



SoCal Network

Policy Manual for the Leadership of Network Affiliated Churches

The Bylaws of both the General Council of the Assemblies of God (“General Council Bylaws”) and the SoCal Network Assemblies of God (SoCal Network AG Bylaws) allow for recognition of Network Affiliated churches. A member church may be placed into Network Affiliated status if the requirements for General Council status are unmet, or upon application by the church or intervention by the Network Superintendent. (SoCal Network AG Bylaws, Article XVII, Section 6). Pursuant to Section 7 of Article XVII of the Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. bylaws

“The Network affiliated church shall be under the direct oversight and governance of the SoCal Network in a manner provided for in these bylaws. The title of property of SoCal Network Affiliated Churches may be held in the corporate name of the Southern California Network Council of the Assemblies of God” (SoCal Network AG Bylaws, Article XVII, Section 6).

The Bylaws further provide for governance of Network Affiliated churches as follows:

The Network Affiliated church shall be governed in accordance with these Bylaws, Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws approved by the Executive Regional Executive Presbytery for Network Affiliated Churches, and such other guidelines and requirements approved by the Executive Regional Executive Presbytery (Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. bylaws, Article XVII, Section 6B).

The instant Policy & Procedures Manual has been developed and implemented in accordance with these provisions in order to guide the Network Affiliated Church with respect to its governance. The provisions herein are intended to supersede the bylaws of any Network Affiliated Church. To the extent conflicts exist between this manual, a Network Affiliated Church’s own bylaws and the Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. Bylaws, the latter shall govern.

These Policies do not apply to churches under *Temporary Network Supervision*

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STATEMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL TRUTHS

The Bible is our all-sufficient rule for faith and practice. This Statement of Fundamental Truths is intended simply as a basis of fellowship among us (i.e., that we all speak the same thing, I Corinthians 1:10; Acts 2:42). The phraseology employed in this statement is not inspired or contended for, but the truth set forth is held to be essential to a full-gospel ministry. No claim is made that it contains all Biblical truth, only that it covers our need as to these fundamental doctrines.

1. The Scriptures Inspired

The Scriptures, both the Old and New Testaments, are verbally inspired of God and the revelation of God to man, the infallible, authoritative rule of faith and conduct (II Timothy 3:15-17; I Thessalonians 2: 13; II Peter 1:21).

2. The One True God

The one true God has revealed himself as the eternally self-existed "I AM," the Creator of heaven and earth and the Redeemer of mankind. He has further revealed Himself as embodying the principles of relationship and association as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Deuteronomy 6:4; Isaiah 43: 10,11; Matthew 28:19; Luke 3:22).

3. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

The Lord Jesus Christ is the eternal Son of God. The Scriptures declare:

His virgin birth (Matthew 1:23; Luke 1:31,35).

His sinless life (Hebrews 7:26; I Peter 2:22).

His miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38).

His substitutionary work on the cross (I Corinthians 15:3; II Corinthians 5:21).

His bodily resurrection from the dead (Matthew 28:6; Luke 24:39; I Corinthians 15:4).

His exaltation to the right hand of God (Acts 1:9,11; 2:33; Philippians 2:9-11; Hebrews 1:3).

4. The Fall of Man

Man was created good and upright; for God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." However, man by voluntary transgression fell and thereby incurred not only physical death buy also spiritual death, which is separation from God (Genesis 1:26-27; 2:17; 3:6; Romans 5:12-19).

5. The Salvation of Man

Man's only hope of redemption is through the shed blood of Jesus Christ the Son of God.

Conditions to Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24; Titus 2:12).

The Evidences of Salvation

The inward evidence of salvation is the direct witness of the Spirit (Romans 8:16). The outward evidence to all men is a life of righteousness and true holiness (Eph. 4:24; Titus 2:12).

6. The Ordinances of the Church

Baptism in Water

The ordinance of baptism by immersion is commanded in the Scriptures. All who repent and believe on Christ as Savior and Lord are to be baptized. Thus they declare to the world that they have died

with Christ and that they also have been raised with Him to walk in newness of life (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 10:47,48; Romans 6:4).

Holy Communion

The Lord's Supper, consisting of the elements (bread and the fruit of the vine) is the symbol expressing our sharing the divine nature of our Lord Jesus Christ (II Peter 1:4); a memorial of His suffering and death (I Corinthians 11:26); and a prophecy of His second coming (I Corinthians 11:26); and is enjoined on all believers "until He come!"

7. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

All believers are entitled to and should ardently expect and earnestly seek the promise of the Father, the baptism in the Holy Spirit and fire, according to the command of our Lord Jesus Christ. This was the normal experience of all in the early Christian church. With it comes the endowment of power for life and service, and the bestowment of the gifts and their uses in the work of the ministry (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4,8; I Corinthians 12:1-31). This experience is distinct from and subsequent to the experience of the new birth (Acts 8:12-17; 10:44-46; 15:7-9). With the baptism in the Holy Spirit come such experiences as an overflowing fullness of the Spirit, intensified consecration to God and dedication to His work (Acts 2:42), and a more active love for Christ, for His Word, and for the lost (Mark 16:20).

8. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

The baptism of believers in the Holy Spirit is witnessed by the initial physical sign of speaking with other tongues as the Spirit of God gives them utterance (Acts 2:42). The speaking in tongues in this instance is the same in essence as the gift of tongues (I Corinthians 12:4-10, 18), but different in purpose and use.

9. Sanctification

Sanctification is an act of separation from that which is evil, and of dedication unto God (Romans 12:1, 2; I Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:12). Scriptures teach a life of "holiness without which no man shall see the Lord" (Hebrews 12:14). By the power of the Holy Spirit we are able to obey the command, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (I Peter 1:15, 16)

Sanctification is realized in the believer by recognizing his identification with Christ in His death and resurrection, by faith reckoning daily upon the fact of that union, and by offering every faculty continually to the dominion of the Holy Spirit (Romans 6:1-11, 13; 8:1, 2, 13; Galatians 2:20; Philippians 2: 12, 13; I Peter 1:5).

10. The Church and Its Mission

The Church is the body of Christ, the habitation of God through the Spirit, with divine appointments for the fulfillment of her great commission. Every believer, born of the Spirit, is an integral part of the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven (Ephesians 1:22, 23).

11. The Ministry

A divinely called and scripturally ordained ministry has been provided by our Lord for the three-fold purpose of leading the Church in: (1) evangelization of the world (Mark 16: 15-20). (2) Worship of God (John 4:23, 24), and (3) building a body of saints being perfected in the image of His Son (Ephesians 4: 11, 16).

12. Divine Healing

Divine healing is an integral part of the gospel. Deliverance from sickness is provided for in the Atonement and is the privilege of all believers (Isaiah 53:4, 5; Matthew 8:16, 17; James 5: 14-16).

13. The Blessed Hope

The resurrection of those who have fallen asleep in Christ and their translation together with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord is the imminent and blessed hope of the Church (I Thessalonians 4:16, 17; Romans 8:23; Titus 2:13; I Corinthians 15:51, 52)

14. The Millennial Reign of Christ

The second coming of Christ includes the rapture of the saints, which is our blessed hope, followed by the visible return of Christ with His saints to reign on the earth for one thousand years (Zechariah 14:5; Matthew 24: 27, 30; Revelation 1:7; 19:11-14; 20: 1-6). This millennial reign will bring the salvation of national Israel (Ezekiel 37: 21, 22; Zephaniah 3:19, 20; Romans 11: 26, 27) and the establishment of universal peace (Isaiah 11: 6-9; Psalms 72: 3-8; Micah 4: 3, 4).

15. The Final Judgment

There will be a final judgment in which the wicked dead will be raised and judged according to their works. Whosoever is not found written in the Book of Life, together with the devil and his angels, the beast and the false prophet, will be consigned to everlasting punishment in the lake which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second death (Matthew 25:46; Mark 9: 43-48; Revelation 19: 20; 20:11-15; 21:8).

16. The New Heavens and the New Earth

“We, according to His promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness” (II Peter 3:13; Revelation 21, 22).

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

MEMBERSHIP

Network Affiliated Churches do not retain membership for purposes of governance of the church. However, each Network Affiliated Church is expected to identify, approve and oversee church members pursuant to the standards set forth below.

Standard of Membership

The standard of membership in this Church shall be:

1. Evidence of a genuine experience of salvation (John 1:12-13, 3:3-8; I Peter 1:18-25).
2. Evidence of a consistent Christian life (Romans 6:4, 13:13-14; Ephesians 4:17-32; 5:1-2,15; I John 1:6-7). Any immorality condemned in Scripture, including the sexual immoralities of fornication, adultery, and homosexuality, shall be considered grounds for refusing membership until repentance is assured.
3. Agreement with the Tenets of Faith
4. Agreement to give ten percent of income (the tithe) on a regular basis, as well as other contributions as the Lord enables, for the support of this Church in accordance with the Scriptures (Malachi 3:20; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-9).
5. Agreement to comply with and be bound by this document and the bylaws of SoCal Network AG
6. Evidence of a cooperative, submissive, humble and Christ-like spirit as the Scriptures enjoin

Categories of Membership

The Church shall have two categories of members. The designation of such categories and the qualifications and rights of the members of such categories shall be as follows:

1. **Active.** Active membership shall be open to all those eighteen (18) years of age and older who shall freely give of themselves to the commitments of membership as stated in "Standard of Membership," above.
2. **Inactive.** Any enrolled member who fails to attend services regularly or who ceases to take an active part in the life of the Church may be transferred to the inactive roll according to the procedures set forth in "Alteration or Termination of Membership," below. Inactive members shall not have a vote in Church meetings. A written request by the inactive member or a motion by a member of the Advisory Board for reinstatement to the prior status shall be considered at the next duly noticed meeting of the Advisory Board. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of a quorum of the Advisory Board shall be required for such action.

Election of Members

1. **Application or transfer.** Persons desiring to become members of the Church shall fill out an application form approved by the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board may accept, in lieu of a completed application, a letter of transfer from another Assemblies of God church. The Pastor or his designated membership committee shall examine the application or transfer according to the standards of membership (Section 1), and shall make recommendations to the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board shall consider the application or transfer at its next duly noticed meeting. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of a quorum of the Advisory Board shall be required for election to membership. Persons so elected shall be publicly received into membership at any regular church service.
2. **Membership Class.** The Pastor and Advisory Board may authorize the establishment of a membership class and require any prospective member to complete the class prior to the prospective member's submission of an application or transfer. The Membership Class shall be under the direction of the Pastor or his designee.

3. **Credentialed Ministers.** Ministers credentialed with the Assemblies of God, other than those on the church staff or payroll, may hold Associate Membership in this Church. Ministers credentialed with the Assemblies of God who are on the church staff or payroll may hold active membership during the time they hold position with the Church. Except for the provision just given, active membership may not be given to any Assemblies of God or non-Assemblies of God credentialed minister without the written approval of the Southern California Network Executive Presbytery.

Resignation

Any member desiring to resign may file a written resignation with the Pastor or Secretary who shall present it to the Advisory Board at its next duly noticed meeting. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of a quorum of the Advisory Board shall be required to approve the resignation.

Transfer

Any member desiring to be transferred to some other church may apply to the Pastor or Secretary for a letter of transfer. Said letter shall be granted if approved by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of a quorum of the Advisory Board.

