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by tithes and offerings. In the event this assembly ceases to function as an Assemblies of God church body that is affiliated with the Southern New England District, all finances shall become the property of the Southern New England District. The Southern New England District Presbytery shall have full authority to use or dispose of these finances at its discretion.

12. **PROPERTY:**

All property shall be held in the name of the church. In the event this assembly ceases to function as an Assemblies of God church body affiliated with the Southern New England District, the said District Presbytery shall have full authority to use or dispose of these properties at its discretion.

13. **AMENDMENTS:**

These minimum inclusions may be amended by a 2/3 vote of the district Missions Committee and the District Presbytery. All proposed changes in the church's constitution and bylaws must first be approved by the ex-officio members of the official Board.

14. **QUALIFICATIONS - PASTOR:**

The Pastor must be a credentialed minister in good standing with the Assemblies of God.

15. **DUTIES OF PASTOR:**

1. Shall be overseer of the assembly and direct all activities.
2. Chairman of all business meetings and Board Meetings.

16. **VACANCIES:**

In the event of a vacancy in the office of pastor, the district superintendent shall, in cooperation with the board, arrange for the congregation to elect a successor.

17. **DEPARTMENTAL LEADERS:**

The pastor shall appoint all departmental leaders.

18. **SALARIES:**

The official Board shall determine all salaries.

19. **DISTRICT SUPPORT:**

It is requested that one percent of the general income be sent to the district office quarterly or monthly.

**SOUTHERN NEW ENGLAND DISTRICT
OF THE ASSEMBLIES OF GOD**

**MODEL CONSTITUTION
FOR
DISTRICT AFFILIATED ASSEMBLIES
ADOPTED _____**

PREAMBLE

For the purpose of establishing and maintaining a place for the worship of Almighty God, our Heavenly Father; to provide for the Christian fellowship for those of like precious faith, where the Holy Ghost may be honored according to our distinctive testimony; to assume our share of responsibility and the privilege of propagating the gospel of Jesus Christ by all available means, both at home and in foreign lands; we hereby recognize ourselves as a district affiliated assembly of the Southern New England District of the Assemblies of God, Inc.

CONSTITUTION

Article I. Definition

A district affiliated assembly is one that is still developing, maturing and striving to meet the requirements for becoming a General Council Assembly or one for which the district holds a financial liability.

Article II. Name

The name of this assembly shall be _____ .

Article III. Affiliation

This assembly shall be affiliated with the Southern New England District as a district affiliated assembly and shares in the privileges and assumes the responsibilities enjoined by this affiliation. In the event the termination of affiliation with the Southern New England District is under consideration by the affiliated assembly, the pastor and/or the board shall invite the district officary to participate in a specially called business meeting for the express purpose of giving the district officary the opportunity to present the case for continued Southern New England District affiliation.

Article IV. Tenets of Faith

This assembly shall accept the Holy Scriptures as the revealed will of God, the all-sufficient rule of faith and practice, and for the purpose of maintaining general unity adopts the Statement of Fundamental Truths approved by the General Council of the Assemblies of God.

Article V. Ordinances

Section 1. Water Baptism: The ordinance of Baptism by immersion in water (Matthew 28:19) shall be administered to all those who have repented of their sins and who have believed on the Lord Jesus Christ to the saving of their souls, and who give clear evidence of their salvation. (Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12.)

Section 2. Communion: The ordinance of the Lord's Supper shall be observed regularly as enjoined in the Scriptures. (Luke 22:19, 20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.)

Article VI. Membership

Section 1. Membership Eligibility: Membership in this assembly shall be open to all who give evidence of their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and who voluntarily subscribe to its tenets of faith and agree to be governed by its constitution and bylaws as herein set forth.

Section 2. Voting Membership: All those who meet the scriptural standards for membership, whose names appeared on the original membership roll of the assembly at the time the assembly was first organized, together with those names that shall be added from time to time, shall constitute the legal voting membership of the assembly, provided they are 18 years of age or over, that they regularly attend and take part in the services, that they are living consistent Christian lives and are in agreement with our distinctive testimony.

