

ORIENTAL MISSIONARY SOCIETY-HOLINESS CHURCH OF NORTH AMERICA
THE REVISED CONSTITUTION
(1998)

ARTICLE I
NAME

The name of the Conference shall be called: The Oriental Missionary Society - Holiness Church of North America, hereinafter referred to as the "Conference".

ARTICLE II
PURPOSE

The purpose of this Conference is to propagate the Gospel of Jesus Christ as recorded in the Bible and to edify and guide the believers.

ARTICLE III
STATEMENT OF FAITH

We believe in:

A. THE GODHEAD

The Godhead eternally exists in three persons - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. These three are one God of precisely identical nature, attributes and perfection.

1. God, the Father.

God, the Father Almighty, creator, preserver, and ruler of the universe, in His essential nature is Spirit, and in His essential attribute is absolutely holy, and in His essential character is love.

2. God, the Son, Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ, the eternal Son, was conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary, thereby having a truly divine nature and a truly human nature in one person, and is the only mediator between God and man.

To accomplish salvation, He lived a sinless life, completely fulfilling righteousness and offered Himself a substitutionary sacrifice for the sin of the world, satisfying divine justice.

He was crucified under Pontius Pilate, died, and was buried. On the third day, He arose bodily from the dead. He ascended into heaven where in His glorified state He intercedes for believers. He shall come again personally and visibly to judge the world in righteousness and to establish His kingdom.

3. God, the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is the third person of the Godhead. His ministry is to reveal Christ through the Word of God, to fulfill salvation in the regeneration and sanctification of the believers, to direct and empower the church in the fulfillment of the Great Commission, and to convict the world of sin of righteousness and of judgment.

B. THE BIBLE.

The Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, the Word of God, is a divinely inspired revelation. It is the supreme and final authority in matters pertaining to faith and practice.

C. MAN.

Man was created in the image of God; he disobeyed God, thereby incurring spiritual death which is separation from God.

Man is saved from the condition of spiritual death only by the grace of God through faith in Christ and His redemptive act and the ministry of the Holy Spirit. His spiritual growth and maturity is initiated by God's Spirit and by a conscious act of dedication on the part of the believer and is effected by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

D. THE CHURCH.

The Church consists of all who have been regenerated through faith in Christ and have been united into one body under Christ, the Head thereof. It is called to worship God, to preach the Gospel, to administer baptism and holy communion by its duly appointed ministers, and to care and nurture the believers.

ARTICLE IV ORGANIZATION

The Conference is composed of Christian ministers and lay members.

A. ACTIVE MINISTERS.

They must maintain the sound doctrine and faith as defined in Article III and must have a genuine experience of regeneration and sanctification. All ministers must be approved by the Ministerial Body. Ministers of the Conference are as follows:

1. Ordained Ministers.

Those who have been ministers of this Conference for more than two years, who have passed the examination of the Ordination Examining Committee, and who have been ordained.

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2. Candidates for ordination who are pastoring a local church.

Those who are in the process of fulfilling the requirements for ordination which are as follows:

- (a) He must be a graduate of a standard accredited seminary or one approved by this Conference. This may be waived in special cases subject to the approval of the Ministerial Body.
- (b) He must be recommended by his pastor, his seminary, and a minister of this Conference.

3. Student Pastors.

Those who are preparing for the pastoral ministry or related Christian work, who are called to serve in a local church, either under a senior pastor, or in the absence of a qualified pastor for a local church.

4. Lay preachers who are "interim" pastors of a local church.

Mature lay members who are designated to serve as pastors in the absence of a qualified minister.

B. RETIRED MINISTERS.

Those who have served as ordained ministers in this Conference and have retired from active ministry. As a retired minister:

1. He shall retain membership in the Ministerial Body.
2. He shall, as a contributing member, be eligible to draw from the Pension Fund upon retirement.
3. He shall detach himself for a period of no less than one year from the administration of the last Conference church which he served. However, if he is appointed by the Conference for a specified task and duration, he may serve with administrative responsibility consistent with his appointment. (Amended 1993)
4. He shall be a participant of the General Conference with voting privileges. (Amended 1995)
5. He shall be reimbursed for traveling and housing expenses at the General Conference by the Conference. The local church where the conference is held shall assist the retired pastor locate commercial or host housing for the duration of the Conference. (Added 1995)

C. LAY MEMBERS.

Those believers who have been duly received as members into a local church of this Conference. They must maintain the faith as outlined in Article III and have the experience of regeneration and baptism.