Alteration or Termination of Membership

Unscriptural conduct or failure to maintain and abide by the standards of membership given in "Standard of Membership," above, shall constitute sufficient grounds upon which any member may be removed from the membership or disciplined by being placed in a category of membership other than active membership (Matthew 18:15-18; Romans 16:17-18; I Corinthians 5:11; Galatians 1:8-9; Titus 3:1-5). The Advisory Board shall have the duty to investigate any charges against a member and to determine whether there has been unscriptural conduct or failure to maintain and abide by the standards of membership given in "Standard of Membership," above. The Advisory Board shall ascertain what action has been taken by the Pastor or others to counsel or assist the member. In acting upon any such investigations, the Advisory Board shall follow the procedures set forth in "Review of Membership Roll, Action of the Advisory Board Affecting Membership Status and Right of Appeal," below. Upon a vote in accordance with these procedures the Advisory Board may terminate the membership and strike that member's name from the roll or reclassify his membership.

Review of Membership Roll

The Pastor and Advisory Board shall revise the membership roll within ninety (90) days of the annual business meeting and at such other times as they deem necessary. The review preceding the annual business meeting shall be completed not less than fifteen (15) days prior to the meeting. At its annual revision and more often as need may require, the Advisory Board shall remove from the roll all names of members who are deceased, together with the names of those who have resigned, or whose membership has been terminated. The roll shall accurately reflect the category of membership of each member.

Action of the Advisory Board Affecting Membership Status

The Advisory Board by an affirmative vote of two-thirds of a quorum may alter or terminate the membership of a member for cause at any duly noticed meeting provided that at least ten (10) days prior written notice of such pending action is given to the said member. The member involved shall be given an opportunity to be heard at such meeting.

Right of Appeal

Any member whose membership has been altered or terminated by the Advisory Board has the right to appeal. Appeal for reconsideration may be made to the Regional Executive Presbyter and Regional Leadership Team, with the Advisory Board of the Church. Its decision is final.

Necessity of Unity

1. Cooperative action. The membership of this Church shall give consent to its forms of government, together with the past policies mutually agreed upon, and agree to the policy of fundamental unity and agreement, alike in doctrine, conduct and action, and shall conform to the Scriptural injunction that there be no divisions in the body. They shall be subject to those who may be delegated to leadership as the Word of God plainly teaches, that the principle of Christian fellowship may be kept inviolate and perpetuated, recognizing its fundamental importance. A member who exercises the rights of membership given in this manual shall not be deemed to be lacking cooperative action unless such a member refuses to abide by a final decision once that decision has been reached or pursues any rights granted under this document with an un-Christlike spirit and manner.
2. Attitude toward strife. Inasmuch as no Christian institution can comply with the plain teaching of Scripture unless unity and harmony predominates within its circle, no member of this Church may use means to incite or engender strife, but shall work in harmony with the membership, the Advisory Board, and church officers, as did the early Church (Acts 2:42). If there is cause for dissatisfaction, it shall be called to the attention of the Pastor and the Advisory Board in a manner and spirit which conforms to provisions given in this document.

MEETINGS

Regular Services

Meetings for public worship shall be held as may be determined by the Pastor and Advisory Board.

Special Services

Services, conventions, and other special services shall be planned by the Pastor. The Pastor may counsel with the Advisory Board in such planning; he shall keep it informed of such plans.

Annual Business Meeting

The church year shall coincide with the calendar year, beginning on January 1 and running through December 31 of each year. There shall be a general meeting of the membership to be known as the annual business meeting. It shall be held annually during the months of January or February for the transaction of such business as may be brought to the meeting. The time and place of the annual business meeting shall be set by the Advisory Board.

The annual business meeting may be postponed for a reason, for a period not to exceed thirty (30) days, by action of the Pastor and Advisory Board. The meeting shall be in collaboration with the REP or his designee.

Order of Business

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

1. Devotional
2. Roll call
3. Approval of prior minutes
4. Report of the Pastor
5. Report of the Treasurer
6. Report of committees
7. Unfinished business
8. New business
9. Adjournment

Special Business Meetings

Special business meetings of the church may be called by:

1. The Superintendent of the SoCal Network; or
2. The Secretary of the Advisory Board upon the written order of a majority of the Advisory Board.

Notice of Business Meetings

Notice of all annual and special business meetings shall be made by verbal announcement during two consecutive Sunday morning services prior to such meeting. Notice may additionally be published in the form of bulletin announcements, mail, or in such other form as may be determined by the Advisory Board. An exception regarding notice of a business meeting shall be made when it is called by the Network Superintendent; in such case, the notice shall be made by verbal announcement during one Sunday morning service provided notice of such a meeting shall have been mailed to the active membership at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting.

Quorum

There shall be two alternatives in determining a quorum.

1. When the purpose of voting is to request the SoCal Network Executive Presbytery to change the Church from that of a Network Affiliated Church to a General Council Affiliated Church, or to that of Parent Affiliated Church, no matters may be voted on and no business may be conducted unless fifty percent (50%) or more of the active members shall be present to constitute a quorum.
2. No matters may be voted on and no business may be conducted at any meeting, when called for any other purpose except that specified in the immediately preceding paragraph, unless twenty-five percent (25%) or more of the active members shall be present to constitute a quorum, referred to herein as a minimum quorum.

Absentee Voting

Absentee voting or absentee ballots shall not be permitted at any annual or specially called Church business meeting. This prohibition extends to all elections and all issues.

Unauthorized Meetings and Activities

No member of this Church shall promote private enterprises, activities, or meetings (such as private prayer meetings, Bible studies, action groups) involving the membership of this Church which have not been sanctioned by the Pastor and Advisory Board. No member shall use his influence to draw other members of the Church into such outside activities. If additional services are desired besides those provided for, such services must have the approval of the Pastor and be under his general supervision. In the event the church is temporarily without a Pastor, such services must have the approval of the Advisory Board.

THE ADVISORY BOARD

Definition

There shall be an Advisory Board of this Church which shall be comprised of the Regional Executive Presbyter, the Pastor and such other members as are appointed by the Network Superintendent. "Advisory Board member" shall be a term referring to members of the Advisory Board other than the Pastor or REP, although both shall be members of the Advisory Board. The SoCal Network Executive Presbytery is the legal, "official" Board of this church and all decisions of the Advisory Board are subject to ratification and approval by the SoCal Network Executive Presbytery.

Qualifications

1. The Advisory Board member's relationship to God. Advisory Board members shall be persons who evidence a mature and vital walk with God. They shall be the persons whom others readily identify as those who walk in Christ's steps; who can be turned to in times of spiritual need for Godly and wise counsel; who manifest a life of holiness, wisdom, and faith, and who are filled with the Spirit.
2. The Advisory Board member's relationship to family. The family of an Advisory Board member shall be a positive, wholesome, and imitable influence upon others (inasmuch as children who have come of age cannot be coerced into the Faith, Advisory Board members are not to be regarded as necessarily derelict in their Christian duties if their teenage and older children are not believers).
3. The Advisory Board member's relationship to self. An Advisory Board member shall be a wholesome person spiritually and emotionally. The Advisory Board member's life shall manifest the fruit of the Spirit (the life qualities of the indwelling Christ): love, joy, peace, endurance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control.
4. The Advisory Board member's relationship to the Body of Christ. Advisory Board members shall be persons to whom believers look for guarding the Church from false doctrine and false teachers, promoting and/or teaching sound doctrine within the Church, and providing leadership, direction and counsel to the congregation in matters pertaining to the Church as a whole. Their involvement in the life of the congregation and commitment to the standards of membership given previously shall be exemplary.
5. The Advisory Board member's relationship to the world. Advisory Board members must be above reproach, having a good reputation among those outside the Church.
6. Advisory Board members shall bear the qualifications of life given for the office of deacon (I Timothy 3:8-13) or bishop (I Timothy 3:1-7), and exhibit the qualities of character found in Matthew 5:3-12; Romans 12:9-21; I Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:22-26; and II Peter 5:1-9.

Duties

1. The Advisory Board shall act in an advisory capacity to the Pastor in all matters pertaining to the Church in its spiritual life.
2. The Advisory Board, with the Pastor, shall act in the examination of applicants for membership and in the discipline of members.
3. The Advisory Board, with the Pastor, shall be the trustees of the Church property and finances, and shall be responsible for care of the same, pursuant to the direction of and authority granted by the SoCal Network Executive Presbytery.
4. The Advisory Board shall conduct itself within guidelines and procedures given it in the SoCal Network Manual for Network Affiliated Churches, Pastors and Advisory Boards, and shall be monitored by the Regional Executive Presbyter.
5. The Advisory Board, with the Pastor, shall adopt procedural rules from time to time as necessary for the proper functioning of the Church, as long as such rules do not conflict with this document or the Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. bylaws.
6. The Advisory Board and the Pastor shall fulfill their spiritual and temporal duties in a spirit of servanthood to the Lord, the Church, and one another. Neither the Pastor nor the Advisory Board are to exercise dictatorial leadership over one another or the Church, but shall cooperatively work together as a model of Christian unity and leadership, each submitting to one another as the Spirit, need, or circumstance may require. When disunity becomes present between the Pastor and Advisory Board,

it shall be the responsibility of each to attempt to solve the difficulty between them; if failing to do so, it shall be the responsibility of each to seek the mediating efforts of the Network Superintendent or his designee in order that the conflict may not be carried into the Church, but resolved within the circle of leadership.

7. The Advisory Board shall determine the salary of the ministers and employees of the Church. The Pastor shall be provided an annual paid vacation, if possible, time and length to be determined by mutual agreement. The Advisory Board shall also endeavor to provide the finances necessary for the Pastor to attend SoCal Network Ministers' Retreat, SoCal Network Annual Conference (previously known as District Council), and General Council meetings. Such attendance shall not be considered a part of the Pastor's vacation.

Number of Advisory Board Members

The number of persons serving as Advisory Board members shall be a minimum of three (3) plus the Pastor. In addition, the Regional Executive Presbyter shall be an active member of the Advisory Board. As the church grows, others can be added at the discretion of the Network Superintendent.

Selection of Advisory Board Members

The Network Superintendent shall appoint the Advisory Board members following the nomination process set forth below. Advisory Board members may be appointed from within or outside the church so long as the Advisory Board member is either a member of an Assemblies of God church or is a credentialed minister with the SoCal Network.

Term of Office

The term of office shall be for a period of three (3) years. The time may be extended at the discretion of the Network Superintendent upon recommendation of the Regional Executive Presbyter but shall not extend past a total of two (2) three (3) year terms.

Regional Executive Presbyter

The Regional Executive Presbyter shall be the Vice-Chairman of the Advisory Board. He shall preside over, or designate a Chairman pro tem for all Church business meetings and Advisory Board meetings in the absence of the Pastor. If the Office of Pastor is vacated, the Regional Executive Presbyter shall assume responsibility for the general supervision of the Church.

Secretary

The Secretary of the Church shall be a member of the Advisory Board and shall keep, or cause to be kept, a book of minutes of all Church business meetings and meetings of the Advisory Board. He shall keep, or cause to be kept, a record of the membership of the Church, and shall be custodian of all legal documents of the Church and its corporate seal. He shall perform such other duties as belong to his office. The Secretary shall be appointed by the Network Superintendent.