Membership shall be available for young people under 18 years of age who give evidence of the new birth, having received Christ as personal Savior, and who meet the other qualifications for membership established by this assembly. They shall have voting privileges at 18 years of age.

Section 3. Inactive Membership: Enrolled members who shall absent themselves from the services of the assembly for a period of 3 consecutive months or more, or who ceases to contribute of their means to its support, or who may be out of harmony with its teachings, or who shall be under charges of misconduct, or who may have fallen under condemnation through sinful or worldly practices, shall be considered as inactive members and shall lose their voting privileges until they are restored to the fellowship, their standing to be settled by the definite action of the assembly through its elected officers.

Section 4. Honorary Members: Honorary members shall consist of those members who have entered the ministry as district officers, pastors, evangelists, missionaries, religious educators, or those serving in the Armed Services, making it impossible to serve as active members. Honorary membership recognition shall continue as long as the member maintains a cooperative attitude toward the home assembly. (Voting privilege may be granted at the discretion of the assembly.)

Section 5. Associate Members: The Official Board shall be authorized to make provisions for associate (non-voting) members when such persons may have to be absent from their home assembly for prolonged periods of time such as attending college in the city where this church is located.

Article VII. Officers

Section 1. Officers: There shall be a pastor, deacons, trustees, a secretary and treasurer. The official Board of this church shall consist of these officers (the pastor and not less than three church members) and the district superintendent or the executive director of church development and the sectional presbyter serving as ex-officio members.

Section 2. Deacons: The Deacons shall serve in an advisory capacity in giving assistance to the pastor in promoting the spiritual welfare of the church. They shall minister under the guidance of the pastor, acknowledging the authority of the official Board. A deacon may also be elected to the office of secretary or treasurer.

Section 3. Trustees: The trustees shall be custodians of all real property of the assembly. They shall act under the guidance of the pastor, and be subject to the authority of the official Board. A trustee may also be elected to the office of secretary or treasurer.

Article VIII. Meetings

Section 1. Meetings for public worship shall be held on each Lord's Day and during the week as may be provided for under the direction of the pastor and the official Board.

Section 2. There shall be an annual business meeting of the assembly, at which time the election of officers shall take place and the report of all officers shall be presented. This meeting shall be held on the _____ of each year. (Example: Third Monday in January) The time and place shall be announced by the pastor. Due notice shall be given on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of said meeting.

Section 3. Special business meetings of the assembly may be called when necessary, after proper notice has been given by the pastor or by the secretary of the assembly, provided the meeting has been agreed upon by a majority of the official Board. Special meeting may also be called by petition having been signed by not less than one-third of the active membership of the assembly, the petition to be placed in the hands of the pastor or the secretary and announcement made on the two Sundays immediately prior to the date of meeting. However, before the right of petition is exercised, the church should request the help of the district officary.

Section 4. Quorum: No record of any special or regular business meeting of the assembly shall be made unless one-third or more active members shall be present to constitute a quorum.

Section 5. The official Board shall meet monthly for the transaction of routine business for the assembly, time and place to be announced by the pastor. All official Board members will be duly notified of all meetings.

Article IX. Departments and Committees

Section 1. Sunday School: There shall be a Sunday school created and conducted as a branch of the church activities.

Section 2. Youth Ministries. There shall be a Youth Department formed under the supervision of the pastor and official Board.

Section 3. Men's and Women's Ministries: There shall be a Men's Ministries and Women's Ministries department which shall be formed and conducted under the supervision of the pastor and the official Board.

Section 4. Other Departments: As need arises, other departments or committees may be established.

Section 5. Relationship: All departments and committees shall be subordinate to the assembly and shall contribute to the harmony and development of the whole. They shall be under the general supervision of the pastor and official Board, and the pastor shall be an **ex officio** member of all committees or departments.