ARTICLE V GOVERNMENT

This Conference adopts a representative form of church polity with the General Conference as the highest governing body.

Section 1. GENERAL CONFERENCE.

A. STRUCTURE.

The General Conference shall be comprised of ministers, as defined in Article IV, and lay delegates who are elected at a duly constituted business meeting of their respective local churches (one lay delegate for every one to fifty members). Each church shall be entitled to one ministerial vote and one vote for each delegate.

B. MEETING.

The General Conference shall be convened annually. Each succeeding place and time shall be determined by the General Conference in session.

C. SPECIAL GENERAL CONFERENCE.

A Special General Conference can be called to session by the Executive Council in the event that urgent business arises. When such an occasion occurs, the purpose of calling the special session and the explanation of the nature of the urgent business must be sent to the local churches in order to give them the opportunity to elect their delegates and to deliberate on the proposal.

The same regulations which govern the General Conference apply to the Special General Conference.

D. QUORUM.

The presence of two-thirds or more of the ministers and lay delegates shall constitute the quorum of the General Conference.

E. AGENDA.

The agenda shall be composed of:

1. Propositions of the local churches and Executive Council committees, submitted to the Executive Secretary by May 1 for circulation among all the local churches for discussion.
2. Election of Conference officers.
3. Any other items of business which the Executive Council deems necessary for the General Conference.

F. VOTING MAJORITY.

The passage of all measures for voting shall be determined by a two-thirds majority vote of the General Conference, except for a Constitutional amendment as defined in Article IX.

G. THE MODERATOR.

The Chairman of the Executive Council shall serve as the Moderator of the General Conference. The Moderator shall appoint other officers which he deems necessary for the execution of business.

Section 2. THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

The General Conference shall elect a body known as the Executive Council whose function is to implement the decisions of the General Conference and to serve as the Board of Directors in appointing the Incorporation Officers of the Board at their first annual meeting.

A. STRUCTURE.

The Executive Council shall consist of a chairperson and ten members.

B. ELECTIONS.

1. The chairperson shall be elected by the General Conference.
2. The ten members shall be elected by the General Conference as follows: Five ministers and five lay members with the English-speaking and Japanese-speaking divisions equally represented. This ratio shall be waived whenever the circumstance does not permit it, upon the approval of the General Conference.
3. The nominating committee shall consist of three ministers of the Ministerial Body and three lay members, appointed by the Executive Council no later than the January meeting prior to the General Conference. This committee shall report back to the Executive Council at their May meeting for acceptance. Nominations shall be accepted from the floor at the General Conference. The appointments shall be on a yearly basis.
4. The chairperson shall be elected for a term of two years and cannot serve more than two consecutive terms (4 years). However, the chairperson is eligible to serve as a member of the Council. (Amended 1996)
5. Council members shall serve a term of two years and may be elected for two consecutive terms, or a total of four years, after which he/she must retire for at least one year.
6. Five council members shall be elected annually.
7. The Executive Council is empowered to appoint a council member in the event of a vacancy.

C. DUTIES OF THE CHAIRMAN OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL.

1. Serve as Moderator of the General Conference.
2. Serve as official representative of the Conference.
3. Serve as Chairman of the Executive Council.

D. MEETING.

The Executive Council shall meet at least twice a year.

E. QUORUM.

Quorum shall consist of nine members.

F. COMMITTEES.

1. The Council shall choose from among its members the chairman for each committee.
2. The various committees, consisting of the chairman and at least four members, are as follows:
 - (a) Finance.
 - (b) Ministerial Appointment.
 - (c) Welfare.
 - (d) World Mission.
 - (e) Education and Publication.
 - (f) Evangelism.
 - (g) Research, Regulation, and Doctrine.
 - (h) Pension.
 - (i) Church Planting.
 - (j) Vision and Resources.
3. The Executive Council shall appoint all members to each committee.
4. Each committee member shall serve a term of one year.
5. Sphere of duties of the various committees are as follows:

- (a) Finance Committee:
 - (1) Check and disburse all monies of the Conference Treasury.
 - (2) Prepare an annual budget.
 - (3) Evaluate and service the requests and needs of the local churches.
 - (4) Study and recommend adequate and equitable salary for Conference ministers.

- (b) Ministerial Appointment Committee:
 - (1) After due consideration, appoint ministers to local churches upon the approval of the Executive Council and the General Conference.
 - (2) Consult with the ministers and local churches concerned before any minister is moved or placed.