Treasurer

The Treasurer of the Church shall be a member of the Advisory Board and shall be responsible for all monies received into the treasury of the Church and shall disburse, or cause to be disbursed, such funds as directed by the Advisory Board under authority granted by the Advisory Board or this document. He shall keep, or cause to be kept, itemized records of all receipts and disbursements, and shall furnish financial reports to the Advisory Board monthly and to the membership annually. His records shall be available at all times for audit under the direction of the Advisory Board. The Treasurer shall be appointed by the Network Superintendent.

Regular Meetings

In collaboration with the Regional Executive Presbyter, the Pastor shall call a regular meeting of the Advisory Board within thirty (30) days after the annual business meeting. Thereafter, in collaboration with

the REP the Advisory Board may provide by resolution the time and place for the holding of additional regular meetings of the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board shall meet a minimum of four (4) times a year with the Regional Executive Presbyter having collaborated with the Pastor on the agenda, and the REP or his designee in attendance.

Special Meetings

Special meetings of the Advisory Board may be called in collaboration with the Regional Executive Presbyter at the request of the Pastor or any two (2) Advisory Board members. The person or persons authorized to call special meetings of the Advisory Board may fix the time and place for holding any special meeting of the Advisory Board called by them with the agenda set by the REP.

Notice of Meetings

Notice of regular meetings of the Advisory Board may be made by an Advisory Board resolution adopted at the initial meeting of the Advisory Board following the annual business meeting, or at any subsequent meeting of the Advisory Board during its term.

Notice of any special meeting of the Advisory Board shall be given at least four days previously thereto by written notice delivered personally or sent by mail. Any Advisory Board member may waive notice of any meeting. The attendance of any Advisory Board member at any meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where an Advisory Board member attends for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of business because of failure of notice. The business to be transacted at the meeting need not be specified in the notice or waiver of notice of such meeting, unless specifically required by law or by this document.

Quorum

A majority of the Advisory Board members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the Advisory Board. If less than a majority of Advisory Board members are present at said meeting, a majority of the Advisory Board members present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

Manner of Acting

The act of a majority of the Advisory Board members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the Advisory Board, unless the act of a greater number is required by law or this document.

Vacancies

In the event of a vacancy due to the resignation, death, or removal of an Advisory Board member, the Network Superintendent shall select his replacement.

An Advisory Board member shall have vacated his office when he submits a written resignation or when he verbally resigns to the Network Superintendent.

An Advisory Board member may have his office declared vacant by the Network Superintendent.

STAFF

Pastor

1. Qualifications. The Pastor of this church shall at all times be a credentialed minister of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, or a minister serving with the express written approval of the Executive Regional Executive Presbytery of the SoCal Network Council. In no event shall a former Pastor of this Church who is no longer credentialed by the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. serve as an employee of this Church without the express written consent of the Executive Presbytery of the SoCal Network.

2. Duties.

- a. The Pastor, as designated in the Scriptures, is the head of the Church under the leadership of the Lord Jesus, and is referred to under the title of "pastor" or "shepherd" (Ephesians 4:11), "bishop" or "supervisor" (I Timothy 3:2-7), and "presbyter" or "elder" (Titus 1:5).
- b. The Pastor shall have oversight of the Church, its ministries and employees.
- c. The Pastor will be the Chairman of the Advisory Board, and may preside over all Church Business meetings and Advisory Board meetings, except when the Network Superintendent provides otherwise.
- d. The Pastor shall be an ex-officio member of all other boards and committees within the Church.
- e. In collaboration with the REP, the Pastor shall be responsible for the preparation of the agenda of all Church business meetings and Advisory Board meetings, except when the Network Superintendent provides otherwise.
- f. The Pastor shall provide for all services of the Church and shall arrange for all special meetings, conventions, and revival campaigns. No person shall be invited to minister in the Church without his approval.
- g. The Pastor shall endeavor to represent the Church in Regional, Network and General Council activities.
- h. The Pastor shall perform all other duties necessary to the work of the ministry

3. Manner of election

- a. The Pastor shall be chosen by the Network Leadership Team (the Network Superintendent, Assistant Superintendent(s), Secretary-Treasurer) of the SoCal Network.
 - b. The Network Leadership Team may receive an advisory secret ballot vote (sentiment vote) from the active membership prior to the appointment of a pastor, it being understood that said advisory vote shall not be binding upon the Network Leadership Team.
4. Term of office. The term of the Pastor's office shall be reviewed at least annually by the Regional Executive Presbyter who may make recommendations to the Network Leadership Team concerning continuation of the Pastor's tenure. The Pastor's term will expire upon thirty days' notice given by resignation of the Pastor, or by action of the Network Superintendent.

Other Pastors and Employees

All associate and assistant pastors, directors of youth, music and education, and any other members of the pastoral or Church staff and all other Church employees shall be appointed by the Pastor, subject to prior ratification by the Advisory Board. All appointments shall expire whenever the office of Pastor is vacated or by action of the Pastor and Advisory Board.

Neither this document nor the Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. Bylaws prevents the Pastor of a Network Affiliated Church from hiring Staff as finances and need present themselves.

DEPARTMENTS AND COMMITTEES

Committees of the Advisory Board

The Advisory Board, by resolution adopted by a majority of its members, may designate one or more committees, each of which shall consist of one or more Advisory Board members, which committees, to the extent provided in said resolution, shall have and exercise the authority of the Advisory Board in the management of the Church; but the designation of such committees and the delegation thereto of authority

shall not operate to relieve the Advisory Board or any individual Advisory Board member of any responsibility imposed by law or the bylaws of SoCal Network upon it or the Advisory Board member.

Other Committees and Departments of the Church

Other committees and departments within the Church not having or exercising the authority of the Advisory Board in the management of the Church may be provided for by a resolution adopted by a majority of the Advisory Board present at a meeting at which a quorum is present. The members of such committees or the personnel of such departments shall be appointed by the Pastor subject to ratification by the Advisory Board. Anyone so appointed shall serve at the pleasure of the Pastor or Advisory Board.

Chairman

One member of each committee shall be appointed chairman by the person or persons authorized to appoint the members thereof.

Vacancies

Vacancies in the membership of any committee or department position may be filled by appointments in the same manner as provided in the case of the original appointments.

Quorum

Unless otherwise provided in the resolution of the Advisory Board designating a committee, a majority of the whole committee shall constitute a quorum and the act of a majority of the members present at a meeting at which a quorum is present shall be the act of the committee.

Duties

Each committee may adopt rules for its own government not inconsistent with this document or with rules adopted by the Advisory Board.

MANNER OF GIVING NOTICE

Whenever the Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. Bylaws do not state otherwise, notice is required to be given to any Advisory Board member, officer, or member, and such notice shall not be construed to mean personal notice, but may be given in writing, by mail, by depositing the same in the post office or mailbox, in a postpaid sealed envelope, addressed to such member, officer, or Advisory Board member at such address as appears on the records of the Church and such notice shall be deemed to be given at the time when the same shall be thus mailed.

FINANCES AND GOVERNANCE

Income

The financial needs of the Church shall be met by tithes, offerings, gifts, bequests, trusts, annuities, contributions and such other means as the Advisory Board may approve.

Budget

The Advisory Board shall prepare annually a unified budget for the church. Said unified budget shall include all monies received or expended by or for any and all departments of the church.

Banking

In accordance with the Internal Controls provisions set forth in this document, the Treasurer shall properly account for or cause to be accounted all monies received by any and all departments of the Church and immediately deposit or cause to be deposited the same in the bank account or accounts of the Church which the Advisory Board shall from time to time establish.

Withdrawals

Two signatures shall be required on any withdrawal of monies from any account. The persons authorized to sign for said withdrawals shall be the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, or persons named by the Advisory Board. All withdrawals shall be made under the supervision of the Advisory Board.

Audit

The Advisory Board shall audit the books annually or more often. They shall review monthly income and disbursements statements.

Encumbering

The Advisory Board shall not have the power to borrow, enter into contracts, leases, agreements or otherwise encumber the real property. This authority is vested in the SoCal Network Executive Regional Executive Presbytery.

Salaries

The Pastor shall be given regular and adequate financial support to the best of the church's financial ability, the amount and manner of which shall be determined by agreement between the Pastor and Advisory Board. The salaries of all members of the pastoral staff and other full-time or part-time employees shall be set by the Advisory Board with the advice and counsel of the Pastor. All salaries and benefits shall be reviewed by the Advisory Board on an annual basis or more frequently as the Advisory Board desires. A general principle shall be that as the church prospers and the General Fund income grows under the Pastor's leadership, that percentage of growth shall be applied to the Pastor's salary for the next year.

Missionary Commitments and Missions Projects

Regular financial support to missionaries, missionary projects, and other person(s) and causes related to missions shall be decided upon by the Advisory Board.

Benevolence Fund

The church, in the exercise of its religious purposes and mission, has established a benevolence fund to assist persons in financial need. The Church welcomes contributions to the fund. Donors may feel free to suggest beneficiaries of the fund or of their contributions of the fund. However, the administration of the fund, including all disbursements, is subject to the exclusive control and discretion of the Advisory Board. The Advisory Board may consider suggested designations, but in no event is it bound to honor them. Checks should be made payable to the Church, with a notation that the funds are to be placed in the benevolence fund.

“First Money”

It is the responsibility of the Pastor and Advisory Board to safeguard the testimony and financial reputation of the Church. “First money” shall go to the payment of the mortgage and other bills of the church before salaries, either current or past. This applies also to any back or unpaid salaries at the time of the Pastor's resignation.

Workman's Compensation Insurance

The Advisory Board shall see that the church has, at its own expense, a current Workman's Compensation policy in place at all times that covers all paid employees, including the Pastor.

Policy on Weddings

Marriage is an institution that is ordained by God and is to be celebrated within the community of faith. It is the policy of this church that its facilities will be made available for weddings for members and adherents of Assemblies of God churches, and that all weddings within its facility must be officiated by clergy who are credentialed with the Assemblies of God.

COOPERATION WITH NETWORK AND GENERAL COUNCILS

Benefits of Affiliation

This Church may receive the following benefits resulting from its status as a Member Church of the SoCal Network and as a Network Affiliated Church.