Article X. Finances

All funds for the maintenance of the assembly shall be provided by the tithes and offerings of the members and friends of the organization. Offerings shall be accepted by the assembly at such times and in such ways as agreed upon by the pastor and Official Board, and shall be administered by the treasurer under their direction (Malachi 3:10; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 16:1, 2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8). In the event this assembly ceases to function as an Assemblies of God church body that is affiliated with the Southern New England District, all finances shall become the property of the Southern New England District. The Southern New England District Presbytery shall have full authority to use or dispose of these finances at its discretion.

Article XI. Property

All property of this assembly shall be held in the name of the church. In the event that this assembly ceases to function as a church body affiliated with the Southern New England District, all property shall revert to the Southern New England District, the said District Presbytery shall have full authority to use or dispose of these properties at its discretion.

Article XII. Amendments

This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any business meeting of the church provided proper announcement of the proposed change has been made on at least two Sundays prior to said meeting. No change shall be made which shall violate the minimum inclusions for a District Affiliated Assembly as set forth by the district. All proposed changes must first be approved by the ex-officio members of the official Board.

Article XIII. Qualifications of Pastor

The pastor must be a credentialed minister in good standing with the Assemblies of God.

BYLAWS FOR DISTRICT AFFILIATED ASSEMBLIES

Article I. Duties of Officers

Section 1. The assembly finds its headship under the Lord Jesus Christ in its senior pastor, hereafter referred to as pastor. He should be honored in his sacred office as the spiritual overseer of the assembly, and shall direct all its activities. He shall be president of the corporation and shall serve as chairman of all business meetings of the assembly and official Board meetings. He shall be an **ex officio** member of all committees and departments. He shall appoint all departmental leaders and committees. He shall provide for all the services of the assembly and shall arrange for all special meetings. No person shall be invited to speak or preach in the assembly without his approval.

Section 2. The administrative affairs of the church shall be carried on by the official Board except in matters affecting the entire body. In such cases they shall present their recommendations to the church for ratification.

A majority present at any meeting of the Official Board shall constitute a quorum, provided all members have been notified to be present. In the event the assembly is temporarily without a pastor, or the pastor is unable to be present, the official Board shall be empowered to provide for its own chairman from its membership in order to transact business for the assembly.

Section 3. The deacons are chosen to serve the church and therefore shall act in an advisory capacity with the pastor in all matters pertaining to the spiritual life of the assembly and in the ministry of its ordinances. The deacons shall act in the examination of applicants for membership before they are presented to the official Board. They shall investigate all matters that could lead to the disciplining of a church member and then make their recommendation to the official Board. They shall meet regularly, subject to the call of the pastor, who shall serve as chairman.

Section 4. The trustees shall be responsible for the maintenance and management of all church property. They shall meet for the discharge of their duties as necessity may demand, subject to the call of the pastor, who shall serve as chairman.

Section 5. The secretary shall keep the minutes of the official meetings of the official Board and of the annual and special business meetings of the assembly. The secretary shall keep a record of the membership of the assembly and perform any other clerical work necessary to the proper discharge of his duties. The secretary shall be the custodian of all important documents and, if the assembly is incorporated, the corporate seal.

Section 6. The treasurer shall be entrusted with all the finances of the assembly which may be committed to him. The treasurer shall deposit all funds in a responsible bank in the name of the assembly and shall disburse the same by check as authorized by the pastor and official Board. The treasurer shall keep an itemized account of the receipts and disbursements. The treasurer shall present an itemized report at the regular meetings of the official Board and a summarized report to the assembly at its annual meeting. The treasurer's accounts shall be audited under the direction of the pastor and official Board.