- (c) Welfare Committee:
 - (1) Evaluate and promote programs within the Conference concerning the needs of the ministers.
 - (2) Study and promote programs for the welfare of the aged ministers and lay members of the Conference.

- (d) World Mission Committee:
 - (1) Promote interest in foreign fields.
 - (2) Evaluate the foreign mission fields and recommend support of worthy fields according to needs.
 - (3) Be entrusted with all additional matters concerning foreign missions which may arise.

- (e) Education and Publication Committee:
 - (1) Encourage the development and advancement of Christian Education in the local churches and standardize the curriculum and training of Sunday School teachers.
 - (2) Serve in an advisory capacity to the editor of all Conference publications, evaluate and disseminate literature.
 - (3) Evaluate and advise on all matters pertaining to Conference personnel relative to Christian Education.

- (f) Evangelism Committee:

Promote evangelism among the Conference churches at the local and Conference level.
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- (g) Research, Regulation, and Doctrine Committee:
 - (1) Evaluate and promote the propagation of the doctrines and regulations of the Conference.
 - (2) Serve as the revision committee for doctrine and regulations.
- (h) Pension Committee:
 - (1) Administer the Pension Fund as specified by the pension regulations.
 - (2) Pension regulations and its revisions become effective upon the approval of the General Conference.
- (i) Church Planting Committee:
 - (1) Survey the existing home missions churches of the Conference and make the necessary recommendations.
 - (2) Investigate areas for establishment of mission churches and relocation of existing churches.
 - (3) Assist the Conference churches for their growth in membership by providing adequate information and by compiling statistics.
 - (4) Promote the mutual welfare for our Conference churches.
- (j) Vision and Resource Committee:
 - (1) Program and plan conferences and retreats on Conference level, subject to the approval of the Executive Council.
 - (2) Promote spiritual renewal on a continuing basis.
 - (3) Develop and integrate Conference resources to accomplish projects and goals set by the Conference.
 - (4) As a coordinating group, assist other Executive Committee, if requested, to work together for accomplishment for the Committee's project.

Section 3. EXECUTIVE SECRETARY.

A. Appointment.

The Executive Secretary shall be appointed by the Executive Council with the approval of the General Conference. One shall serve the Japanese-speaking division and one shall serve the English-speaking division.

B. Status.

The Executive Secretary shall be a salaried employee of the Conference.

C. Duties.

1. The Executive Secretary shall execute the decisions of the Executive Council and of the General Conference. He shall promote the general welfare of the Conference and serve as liaison between the Conference and the local churches.
2. The Executive Secretary shall serve as an ex-officio member, nonvoting, of the Executive Council and committees.

D. Term of Office.

The Executive Secretary shall serve a term determined by the Executive Council.

Section 4. MINISTERIAL BODY.

The Ministerial Body shall consist of the ordained ministers of the Conference, who, as a Body, shall function as:

1. The nominating committee for the election of the Judicial Council.
2. The appointing committee, when the need arises, for an Ordination Examining Committee, which shall consist of four ministers, two of whom shall be ministers of the English-speaking division and two of whom shall be of the Japanese-speaking division.
3. The reviewing committee for ordained ministers who are applying for positions within this Conference. Such candidates shall be duly installed after receiving the approval of the Ordination Examining Committee.
4. An advisory committee to the Executive Council and shall meet as the need arises.
5. The Ministerial Body shall be presided over by the Chairman of the Executive Council. If he is a lay member, the Ministerial Body shall elect their own chairman.

Section 5. JUDICIAL COUNCIL.

The General Conference shall elect a body known as the Judicial Council.

A. Structure.

1. The Judicial Council shall be composed of five members, three of whom shall be ordained ministers and two of whom shall be lay members who are elected by the General Conference.
2. The chairperson for this council shall be elected by the members of the Judicial Council.
3. The Ministerial Body shall be the nominating committee with nominations open from the floor.

B. Eligibility.

The members must be members of the Conference for at least fifteen years and must be at least forty years of age. Members of the Executive Council shall not serve concurrently on the Judicial Council.

C. Term of Office.

The term of office shall be for two years, expiring at the close of the General Conference after the second year, and a member cannot serve for more than three consecutive terms, or a total of six years, after which he must retire for at least one year.