1. Purpose. This Church is entitled to participate in the reasons-for-being of the Assemblies of God as declared in the Constitutional Declaration of the General Council Constitution.
2. Doctrine. This Church is undergirded by sound Biblical doctrine
3. Pastors and Staff Ministers. This Church may be assured that those serving the Church in a ministerial capacity shall be credentialed by and accountable to the Southern California Network Council and/or the General Council of the Assemblies of God, or have the express written approval of the Executive Regional Executive Presbytery of the SoCal Network.
4. Itinerant ministers. This Church is entitled, through its Pastor, to the strengthening ministry of evangelists, teachers, and various types of itinerant ministers credentialed with the General and/or Network Council.
5. Listing. This Church is entitled to be listed in the current annual SoCal Network and General Council Yearbooks. Such listing qualifies the Church to receipt donations given it and accords the Church the benefit of being under the umbrella of the Assemblies of God qualification as a non-profit corporation bearing Internal Revenue 501(c)(3) status.
6. Oversight and Accountability. This Church is entitled to receive counsel and direction from those whose election and qualification have set them aside as overseers in God's work. Such counsel and direction may come from the Regional Executive Presbyter or elected Network Officials.
7. U.S. and Foreign Missions. This Church is entitled to participate in the vibrant home and foreign missionary work of the Assemblies of God through giving its people and financial resources for the spread of the Gospel under a program with strict doctrinal and financial accountability.
8. Departments. This Church is entitled to utilize the services of General Council and SoCal Network departments for the strengthening of its local ministry.
9. Vanguard University and Chi Alpha. This Church is entitled to utilize the resources of Vanguard University and the Network Chi Alpha Ministry for its college students to be nurtured in the Faith within a Christian or secular college context.
10. Pinecrest Christian Conference Center. Subject to availability and expense, this Church is entitled to the use of this excellent resource for Christian conference grounds in an idyllic mountain setting. Whether through use of Pinecrest for the church itself, or through the Church's participation in Network-wide conferences and camps, Pinecrest may be utilized for the evangelization and edification of all ministered to by this Church.
11. Teen Challenge. This Church may avail itself of the resources of Teen Challenge in seeking to minister to those within our Church and community who are dependent upon chemicals or alcohol.
12. Official Representation. This Church, by action of its Advisory Board, may appoint one of its members to serve as a lay representative at Network Conference and Regional business meetings
13. Church Loans. This Church may utilize the resources of the SoCal Network financial standing to help it obtain church financing.

Responsibilities of Affiliation

1. Prayer. This Church shall pray for the global, national and Network ministry of the Assemblies of God.
2. Support.

- a. General Council. This Church shall send an offering each year to the General Council for its support in an amount not less than one dollar per church adherent.
 - b. SoCal Network. This Church shall send a minimum of one percent (1%) of its general fund, on a monthly basis, to the Network United Ministries Fund for the under girding of the SoCal Network work and expansion. Additional offerings may be given to SoCal Network departments and ministries.
 - c. Missions. This Church shall support to the best of its ability, on a monthly basis, foreign missionaries from the SoCal Network under General Council appointment and U.S. missionaries from the SoCal Network under SoCal Network or General Council appointment. To the best of its ability, and through the invitation of the Pastor, this Church shall have such appointed missionaries hold services and minister at missions meetings and conventions, and constituents of this Church shall be encouraged to give faith promises and/or offerings for the support of these missionaries and the approved projects they represent.
 - d. Church Planting and Strengthening. This church shall give an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of its missions giving to the SoCal Network for planting and strengthening other Assemblies of God churches within the Network
3. Ministry and Mission. This Church shall maintain pure doctrine, operate within SoCal Network AG bylaws, policies and procedures and shall conduct itself in a manner consistent with Assemblies of God principles and integrity, and ensure that its assets are not dissipated but at all times conserved and dedicated to the historic mission of the Assemblies of God.
 4. Integrity and Fidelity. This Church shall seek to exalt Christ in all its conduct and ministries. It shall remain faithful to live and proclaim the Full Gospel. It shall identify with and affirm its affiliation with the SoCal Network.
 5. Records. This Church shall cause a copy of its important corporate records to be kept on file at the Network Office. Such records shall include, but not be limited to the current:
 - a. Articles of Incorporation
 - b. Constitution and/or Bylaws
 - c. Annual Financial Report
 - d. Copies of Property Deeds
 - e. Completed Annual Church Ministries Report furnished by the General Council
 - f. All amendments made to the Articles of Incorporation, Constitution and/or Bylaws
 - g. Proof of current casualty and comprehensive liability insurance. This Church shall list the Southern California District of the Assemblies of God, Inc. as an additional insured on its liability insurance policy.
 - h. Federal identification number.
 6. Title to Real Property: The Advisory Board shall execute all documents necessary to ensure title to any and all real property is held jointly in the name of the Church and legal name of the SoCal Network, "The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc."
 7. Accountability. The Advisory Board agrees to be bound by The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. Articles of Incorporation and Bylaws and agrees to not make or implement any decisions, policies, or procedures inconsistent therewith. To the extent there are conflicts between decisions, policies, procedures of the church membership or Advisory Board and the SoCal Network Bylaws, the latter will govern.
 8. Arbitration. Any controversy or claim between this Church, or any member or officer of this Church, or

any person claiming to be a member or officer of this Church and the Network or any other member or officer of this church, for which either party may have a cause for legal action (redress from any civil court) shall be submitted to binding arbitration. The arbitrators shall be chosen from the Panel of Arbitrators elected by the Network Conference in session in accordance with its bylaws. The disputing parties shall each select one arbitrator from the Panel of Arbitrators, and the third arbitrator shall be selected by the two previously selected arbitrators. Such arbitration shall proceed in accordance with Title 9 of the California Code of Civil Procedure, or any successor statute.

PROPERTY

Title

All property of whatever kind and wherever situated regardless of how it is acquired by the Church shall be held, sold, transferred or conveyed in the name of the church and the legal name of the Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc.

Acquisition-Disposition

The SoCal Network Executive Presbytery shall have the power to mortgage, encumber or hypothecate the assets of the Church. From time to time real and/or personal property may be offered to the Church by a donor or donors which is intended to provide support to the Church rather than for actual use by the Church. The Advisory Board shall have the power to accept and to dispose of such property in such manner as they deem appropriate and to execute any and all documents necessary and/or convenient provided such action is authorized by a two-thirds vote of the Advisory Board and ratified by the SoCal Network Executive Presbytery. All other transactions involving real property, whether by purchase, lease, mortgage, encumbrance, sale or otherwise, must be approved in advance by a majority of the SoCal Network Executive Presbytery.

Documents

The Chairman and Secretary shall execute any conveyance, lease, or mortgage only when properly approved and authorized by the SoCal Network Executive Presbytery. Neither the Pastor nor the Advisory Board is authorized to execute any such document without such approval and authorization. Should a document be so executed in contravention of this explicit policy, it will be rendered null and void.

Dissolution

The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious purposes and no part of the net income or assets of this corporation shall ever inure to the benefit of any director, officer or member thereof or to the benefit of any private person. Upon the dissolution or winding up of the corporation, its assets remaining after payment, or provision for payment, of all debts and liabilities of this corporation shall be distributed to The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. dba The SoCal Network if at the time of the dissolution of this corporation The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., is then organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes and has established its tax exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. In the event that The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. shall not be organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes, upon the dissolution or the winding up of the corporation, the assets of this corporation remaining after payment or provision for payment of all debts and liabilities of this corporation shall be distributed to a nonprofit fund, foundation or corporation which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes and which has established its tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF EXPRESS TRUST

This Church acknowledges that heretofore contributions have been received upon affirmative

representations that such contributions would be used to support and advance the objectives and mission of The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., as well as the objectives and mission of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. In keeping with the historical policy of this Church, this Church represents and warrants that all assets and contributions it receives shall be used to support and advance the objectives and mission of the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. and The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. through a direct affiliation between this Church and said Councils. In addition, the assets of this Church are and henceforth shall be impressed with an express trust requiring that such assets be used to support and advance the objectives and mission of The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. and the General Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc., through such an affiliation.

It is the intent of this provision to create a trust that is subject to the provision of Section 9142 of the California Corporation's Code, or any successor code provision. The express written consent of the Executive Presbytery of The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. shall be required to amend, remove or revoke this provision.

DISPOSITION OF ALL OR SUBSTANTIALLY ALL OF CHURCH ASSETS

The sale, lease, conveyance, exchange, transfer or other disposition of all or substantially all assets of this church shall require the consent or waiver of the State of California Attorney General pursuant to Section 9633 of California's Corporations Code, or any successor code provision, as well as the written consent, or written waiver of the Executive Presbytery of The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. The express written consent of the Executive Presbytery of The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. shall be required to amend, remove or revoke this paragraph.

MINUTES AND FINANCIAL REPORTS

The minutes of all Advisory Board meetings and the monthly and annual financial reports presented to the Advisory Board shall be open for inspection at all reasonable hours to any active member. In the event the Advisory Board meets in a duly called Executive Session, the minutes shall record the general topic of the Executive Session.

ROBERT'S RULES OF ORDER

Where not in conflict with other provisions of this document, Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition, shall control the procedure for all business meetings of the Church, the meetings of the Advisory Board, and committees established by or pursuant to the Articles of Incorporation and/or the Bylaws of this Church.

NUMBER AND GENDER

Except where the context indicates otherwise, words in the singular number shall include the plural, and words in the masculine gender shall include the feminine, and vice versa.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS

Check List:

For quick reference by the Pastor, the checklist is provided for the listing of the reporting responsibilities of the Pastor to the Regional Executive Presbyter.

Agenda and Minutes Formats:

The Pastor should prepare and reproduce for each Advisory Board Member a written agenda, which follows the direction of the REP and format of the Sample Agenda appended to this document. The Secretary shall prepare and reproduce for each Advisory Board Member a written set of minutes.

Items for Advisory Board Consideration throughout the Year:

Items that should be covered by the Advisory Board annually are outlined in this section. The Mandatory Items for Annual Review are listed below, although each Advisory Board is free to vary the month. It is vital that the Secretary include in the minutes the action on all the items considered at the Advisory Board meeting.

Offering and Attendance Report:

Complete this record for each service and give to the pastor or Treasurer. These will be used to compile the monthly report to the Advisory Board and Regional Executive Presbyter.

Nomination Process for Advisory Board Members:

The steps for nominating Advisory Board members should be carefully followed in the exact sequence given.

Annual Church Ministries Report:

Each year the General Council will send to you the Annual Church Ministries Report (ACMR). It is mandatory for Network Affiliated Churches to complete this form and forward it to both the General Council and the SoCal Network by January 31. Also, make an additional copy and forward it to your Regional Executive Presbyter.

Annual Pastoral Reappointment Questionnaire:

This form will come from the SoCal Network office.

The Pastor must compile the information necessary in preparation for the yearly Regional Executive Presbyter's interview.

This tool may be used throughout the year as a self-study tool.

Please copy this tool and forward to each Member of the Church Advisory Board.

PASTOR'S CHECKLIST

1. MINUTES OF ADVISORY BOARD MEETINGS

Have them prepared immediately after the meeting.

Send to Regional Executive Presbyter within one week after an Advisory Board meeting.

2. FINANCIAL REPORTS

See that the Regional Executive Presbyter receives the Monthly Balance Sheet and Profit and Loss Statement.

3. ANNUAL CHURCH MINISTRIES REPORT (ACMR)

Complete the ACMR at year-end and return it to addresses indicated. Make an additional copy and forward it to your Regional Executive Presbyter.

4. ANNUAL REAPPOINTMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Complete and submit to Regional Executive Presbyter prior to the time of the Annual Ministry Review

5. INSURANCE COVERAGE

All current requirements for Insurance coverage of Network Affiliated Churches are found in the appendices. These coverages include General Liability, Worker's Compensation, Vehicle Coverage and also Youth/Children's Activities.

6. CHURCH OWNED VEHICLE INFORMATION

Please detail for each vehicle owned by the church

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

Our Network and insurance require each church implement the risk management program, the provisions of which are set forth herein.

8. ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

Proposed additions or deletions to the Advisory Board are to be made on the appropriate forms in this Policy Manual.

9. UNITED MINISTRIES FUND (UMF)

Monthly, the Treasurer of the Church is to send to the SoCal Network AG funds in the amount of 1% of the general fund income.