Article II. Elections, Vacancies and the Nominating Committee

Section 1. In the event of a vacancy in the pastorate, the District Superintendent shall, in cooperation with the Board, arrange for the assembly to elect a successor. The pastor must be a credentialed minister in good standing with the Assemblies of God. Under no condition shall the assembly take the initiative to search out their own candidates. However, the assembly may suggest candidates to the district superintendent so that he might contact such if they meet with his approval. Only one name shall be voted upon at a time. Election shall be by secret ballot at a special meeting called for that purpose. A two-thirds majority of all votes cast shall constitute an election.

Section 2. The secretary and the treasurer shall be elected annually. They shall be chosen from the membership of the assembly and shall be nominated by a nominating committee and elected by a majority vote at the annual business meeting. Their terms of office shall be for one year from the time of election.

Section 3. The deacons shall be chosen from the membership of the assembly. They shall be members of mature Christian experience and knowledge and shall meet the requirements as set forth in 1 Timothy 3 and Acts 6. They shall be at least twenty-three years old, and shall have been members of the assembly for at least one year. They shall be nominated by a nominating committee and elected by a majority vote at the annual business meeting. Their terms of office shall be for one year from the time of election.

Section 4. They trustees shall be chosen from the membership of the assembly. They shall be members marked by spiritual maturity, leadership ability and be faithful by living an exemplary life as set by our standards of membership. They shall be at least twenty years old and shall have been members of the assembly for at least six months. The trustees shall be nominated by a nominating committee and shall be elected by a majority vote at the annual business meeting of the assembly. Their term of office shall be one year from the time of election.

Section 5. Vacancies:

- a. The pastor. In the event of a resignation, the district superintendent shall be notified at least thirty days in advance. In the event the pastor has serious charges preferred against him, or his ministry has ceased to be affective, the district superintendent, in cooperation with the District Presbytery, may request his resignation, and if the request for

the pastor's resignation is refused, the district superintendent shall have the right to declare the pastorate vacant. When a vacancy in the pastorate shall occur a supply shall be arranged for by either the district superintendent or the district superintendent in cooperation with the official Board.

b. Other officers:

1. Any office may be declared vacant by an act of a majority of the membership of the official Board at any regular or special business meeting. In the event that an office is vacated, the unexpired term shall be filled by appointment by the pastor and the official Board.
2. Ground for such action shall be: Unscriptural conduct, departure from the tenets of faith, incompetency in office, or for any good and sufficient cause.
3. Any incumbent under charges shall have opportunity for a hearing of his case before the official Board if requested. If the case cannot be resolved, the counsel of the district superintendent shall be solicited.

Section 6. The Nominating Committee. The Nominating Committee shall consist of the pastor as chairman and three other voting members to be appointed by the official Board. It shall be the duty of this committee to receive from the voting members of the church, by means of an appropriately duplicated or printed form, written nominations for each elective office, except the pastor, and from these names and others the committee may wish to add, present a slate of nominees for each office to the annual business meeting for elections. Qualified members, who have held active membership in this church for at least six months (one year for deacons), shall be allowed to stand for each office. Every written nomination will be allowed to stand if it can be ratified by the committee on the basis of qualifications and other stipulations of this Constitution and Bylaws. No nominations shall be allowed from the floor at the annual meeting. The slate of nominees shall be posted two weeks prior to the elections. (See suggested form at the end of these Bylaws.)

Article III. Membership

Section 1. The Standard of Membership:

The standard of membership of this assembly shall be: Evidence of a genuine experience in regeneration (the new birth)-John 1:12, 13; 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:18-25; evidence of a consistent Christian life-Romans 6:4; 13:13-14; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1,2,15; 1 John 1:6,7; to fully subscribe to the tenets of faith as set forth in Article IV of the Constitution; and willingness to contribute regularly a tithe of their income to the support of the assembly according to his or her ability.

Section 2. Reception of Members:

- a. Persons desiring to become active members of the assembly shall be examined by the pastor and deacons, according to the standard of membership.