D. Vacancy.

In the event of a vacancy, the Executive Council shall appoint a person who shall serve until the next General Conference, at which time a new member shall be elected to fill the unexpired term.

E. Duties.

1. Convene at the beginning of the annual General Conference and remain in session until the close of the General Conference.
2. Convene at any time by a majority vote of the council members.
3. Judge the constitutionality of any decisions or acts of the legislative, executive, administrative bodies or persons, local churches, and ministers of the Conference.
4. Act on any written request or appeal approved by the committee, or executive body of the Conference, or any five Conference members.
5. Judge on any cases of constitutional abuse coming to its attention.
6. Hold court in an acceptable judicial procedure on appeals concerning ministerial misconduct or teaching, or preaching doctrines contrary to the statement of faith, or unresolved difference between individuals and bodies of the Conference due to unchristian-like conduct.
7. All decisions of the Judicial Council in the above designated areas are final.

Section 6. LOCAL CHURCHES.

The local church is under the jurisdiction of the Constitution and the regulations of the Conference.

A. Official Board of Deacons.

The local churches are to elect their Board of Deacons and hold regular meetings. The Board of Deacons is the administrative council of the church, elected during a duly constituted business meeting. The Board shall consist of the minister and a minimum of five elected Board members, or as many as deemed necessary.

B. Qualification of Deacons.

1. The individual must be a member in good standing for at least two years. Charter members of a newly-organized church shall be eligible to serve as deacons without fulfilling the two year requirement.
2. The individual must be elected at a duly constituted business meeting by a majority vote and must be approved by the minister.
3. The individual must be qualified to fulfill the duties and functions of the Board of Deacons as outlined in paragraph D below, "Functions of the Board of Deacons."

C. Chairman of the Board.

The individual shall be either the minister or a member elected from within the Board of Deacons.

D. Functions of the Board of Deacons.

1. Administer the financial matters of the church.
2. Carry out the evangelistic policies of the church.
3. Promote the general well-being of the members of the church.'
4. The Board of Deacons of the local church shall not have the authority to call or dismiss their own minister, but shall have the prerogative to consult with the Ministerial Appointment Committee concerning the selection of ministers.

E. Special Meetings.

Whenever the need arises, the minister, or the chairman of the Board of Deacons, may call a special meeting of the Board. In the event of their absence, the Board, upon the consent of its members, may call a meeting.

**ARTICLE VI
MAINTENANCE**

This Conference shall be maintained by the offerings and contributions of its constituency. The local churches are required to contribute to the headquarters a prescribed percentage of their monthly income. This percentage is to be specified by the Finance Committee and approved by the Executive Council and the General Conference.

Income is understood to include all monthly or weekly pledges, loose offerings of all regular worship services, and any other offerings. Certain income is exempt from the assessment, and these are listed in the Standard Financial Guidelines of our Conference.

- A. Exception may be made by appealing to the Finance Committee.
- B. Local churches are to send the spiritual and physical birthday offerings of their members to the treasurer of the Conference. This fund is to be used for the needs of the ministers.
- C. Upon recommendation of the Finance Committee and upon approval of the General Conference, any other special offerings can be collected as the need arises.

**ARTICLE VII
ORDINANCES (SACRAMENTS)**

This Conference believes in two ordinances; namely, Baptism and Holy Communion. This Conference regards both immersion and sprinkling as acceptable modes of baptism. Since Holy Communion is the Lord's Supper, believers of the Christian faith are eligible to participate. However, only ordained ministers can officiate at these two ordinances.

**ARTICLE VIII
PROPERTY**

- A. All assets which belong to this Conference will be kept in the incorporated name of this Conference.
- B. Local churches are to be incorporated for the purpose of owning its real and personal properties and shall elect a Board of Trustees and appoint the incorporation officers.
- C. In the event of a dissolution or irresolvable schism in the Congregation, the properties will be transferred to the custody of the Conference.

**ARTICLE IX
AMENDMENTS**

All amendments to the Constitution of this Conference must be made by the decision of the General Conference. When an amendment to the Constitution is necessary, the General Conference will appoint a committee which will make a draft in an amendment form and send it to the local churches for deliberation. At the next General Conference or at a Special General Conference, all decisions of the churches on this matter will be tallied and the final decision will be determined accordingly.

- A. Proposals for the amendment must pass by a three-fourths majority vote in the business meeting of the local churches.
- B. The final decision shall be determined by a three-fourths majority vote of the delegates present at either the General Conference or Special General Conference.