10. CHURCH PLANTING

This church shall give an amount equal to ten percent (10%) of its Missions giving to the SoCal Network AG for planting and strengthening other Assemblies of God churches within the Network-

11. RECORDS

This church shall cause a copy of its important corporate records to be kept on file at the SoCal Network Office. Such records shall include, but not be limited to the current:

- Articles of Incorporation
- Annual Financial Report
- Copies of property deeds with The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. (All places where SCDC or SoCal Network was used, substitute "The Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc.") name on deeds

- Copies of all property tax bills
- Completed Annual Church Ministries Report (ACMR) required by the General Council

12. ACCOUNTABILITY

Pastor is responsible to know and implement all current SoCal Network mandated requirements for Network Affiliated Churches, including the most current Southern California District Council of the Assemblies of God, Inc. bylaws.

ITEMS FOR ADVISORY BOARD CONSIDERATION THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Items that should be covered by the Advisory Board annually are outlined in this section.

Goals and Vision/Planning

- Review of prior year's goals and accomplishments.
- Annual Church Ministries Report (ACMR).
- Review of membership roster
- Adoption of goals for the next year (November).

Budgeting *NOTE: Budgets are always "as funds available," with no single budget line item to be considered as permission to spend unless funds are on hand.*

Prior year's Annual Financial Statement

Review of Departmental Ministries.

Authorization for expenses of pastor and spouse, and lay delegate to SoCal Network Annual Conference (if not in yearly budget).

(Odd years) Authorization of expenses for pastor and spouse to attend General Council (if not in yearly budget).

Presentation of preliminary budget for next year (September or October). Annual review of pastoral and ministerial compensation (salary, retirement, benefits, vacation, auto).

Adopt pastoral and ministerial staff housing allowance for next year.

Adopt annual budget for next year; Include in report to Regional Executive Presbyter (by November 30th). Consider a special Christmas love offering to be received for pastor and staff (November), and authorization of expenses for pastor and spouse to attend Network Minister's Retreat (if not in yearly budget).

Facilities and Ministries

Advisory Board walk-through of church buildings and grounds

Review of Missions pledges, budget and convention twice each year.

Review of all church publications and advertising.

Review of all outreach ministries.

Adoption of calendar for the next year.

Set date and time for annual church business meeting

Annual review of pastor(s) or staff's health coverage.

Annual review of all insurance coverage including include General Liability, Worker's Compensation, Vehicle Coverage and also Youth/Children's Activities

NOMINATION PROCESS FOR ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

The steps for selecting Advisory Board members should be carefully followed in the exact sequence given

The Pastor approaches the potential new member for availability. Should the candidate agree to be nominated, the candidate reviews the requirements in this manual and then completes the appropriate forms if willing to serve.

All forms are forwarded by the pastor to the REP. The REP submits the forms to the RLT for consideration, whose decision is communicated to the pastor. Should the candidate be approved by the RLT, the pastor forwards a copy of the NE Advisory Board Update form to the REP who keeps a copy and sends another to the NA Church office.

FULLY ACCOUNTABLE REIMBURSEMENT POLICY

Whereas, income tax regulations 1.162-17 and 1.274-5T(f) provide that employees need not report on their tax return expenses paid or incurred by them solely for the benefit of their employer for which they are required to account and do account to their employer and which are charged directly or indirectly to the employer; and

Whereas, income tax regulation 1.274-5T(f) further provides that an adequate accounting means the submission to the employer of an account book, diary, statement of expense, or similar record maintained by the employee in which the information as to each element of expenditure (amount, date and place, business purpose, and business relationship) is recorded at or near the time of the expenditure, together with supporting documentary evidence, in a manner which conforms to all the "adequate records requirements" set forth in the regulation; and

Whereas, the Church desires to establish a reimbursement policy pursuant to the regulations mentioned above; be it therefore

Resolved, that the Church hereby adopts an accountable reimbursement policy pursuant to income tax regulations 1.162-17 and 1.274-5T(f) upon the following terms and conditions:

1. In addition to meeting the requirements set forth below, any expense in excess of \$1,000 *must be approved in advance by the Executive Presbytery.*
2. Adequate accounting for reimbursed expenses. Any "employee" (as defined below) employed by the Church shall be reimbursed for any ordinary and necessary business and professional expense incurred on behalf of the Church, if the following conditions are satisfied: (1) the expenses are reasonable in amount; (2) the employee documents the amount, date, place, business purpose (and in the case of entertainment expenses, the business relationship of the person or persons entertained) of each such expense with the same kind of documentary evidence as would be required to support a deduction of the expense on the employee's federal tax return; and (3) the employee substantiates such expenses by providing the Church treasurer with an accounting of such expenses no less frequently than monthly (in no event will an expense be reimbursed if substantiated more than 60 days after the expense is paid or incurred by an employee). Examples of reimbursable business expenses include local transportation, overnight travel (including lodging and meals), entertainment, books and subscriptions, education, vestments, and professional dues. Under no circumstances will the Church reimburse a employee for business or professional expenses incurred on behalf of the Church that are not properly substantiated according to this policy. Church and staff understand that this requirement is necessary to prevent the Church's reimbursement plan from being classified as a non-accountable plan.
3. Excess reimbursements. Any Church reimbursement that exceeds the amount of business or professional expenses properly accounted for by an employee pursuant to this policy must be returned to the Church within 120 days after the associated expenses are paid or incurred by the employee, and shall not be retained by the employee.
4. Reimbursements not funded out of salary reductions. Reimbursements shall be paid out of Church funds and not by reducing pay checks by the amount of business expense reimbursements.
5. Cellular phones and personal computers. The Church will not reimburse cellular phone or personal computer expenses of an employee who is treated as an employee for federal income tax reporting purposes unless the employee's use of a cellular phone or personal computer (each referred to below as "equipment") meets the following two tests:
 - a. Convenience of the employer. Use of the equipment must be "for the convenience of the employer." This means that the employee cannot perform his or her job without the equipment.

The fact that the equipment enables an employee to perform his or her work more easily and efficiently is not enough. Further, it must be demonstrated that computers and telephones available at the Church are insufficient to enable the employee to properly perform his or her job.

- b. Condition of employment. Use of the equipment must be required as a "condition of employment." It is not necessary that the Church specifically requires use of the equipment. On the other hand, it is not enough that the Church merely states that use of the equipment is a condition of employment. Tax reporting. The Church will not include in an employee's W-2 form the amount of any business or professional expense properly substantiated and reimbursed according to this policy, and the employee should not report the amount of any such reimbursement as income on Form 1040.
6. Retention of records. All receipts and other documentary evidence used by an employee to substantiate business and professional expenses reimbursed under this policy will be retained by the Church.
7. Employees. For purposes of this policy, the term "employee" shall include the following persons: Any full-time or part-time paid staff of the church. Also included are unpaid volunteer staff.

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RISK MANAGEMENT

Reports of sexual molestation of children and youth are on the rise and news of lawsuits stemming from these reports is broadcast by the media continually. While this Risk Management Policy is of general nature, specific and special emphasis is given to the protection of our children.

The church, once considered a safe haven for children and youth is increasingly in the middle of these lawsuits. Many insurance companies are refusing to cover claims of sexual misconduct or molestation by church employees or volunteers due to the ever-increasing costs of litigation and the considerable losses experienced in these lawsuits. According to Richard R. Hammar, legal counsel for the General Council of the Assemblies of God, "Most of the lawsuits filed against churches for acts of child molestation have alleged that the church was legally accountable either on the basis of negligent hiring or negligent supervision... (churches) are not absolutely liable for every injury that occurs on their premises or in the course of their activities. Generally, they are responsible only for those injuries that result from their negligence."

Our Network Affiliated Churches are covered by a Master Liability Policy, which will cover the church and the Network in the event of such a lawsuit if a Risk Management Policy has been set in place and is being adhered to by the church leadership. However a proactive Risk Management Policy for the prevention of abuse is our first priority for protecting our children and youth.

Risk management involves two areas: prevention (risk reduction) and response. These will be covered separately in this manual.

Refusal to develop and adhere to a risk management program will result in non-coverage of liability should such a suit be brought against the church, child or youth workers, or church Advisory Board. It is imperative that such a program be put in place.

We will assist you as much as possible in development, but the implementation is up to you.

On the pages following will be suggested policy, sample forms and instructions for their use. You may photocopy forms from the publication for use in your church, or you may modify forms to suit your situation; however, if you modify the forms, they will need to be reviewed by our lawyer and insurance company prior to use.

1 Hammar, Richard., et. El., Reducing the Risk of Child Sexual Abuse in Your Church (1993).

SECTION I: PREVENTION

As you no doubt are aware, prevention is the best medicine. Many things, which were once taken for granted, now must be carefully planned for to avoid the incidence of abuse, sexual molestation or like conduct in the church. The entire church, staff and Advisory Board must back the program in order for it to work effectively. Education, therefore, is key to prevention.

Each church should set a basic policy with regard to children and youth workers (compensated and non-compensated) prior to allowing them access to their children or youth. For churches, which already have children and youth workers in place, the education and screening which will form your basic policy must be completed, on a modified basis, for them as well.

The basic prevention policy should include the elements listed below:

GENERAL PREVENTION POLICY

All workers must be screened prior to their working in any children's or youth program. These reviews MUST be kept in absolute confidence (under California law we are obligated to this and should not release them without a court order or the written consent of the applicant). A Children's/Youth Ministry Review Advisory Board shall be formed to interview each potential worker/volunteer. Members of the Review Advisory Board must be trained to screen workers. Training tools can be obtained from the Assistant Superintendent's Office.

Prior to screening by the Review Advisory Board, all candidates for children's/youth worker positions should be informed that they will be screened by a Review Advisory Board. A written policy statement regarding risk management and the purpose for screening should be given to the candidate along with their application. The candidate should know in advance that his/her references will be checked, that he/she will need to answer some personal questions, and that all information will be used to identify his/her suitability for a position as a youth or children's worker but will otherwise remain confidential. Any applicant who has been convicted of charges involving molestation. Misconduct, abuse or endangerment of a minor shall not be involved with ministry to children or youth.

Purpose of the Review Advisory Board

To meet and interview all potential Children and Youth Ministry Team members in order to establish a foundation of relationship and accountability and screen and redirect candidates not meeting the basic eligibility criteria for Children/Youth Ministry Team members.

Ministry Team Member

Any adult or minor who is helping during a church sponsored class or activity – whose involvement would exceed the terms of a “parent/relative worker” role.

Parent/Relative Worker

A family member who assists the ministry team in his/her own child's class/program must still complete the application and screening process.

BASIC ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA FOR CHILDREN'S/YOUTH MINISTRY TEAM MEMBERS

Team Member Requirements:

(Please see pages and forms following in this manual for the requirements for following up contacts to be made and the recording of information gained from these contacts.)

A professing Christian

An attendee of this church for the past six months. Exceptions must be cleared through the pastor.

Involved in an ongoing personal, spiritual growth program, (i.e., daily devotional, Bible reading, prayer and fellowship with other Christians).

Screening Procedure

Candidate reads and signs an Adult/Minor Worker Policy, reviews the Tenets of Faith, and completes an application for Children's/Youth Ministry Worker.