- b. The pastor and deacons shall present the names of those who apply for membership with their recommendation to the Official Board for a final decision. All persons who shall have met the membership requirements and have been approved shall be received into the assembly publicly at any of the regular Sunday services and their names shall be inscribed on the roster.

Section 3. Discipline:

- a. Any member of the assembly who shall willfully absent himself from the regular services for a period of 3 consecutive months or who is under charges, shall be temporarily suspended from active voting membership pending investigation and final decision in his case.
- b. Unscriptural conduct or doctrinal departure from the tenets of faith held by this assembly shall be considered sufficient grounds upon which any person may be disqualified as a member. Matthew 18:15-18; Romans 16:17, 18; 1 Cor. 5:11; Galatians 1:8,9; Titus 3:1-15.

Section 4. Members in good standing, who may wish to sever their relationship with the assembly, or who may desire to be transferred to some other congregation, may apply to the secretary for a letter, which shall be granted on the approval of the pastor and Official Board, said letter to be signed by the pastor and the secretary of the assembly.

Section 5. The pastor and Official Board shall be authorized to revise the membership roll of the assembly annually, and to remove from the list of active members all names of those who may have become deceased during the year together with the names of those who may have withdrawn from the fellowship, or who may have fallen into sin and whose lives may have become inconsistent with the standards and teachings of the assembly. The following rules and instructions shall be observed as occasion may require. Matthew 18:15-17; Romans 16:17,18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 2 Thessalonians. 3:6-15.

If a name is removed for cause, the one whose name is removed shall be notified of the action of the pastor and official Board through the secretary. If appeal is made to the official Board for reconsideration of their action and reinstatement is not granted, the dismissed member may appeal to the congregation. The action of the assembly by a majority vote, shall be considered final.

Article IV. Sunday School

The pastor shall appoint the superintendent of the Sunday school from among the members of the church. The pastor and the Sunday school superintendent shall have the right to appoint all officers, teachers, and other workers of the Sunday school and, in consultation with the workers of the school, determine all policies and programs of the school.

Article V. Youth

A youth organization may be formed. It shall be under the general supervision of the pastor and the official Board and shall be conducted as a branch of the activities of the assembly.

Article VI. Finances

Section 1. The official Board shall determine all salaries and shall have general oversight in all financial matters in every department of the assembly. An annual report shall be sent to the district office.

Section 2. The pastor shall be given regular and adequate financial support, the amount and matter determined by the official Board.

Section 3. It is requested that one percent of the general income of this assembly be sent to the district office on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Article VII. Order of Business

The regular order of business for the annual meeting of the assembly shall be as follows:

1. Devotional.
2. Reading of previous minutes by secretary.
3. Report of treasurer.
4. Report of committees.
5. Unfinished business.
6. Election of officers.
7. New business.
8. Adjournment.

Article VIII. Parliamentary Order

In the conducting of its affairs, the church shall be governed by parliamentary procedure as set forth in the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, in keeping with the spirit of Christian love and friendship.

Article IX. Amendments

These Bylaws may be amended by a two-thirds vote at any business meeting of the church provided proper announcement of the proposed change has been made on at least two Sundays prior to said meeting. No change shall be made which shall violate the minimum inclusions for a District Affiliated Assembly as set forth by the District. All proposed changes must first be approved by the ex-officio members of the official Board.

SAMPLE FORM FOR NOTICE OF NOMINATIONS

On January 28, 20_____ the membership of _____ Assembly of God will convene for its Annual Congregational Business Meeting at which time elections for the below listed officers will take place. Our Bylaws make provision for each voting member to nominate persons for these offices to be ratified by the Nominating Committee prior to the Annual Meeting. No nominations from the floor will be allowed at the meeting. Please write the names of your nominees in the appropriate place. Return this form to the Nominating Committee no later than January 5. Thank you for your cooperation.

Offices to be Filled:

My Nominees:

Deacons: _____

Trustees: _____

Secretary: _____

Treasurer: _____

Your Signature _____

Date _____