All employees working with children and youth are required to have a criminal background check. It is mandatory that all volunteers working with children or youth also undergo criminal background checks.

Advisory Board chairperson or pastor reviews the application and schedules interview. Minimum 15 minutes in length.

Interview questions (see attached) are asked by Advisory Board members. All applicants are asked the same questions and each Advisory Board member should note responses on the form provided. These forms become part of the applicants' file.

References are checked either by personal interview or phone conversation. In the event of prior criminal convictions regarding a minor, Department of Justice records will be checked for details of the case.

Advisory Board evaluates together after completing "notes" form. (All paperwork becomes part of permanent Children's/Youth Ministry Worker file.)

Recommendations: Flowing from the Evaluation, there are three options

Pass – approved, ready for placement.

Hold – don't place yet, but given time could be a positive addition to a team. (An individual who is put on "hold" can be reconsidered in a designated time, i.e., 3, 6, or 12 months). Attention will be given to the focused concern of the previous "hold" recommendation.

Do Not Pass – indicators* lead the Advisory Board to deny this individual's involvement with the children in a Ministry Team capacity.

The Review Advisory Board is a recommending agent which functions within these stated policies. It provides input for, but not an inflexible mandate to the director of Children's/Youth Ministries, who is vested with the responsibility for and authority to exercise final decisions regarding Children's/Youth Ministries personnel.

Review Advisory Board Membership: Ideally, this Advisory Board should include a member of the pastoral staff, one or more members of the church Advisory Board and the director of children's or youth ministries for the church or other lay leader. Also, the Advisory Board should include members of both genders and members who are not related to each other.

** "Indicators" must be concrete and demonstrable. They may not be a "discerned concern" but something, which could be proven factually*

ADDITIONAL PROCEDURES & CAUTIONS WHICH MAY BE IMPLEMENTED FOR YOUR CHURCH SITUATION

Two Adult Rule: In no event should a single child be left with a single adult unsupervised or in a vehicle without a second adult present.

Six Month rule: Ideally, all workers will have attended the church for at least six months prior to becoming youth/children workers. If this is not possible (i.e., you are a new church plant or do not have workers to choose from), then all of the other recommendations must be followed, including contact with all references.

Adult Family Members as Team Teachers: many churches are employing the “team teacher” approach to satisfy the two adult rule. However, spouses are forbidden from being on the same teaching team as this arrangement increases the risk of sexual molestation/abuse since the spouse will be less likely to report an incident in classes or activities involving minors. Therefore, it is mandatory that the ministry team be composed of members of different families.

Using Minors as Junior Teachers or Helpers: care should be taken when using minors as children’s workers. It is mandatory to always have an adult work in conjunction with the minor worker. The minor must not be accountable to a family member while serving as a children’s worker.

Criminal records check and fingerprinting: Current California Law allows for the fingerprinting and criminal records check of any applicant to be an employee or volunteer wishing to be in any position where he/she would have supervisory, disciplinary power over a minor or any person under his or her care. The Department of Justice shall furnish the information to both the requester and the applicant. In a case in which you cannot confirm references, or where there is a charge pending, trial, or a conviction, you may obtain a criminal record check and fingerprinting. Contact your local law enforcement agency or the Department of Justice for instructions.

Background Check Releases: We require background checks be made on volunteers working with children. This requirement in and of itself serves as a deterrent to potential perpetrators.

POLICY FOR REGISTERED SEX OFFENDERS ATTENDING CHURCH

Purpose:

The Church accepts as central to its mission the establishment and maintenance of a caring environment for every child of God, not least our own children and a place of grace for all sinners, including those whose crimes are public. Knowing that children are at risk, not yet having the ability to protect themselves, we determine to provide protection for them by carefully monitoring any known Registered Sex Offender participating in the life of this congregation.

Knowing that God's grace has been extended to all, that grace invites repentance and that repentance requires acknowledgement of sin, sorrow for sin and a turning away from sin, all with the support and prayers of God's people. We determine to provide a means that a Registered Sex Offender can live in that grace in the life of this congregation. Toward this end we establish the following policy with regard to the presence of Registered Sex Offenders in the life of the congregation.

Policy:

1. Obtain release from offender and contact probation officer for specific information about the offense.
2. *"Participant"* must sign an agreement to adhere to the following requirements for participation in church life:
 - *"Participant"* must be physically accompanied *at all times* by an agreed upon, trustworthy male from the church while on church campus or attending church activities off campus where children may be present
 - *"Participant"* is not permitted to be involved in any children's or youth ministries
 - *"Participant"* is not permitted to be in the education wing, youth lounge, or other areas where children's and youth activities usually take place
 - *"Participant"* must be actively involved in a treatment program with qualified professional until such time that the psychiatrist/psychologist is willing to write a letter to the church stating that the individual no longer benefits from treatment
 - *Should the "Participant"* not comply with the participation requirements, the offender will be asked to discontinue participation in church life on the church campus.
3. Ongoing and full disclosure to staff of *"Participant"*, until such time as is no longer deemed necessary.
4. Contact insurance carrier to provide appropriate information for policy coverage.
5. Reviews of compliance may be conducted periodically at the request of the *"Participant."*

HARASSMENT POLICY

The SoCal Network seeks to promote a productive work environment in which all employees reach their full spiritual and professional potential in ministry service. The SoCal Network strictly prohibits all forms of unlawful harassment, which includes harassment on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, gender identity, sexual orientation, national origin, ancestry, citizenship status, uniform service member status, marital status, pregnancy, age, genetic disposition, protected medical condition, disability or any other category protected by applicable state or federal law.

No form of harassment will be tolerated. The SoCal Network does not tolerate harassment of personnel by co-workers, ministry leaders, or non-employees in the workplace for any reason. The SoCal Network is committed to preventing, investigating, and when appropriate, taking disciplinary and other action in response to incidents of harassment. This policy against harassment applies to all employees and extends to all Network Affiliated Churches. Violation of this policy will subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. Additionally, under California law, employees may be held personally liable for harassing conduct that violates the California Fair Employment and Housing Act.

Definition of Harassment

Harassment is unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct that creates an intimidating, offensive, or hostile working environment or that interferes with work performance. Such conduct constitutes harassment when:

Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment.

Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as the basis for employment decisions affecting such individual.

Such conduct has the purpose or effect of unreasonably interfering with any individual's work performance or creating an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. Harassing conduct can take many forms and includes, without limitation, slurs, jokes, statements, gestures, pictures, or cartoons regarding an employee's age, ancestry, color, marital status, medical condition, mental disability, physical disability, national origin, race, religion or sex. Sexual harassment is harassment based on sex or of a sexual nature; gender harassment; and harassment based on pregnancy, childbirth, or related medical conditions. This includes many forms of offensive behavior, including harassment of a person of the same gender as the harasser. The following is a partial list of types of sexual harassment:

- Unwanted sexual advances
 - Offering employment benefits in exchange for sexual favors
 - Actual or threatened retaliation
 - Leering; making sexual gestures; or displaying sexually suggestive objects, pictures, cartoons, or posters
 - Making or using derogatory comments, epithets, slurs, or jokes
 - Sexual comments including graphic comments about an individual's body; sexually degrading words used to describe an individual; or suggestive or obscene letters, notes, or invitations
 - Physical touching or assault, as well as impeding or blocking movements
- Reporting, Investigation and Discipline Any employee who experiences or becomes aware of harassment of any form in the workplace must report it immediately to his/her ministry leader. If the ministry leader is the alleged harassing party, an employee may report the harassment to the Pastor, Regional Executive Presbyter or Superintendent. Any such harassment will subject an employee to disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination. Any ministry leadership level employee who witnesses harassment or learns of an allegation of harassment and does not report it is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of service.

All allegations of harassment will be promptly investigated in as impartial and confidential manner as possible. The investigation will include obtaining information from whomever the employee believes has been harassing him/her and anyone who may have been a witness to or may have knowledge regarding the alleged harassment. Upon completion of the investigation, the SoCal Network will take any appropriate disciplinary action as is necessary, will communicate the resolution of the matter to the parties involved, and will take any further steps as may be necessary to preclude further harassment. If the harassing conduct is the act of a non-employee, the SoCal Network will undertake whatever action may be feasible to ensure such conduct is not repeated.

The SoCal Network will permit no employment-based retaliation against anyone who brings a bona fide complaint of harassment or who provides true information as a witness in the investigation of a complaint of harassment. However, an individual who makes a false complaint or provides false information to an investigator will be subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination of service.

Any employee found to have violated this policy is subject to disciplinary action, up to and including termination.

BASIC BEHAVIOR BOUNDARIES

The Primary Goal of Children's Ministries is to provide an environment within which the children feel safe and loved and are exposed to the truths about God's love for them as individuals both through the lessons and through our lives.

Boundary setting and options are the domain of the teachers. (Discipline is the parent's domain)

Boundaries

We give NO THREATS.

We do NOT withhold snacks for behavior control.

It is OK for a child to choose not to participate.

It is NOT OK for a child to choose to disrupt the entire class or to hurt or endanger another child.

Do NOT leave the child alone outside the classroom, or in another room.

Do NOT leave the child with just one adult. Follow the two adults rule

Basic Options

There are two basic options to be given to a child who is overtly disrupting the ongoing flow of the class. Please tell the child:

You can choose to participate or not participate (time-out), but you need to choose to be nice and help the class or

You can choose to have me call your parent so that your parent can come and help you.

Note regarding toys from home and items for sharing: A child's personal possessions are a "piece of home." These items are often touchstones of security. It is OK to bring items from home. If they become disruptive or in danger of being broken, tell the child you are putting it up on the shelf to keep it safe until it is time to go home.

Guidelines for Sharing with Parents

Smile! Be gentle and kind – our foremost goal is to bless them.

Say, "May I share something with you about _____ (*child's name*)?" Be discrete. Take the parent aside. Confidentiality and privacy are important to everyone.

Be specific regarding the incidents of concern.

SECTION II: RESPONSE

No prevention policy will be totally effective; however, when a prevention policy is in place and is being adhered to, the church can respond to allegations of sexual misconduct or molestation with a proactive, confident stance. Bear in mind the following:

Whenever there is an allegation of sexual misconduct or abuse, the allegation must be taken seriously. Any report mandated by California Penal Code Section 11166 must be made.

Each situation must be handled straightforwardly and with respect for privacy and confidentiality.

IMMEDIATELY contact the SoCal Network Office, and the insurance carrier for Network Affiliated Churches. Follow the advice given by your insurance carrier.

Pastors ARE Mandatory Reporters in the State of California

Give total cooperation to civil authorities under guidance of your attorney (or the Network Office's attorney).

Direct care and loving concern toward the victim and his/her family.

Do not make any statements which would indicate that you hold the victim responsible in any way.

PLAN YOUR RESPONSE IN ADVANCE

Don't be Caught By Surprise

If you have been adhering to your prevention policy, you should have adequate records, applications, references and screening forms. These should be up-to-date and within easy reach.

Begin by having a reporting procedure in place for all of your children's and youth programs. A standard form should be used, and each worker/leader should clearly know to whom they should report.

Then select a spokesperson for your church. The spokesperson should be the only one from the church to speak to the media and should be the one who reports information to the congregation tactfully and diplomatically. This person should not express bias toward either the alleged victim or the accused. All requests for information should be directed to the spokesman. The rationale for this is that an unprepared pastor, staff member or Advisory Board member may inadvertently give out conflicting or contradictory statements which may do more damage than good.

Have a working knowledge of the state and county requirements for reporting. Your local Department of Youth and Family Services, SoCal Network AG attorney's office, or local law enforcement agencies will be a good resource for you.

Prepare a written position statement of your church regarding sexual misconduct/abuse with minors (see the sample in this manual). This statement should be available at all times and in the event of allegations, should be released to the public, only after consultation with and approval from the SoCal Network Office. According to Richard Hammar, releasing a position statement is "far superior to making no comment. This is your opportunity to influence public opinion positively by emphasizing your awareness of the problem of child abuse, your concern for victims, and the extensive steps your church has taken to reduce the risk and provide a safe environment for children...Describe all the precautions you have taken, and the policies you have implemented. This is not the time for silence or 'no comment.' Do not surrender the bully pulpit to those who will criticize and condemn you."²

DO NOT respond to allegations by denying that the incident occurred (that is a court decision); minimizing the incident (every incident of sexual misconduct or abuse is serious and should be acknowledged as such); nor place any blame on the victim or the victim's family.

Responses like these are inappropriate, unhelpful and to be avoided.

Use an attorney. If your church does not have an attorney, contact your SoCal Network Office or insurance carrier for appropriate referrals. Always have your attorney present when being questioned by law enforcement or social services agencies.

Accuse neither the alleged victim, his/her family, nor the accused in any public interview. The church must respond with love and concern.

Until the investigation is complete, charges made and a conviction or acquittal delivered, both the alleged victim and the accused deserve and should receive the prayers and concern of the body of believers.

Always work closely with the SoCal Network Office and your Insurance Carrier.

Now that you have everything in place and know how to respond, follow these guidelines in case an actual incident occurs. Follow these instructions in the order given so that you have the benefit of the SoCal Network Office's support and your attorney's advice prior to responding publicly. Consider an allegation and your responses to be an emergency – the longer you wait to respond correctly, the more likely the damage to your church. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES SHOULD YOU CONFRONT THE ACCUSED UNTIL YOU HAVE COMPLETED STEPS 1-4.**

- 1) Document everything from the moment you are informed of a report of sexual molestation or misconduct. Keep record of all phone calls. Record to whom you spoke, when you spoke to them and what they said. Keep all copies of correspondence regarding the report together with all other documents.
- 2) Contact the SoCal Network Office immediately. If the report is on a weekend, contact a SoCal Network official, your Regional Executive Presbyter, or Executive Regional Executive Presbyter at home. Contact your insurance carrier. Contact your attorney. Do not proceed without outside professional assistance from your attorney, the SoCal Network Office or your insurance carrier. Do not try to handle it as an internal problem, or as a spiritual problem.
- 3) Contact the proper civil authorities following the guidance of your insurance company and attorney. Once your "reporting form" is complete, do not conduct an in-depth investigation. This should be left to law enforcement, your attorney and insurance company.
- 4) Notify the parents. Be careful to follow your attorney's or insurance company's advice at this time.

Do not confront the accused until you know that the child or youth member is safe and in a secure environment.

The care and safety of the alleged victim is priority. Extend whatever pastoral resources are needed. Be supportive of the alleged victim's family and let them know that you care. Do not make a judgment on the situation as to anyone's guilt or innocence. Leave that to the legal authorities. By remaining caring and concerned, you generate good will. Lack of support and/or a negative reaction can increase the alleged victim's anger and hurt, and make reconciliation more difficult and litigation more likely.

The accused should be treated with love, care and dignity. If the accused is a pastoral staff member or church employee, he/she should be temporarily relieved of his/her duties until the investigation has been completed. If the accused holds a compensated position, arrangements should be made to maintain his/her income if possible until allegations are cleared. If this is not possible, arrangements should be made to suspend the accused's income, with restoration of the income when allegations are cleared.

Use the pre-written text of your church's position on sexual misconduct and abuse to answer the press and convey information to the congregation. This should be done by the designated spokesperson. Do not engage in speculation, bias, or accusation. Confidentiality and privacy of all involved should be safeguarded at all times.

PUBLIC POLICY STATEMENT

This is a SAMPLE Policy Statement which has been drafted for use by Network Affiliated Churches. This Policy Statement should be released to the public in the event of allegations of sexual misconduct or abuse of a minor by any church employee or volunteer. No other information should be released to the media or congregation without the advice of your attorney and/or insurance carrier.

We believe that our children are a precious resource which must be safeguarded. We seek to give our children every opportunity to reach their full potential. Physical and sexual abuse jeopardizes that potential and steals away the innocence of childhood.

Our church takes very seriously the safety and protection of all children and adults who participate in our church programs and activities. To minimize the risk to children and youth of sexual misconduct or abuse during church sponsored activities we have set the following policies and procedures in place:

We screen all paid employees, including clergy, and all volunteer workers who work with youth or children. No adult who has been previously convicted of child molestation or abuse is allowed to work with your children.

We check references on all paid employees and all volunteers working with youth or children.

We train all of our staff who work with children or youth, both paid and volunteer to understand the nature of child sexual abuse

We train all of our staff who work with children or youth, both paid and volunteer, to carry out our policies to prevent sexual abuse.

We take our policies to prevent sexual abuse seriously and see that they are enforced. We recognize that child physical and sexual abuses are criminal actions which we do not tolerate.

We train our staff to understand state law concerning child abuse reporting obligations.

We have a clearly defined reporting procedure for a suspected incident of abuse.

We offer pastoral counsel to victims of sexual abuse or misconduct and their family members.

INTERNAL CONTROLS

Internal Controls are the processes and procedures put in place to manage finances and property. They will help to ensure the church is conducting business in an efficient and effective manner and bring consistency and structure to the financial process.

Strong internal controls will help:

- Safeguard church resources.

- Identify and reduce errors.

- Discourage and identify fraud and theft.

- Provide accurate financial information.

- Ensure that church resources are used as they were intended.

- Ensure that the church and church staff maintain high integrity and remain above reproach.

- Protect the Pastor.

Why are Internal Controls needed?

God desires attention to the financial arena as evidenced by the hundreds of Scriptures relating to the good stewardship of money and finances. This is why your church needs to be proactive in managing the resources God has entrusted to it. The best way to achieve this is to understand and implement effective internal controls.

Non-existent or poor internal controls is damaging to the church in many ways. The reality is that many churches suffer from some, if not all, of these situations:

- Financial decisions made based on weak and inaccurate information.

- Churches unexpectedly are unable to pay their bills.

- Errors being made that go undiscovered and uncorrected.

- Churches are vulnerable to fraud and theft.

- Churches losing their tax-exempt status.

An important factor in being able to make the right decisions is the presence of accurate and reliable financial information. Even the most detailed person can make errors. Strong and adequate internal controls will reduce errors and produce accurate and reliable information.

What roles are necessary?

The key to maintaining an effective internal control process is the creation of a system of checks and balances. Different people within your church should perform each of the positions listed below. This separation of duties will maintain the integrity of the system.

Treasurer (appointed as set forth above): Responsible for managing the entire financial process and insisting that all procedures are being consistently followed.

Business Manager: Responsible for paying authorized bills and keeping the accounting records up to date; reports directly to the Treasurer.

Bookkeeper: Responsible for preparing the bank deposit, agreeing the *Usher/Counter Offering Reports* to the bank deposit, updating the donor contribution records and reporting the deposit totals to the Treasurer and Business Manager. This role cannot be combined with the Business Manager.

Ushers: Responsible for collecting and counting contributions. They submit their *Usher/Counter Offering Reports* directly to the Bookkeeper. The Treasurer or Business Manager cannot perform the position of Usher.

Group/Ministry Leaders: Responsible for collecting and counting contributions within their ministry. They submit their *Usher/Counter Offering Reports* directly to the Bookkeeper.

*****NOTE REGARDING MINISTRY POSITIONS*****

We understand that some churches may have limited staff and/or volunteers available. The internal control procedures and job functions referred to above can be customized without losing critical controls. For information on creating customized internal controls for your church, please call the SoCal Network AG. We can tailor this program to fit your specific situation.

*SIGNING OR INITIALING ANY DOCUMENT INDICATES YOU HAVE REVIEWED IT
AND APPROVE OF IT.*

Incoming Funds

Ushers

There must be more than one usher during the collection and recording process to ensure all donations arrive securely and are accurately counted. Multiple family members cannot be in the same Usher rotation and the members of the Usher teams should be rotated regularly. *Ushers cannot honor any requests to make change or cash checks.* Once the contributions are collected, the ushers take them to a secure room for counting. Each usher separately counts the contributions. The usher team completes an *Usher/Counter Offering Report* and each usher signs or initials the report. It accounts for the total amount of incoming donations, broken down between cash and checks. This report is a permanent document and must be completed in ink. The head usher then places the contributions and contribution envelopes into the church safe or lockbox.

Groups and Ministries

The fundraising/contributions collected are the responsibility of the individual(s) leading the small group or ministry. The contributions are to be kept in a secure location until the function has ended. The Leader then counts the contributions and completes the *Usher/Counter Offering Report*, in ink. It is preferable (although it might not be possible) to have two people involved in the counting and report preparation. The contributions and report are to be given to the Bookkeeper immediately following the function.

Bookkeeper

The Bookkeeper gets the *Usher/Counter Offering Report*, the contributions and the contribution envelopes from the secure location. The money is counted and verified to the total of each *Usher/Counter Offering Report*. Any discrepancies must be immediately investigated with the signors of the report. The donor information from the contribution envelopes is entered into the church's contribution tracking program. The Bookkeeper completes the *Cash Receipts Spreadsheet* (See Appendix A), which reports the detail of the funds comprising the total deposit. For example, if the total deposit consists of \$200, (\$150 of tithes, \$25 for missions and \$25 for children's ministry), these details are reported on the *Cash Receipts Spreadsheet*. Two copies of the spreadsheet are made; one is attached to the *Usher/Counter Offering Report*, one is given to the Treasurer and the original is kept in a chronological file. At a minimum, this process should be performed weekly.

The Bookkeeper completes the deposit slip and deposits the funds into the bank. The deposit receipt is attached to the *Usher/Counter Offering Report*. The completed deposit package contains: The *Usher/Counter Offering Report*, the *Cash Receipts Spreadsheet*, and the deposit receipt. The completed deposit package is submitted to the Business Manager.

Business Manager

The Business Manager verifies the deposit receipt to the *Usher/Counter Offering Report* and the *Cash Receipts Spreadsheet* and enters the deposit into the church's accounting records. Accounting procedures are explained in more detail elsewhere in the Master Manual. During the bank reconciliation process, the Business Manager will verify that the bank properly recorded the deposit.

Outgoing Funds

General Expenses

The Advisory Board of the Church must approve **all** expenses **before** they are incurred. As an alternative to having the Advisory Board approve every expense, the Advisory Board drafts and approves a budget. The Advisory Board must approve any expenses that exceed budgeted amounts or preset individual dollar limitations. ***We cannot stress enough the importance of an accurate and detailed annual budget.***

Recurring Bills

In order to avoid the repetitive approval of ongoing bills such as utilities or mortgage payments, the Advisory Board creates and adopts an annual budget. The Business Manager places them on an 'Approved Monthly Bill' report and reviews the charges monthly to make sure they are reasonable and consistent. The Treasurer should also periodically review the bills.

Purchases Made by Charge or Church Account

A *Purchase Requisition* must be submitted to the Treasurer for approval. Permission for purchases can only be granted by the Treasurer (as evidenced by initials or signature on the *Purchase Requisition*). If the request is not in conformity with the annual budget, the request must be adopted by the Advisory Board and reflected in the minutes of the Advisory Board meeting.

Upon receipt of the order (or purchase), the purchaser verifies the quantity and items ordered have been received by initialing the packing slip or sales receipt. The packing slip is attached to the *Purchase Requisition* and is presented to the Treasurer. The Treasurer verifies all documents have been properly approved. If this was a "charge" order, the Treasurer matches the *Purchase Requisition* to the invoice. The invoice is now ready to be paid and is submitted to the Business Manager.

Reimbursements for Purchases Made With Cash

In addition to the above procedures, the person requesting reimbursement must complete a *Reimbursement Request*, provide the original receipt, and submit it to the Treasurer for approval. No reimbursement will be approved without the original receipt. The completed *Reimbursement Request* is given to the Business Manager for payment.

Other Bills

Upon receipt of invoices that do not fall into the categories referred to above, the Business Manager will forward the original to the Treasurer for approval and retain a copy in a file waiting for approval. This file should be reviewed periodically to make sure no invoices go delinquent. When the approved invoice is received, the copy can be destroyed and the invoice paid.

Credit Card Transactions

Credit cards should always be kept in a secure location. Refer to the instructions above under Purchases Made by Charge or Church Account for any and all purchases made by credit card. The Business Manager will reconcile all credit card receipts to the credit card statement, report any discrepancies to the Treasurer and provide the statement with all of the receipts attached to the Treasurer for approval.

Only purchases authorized for church use can be made with church credit cards. Individuals may not use the cards to purchase personal items even if their intent is to reimburse the church. Individual purchases must be made with personal funds. Due to the ease at which abusive use of credit cards can occur, it is recommended that the church limit access to and use of the cards.

Issuing Checks Without an Invoice

Circumstances may arise where a check needs to be issued without an associated invoice, for example, benevolence, missionaries and honorariums. A *Check Request* must be completed and submitted to the Treasurer with proper approval.

Drafting Checks

The Business Manager drafts the checks for all approved expenditures. The check, along with the approved paperwork is provided to two authorized signors who take the time to verify all paperwork has been properly authorized **before** initialing the invoice and signing the check. The paperwork is returned to the Business Manager where it is marked 'PAID' and filed. The check is delivered to its intended recipient. The Business Manager should not handle the checks once both signatures are obtained.

The Internal Revenue Service has specific filing requirements regarding payments made to individuals by the church. It is the Treasurer's responsibility to make sure the church is in compliance.

Authorized Check Signors

Authorized signors must be the Treasurer plus those approved by the Advisory Board. Every check signor must be satisfied that the entire approval process has been followed prior to signing the check. All checks require two signatures. One signatory must be outside the authorization and approval process. The Business Manager CANNOT be a signatory.

Petty Cash

A designated amount of money is kept in a locked box for 'emergency' type expenditures. Receipts need to be placed in the lock box when petty cash is spent. If no receipt is given, a *Petty Cash Receipt* must be completed. In order to replenish Petty Cash, the Business Manager completes the *Petty Cash Reconciliation*. The form is provided to the Treasurer for approval. A check is made payable to Petty Cash and the Bookkeeper or the Business Manager cashes the check and replenishes the Petty Cash Fund.

Items Donated for Giving Credit

If a person does not wish to be reimbursed, a *Donated Items* form must be completed. The *Donated Items* form with the **original** receipt attached is submitted to the Treasurer for approval. The approved form is sent to the Bookkeeper to be input into the contribution tracking program. A copy of the form is sent to the Business Manager to be input into the accounting program.

If the individual is donating property that does not have a receipt (for example a used table, lawn mower, etc.), the church will issue a standard *Item Donation Letter*. The letter is to be approved and signed by the Treasurer. In order to be compliant with Internal Revenue Service regulations, the letter must state that no goods or services were exchanged for this donation. The church **will not** estimate the value of the donated property. It is the responsibility of the donor for the estimation of the fair market value for tax purposes.

Any gift that is estimated to be above \$5,000 in value falls under very specific Internal Revenue Service rules. It is imperative that the church gives account for these donations after consultation with recognized experts in this field.

General Comments

Bank Statements

Bank statements are delivered UNOPENED to the Treasurer for review. The Treasurer will review all cancelled checks to verify the signatures are authentic and the payees familiar. The statements should be reviewed for unusual items, debits or charges. The Treasurer initials the statements and delivers them to the Business Manager for reconciliation.

Control Oversight

Independent oversight provides the church with assurance that the internal controls are being followed, are adequate, and are achieving the desired results. Periodically the entire financial package is to be reviewed by an independent finance or audit committee made up of people not associated with the day-to-day financial activities of the church. The review would consist of examining selected documents and verifying procedural steps.

Fund Transfers

FUND TRANSFERS IN AND OUT OF THE CHURCH ACCOUNTS ARE NOT ALLOWED.

The church bank accounts should be blocked to prevent account transfers.

Electronic Payments

Electronic payments can pose a weakness in internal controls. However, if the recurring bills referred to above were set up as electronic payments, the controls would not be compromised.

ATM Cards

THE CHURCH SHOULD NEVER HAVE ATM OR CHECK CARDS.

New Bank Accounts and/or Credit Accounts

Bank accounts are to be opened only with the approval of the Advisory Board. Credit accounts and long-term debts are only to be opened upon approval the Advisory Board and a majority of the members of the church as approved by SoCal Network AG. The SoCal Network Executive Presbytery must approve all debt in excess of \$1,000. All church accounts are to be opened only under the official corporate name and ownership of the church. **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCES ARE CHURCH BANK OR CHARGE ACCOUNTS TO BE CO-OWNED BY OR CONNECTED TO AN INDIVIDUAL IN ANY WAY.**

Payroll

The process of internal controls regarding payroll has not been addressed in this manual. If your church has questions regarding payroll, please contact us.

APPENDICES

In the pages to follow are forms to be copied for the use of the Network Affiliated Church Leadership Team. They can also be found on the www.socalnetwork.org website, under the Departments Tab, Network Affiliated Churches.

APPLICATION FOR CHILDREN/YOUTH WORK

CONFIDENTIAL

Full Name _____ Date _____

This application is to be completed by all applicants for any position (volunteer or compensated) involving the supervision or custody of minors. It is being used to help the church provide a safe and secure environment for those children and youth who participate in our programs and use our facilities. This information is confidential, is to be used only by authorized staff, and is to be kept in a locked file.

PERSONAL:

Present address: _____

Phone Home () _____ Work () _____

EMPLOYEE ONLY:

Are you over the age 18? ___yes___no

VOLUNTEER ONLY: applicants for a compensated position should not answer this question.

Age _____ Marital status: ___Married___Single___Separated___Divorced___Widowed
___Engaged

What type of children/youth work do you prefer or are applying for? _____

What date would you be available? _____

Minimum length of commitment? _____

Are you willing to commit to orientation, training and supervision? ___yes___no

Do you have a driver's license? ___yes___no

If yes, please list your driver's license number and the state which issued it: _____

Are you applying to drive a church vehicle? ___yes___no

If yes, you must be interviewed and trained by a church staff member and provide a DMV report prior to operating a vehicle.

Do you have any special license or endorsement? (Class B, C, etc.) _____

Have you ever been convicted of a traffic offense? ___yes___no If yes, please describe all convictions for the past 5 years. _____

Do you use tobacco? ___yes___no

Drink alcoholic beverages? ___yes___no

Use non-prescription drugs? ___yes___no

Have you any physical disabilities or conditions preventing you from performing certain types of activities relating to youth or children's work? yes no

If yes, please explain: _____

Have you ever been convicted of child abuse or a crime involving actual or attempted sexual molestation of a minor? yes no If yes, please explain: _____

Are currently released on bail or on your own recognizance pending trial for any such offense yes no

If yes, please explain: _____

Have you read the adult/minor worker policy for our church and our Tenets of Faith? yes no

Are you in agreement with this policy? yes no

If no, why? _____

Are you in agreement with our Tenets of Faith? yes no

If no, why? _____

CHURCH ACTIVITY

Are you a Christian? yes no When saved? _____

Baptized in the Holy Spirit? (Acts 2:4) _____

Name of church you attend _____

How long have you attended this church? _____

Are you a voting member of the above church? yes no

List other churches you have attended regularly during the past five years (name and address or phone number): _____

Person to contact at former church: _____

List all previous involvement with church youth groups, children's programs, or other youth organizations. Identify church/organization, and type of work: _____

List any gifts, callings, training, education, or other factors that have prepared you for children/youth work:

PERSONAL CHURCH ATTENDANCE PATTERN

(Circle one in each category or n/a if not applicable)

Sunday A.M. Worship

25% 25-50% 50-75% 75%+ n/a

Midweek Bible Study or activity

25% 25-50% 50-75% 75%+ n/a

Cell groups (Fellowship/prayer)

25% 25-50% 50-75% 75%+ n/a

PERSONAL REFERENCES

(Not former employers or relatives)

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Staff or elders of the church who know you:

Name _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Name _____
Address _____
Telephone _____

APPLICANT'S STATEMENT

I certify that the information contained in this application is correct to the best of my knowledge.
I authorize _____ (Pastor, church, review Board) to investigate any matters contained in this application. I hereby authorize any reference or church listed in this application to release any information (including opinions) that they may have regarding my character and fitness for children/youth work, and release all such references from liability for any damage that may result from furnishing such evaluations to you. I waive any right that I may have to inspect references provided on my behalf.

I, _____, hereby authorize this church to investigate my background and qualifications for purposes of evaluating whether I am qualified for the position for which I am applying. I understand that this church will utilize an outside firm or firms to assist it in checking such information, and I specifically authorize such an investigation by information services and outside entities of the company's choice. I also understand that I may withhold my permission and that in such a case, no investigation will be done, and my application for employment will not be processed further.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Witness _____ Date _____

Should my application be accepted, I agree to be bound by SoCal Network AG Bylaws and the policies of this church, and refrain from unscriptural conduct in the performance of my services on behalf of this church.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

ADULT/MINOR WORKER POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Requirements:

Each person working in any child/youth program or activity must have a completed Application for Children/Youth Work on file with the ministerial staff, and must have completed the interview process with the review Advisory Board.

Each leader/worker must be familiar with our adult/minor policy.

I. General Policy Involving Church Adult/Minor Child

Each adult/minor involvement must include at minimum three persons: two adults/one minor. When using two adults, they will be from different families.

Use a "buddy system" for children at all times. Pair up children at the beginning of each program or activity for trips to the restroom, etc.

Teach minor child to notify adult leader as to whereabouts if separated from group/class. Child must acknowledge his return to same adult.

Adult/child involvement. There should be no spanking, swatting, hitting, or any physical contact with private parts of any child or adult. Discipline MUST follow the disciplinary guidelines set forth in this policy.

Parents should be notified as soon as possible of any accident, illness, physical distress or emotional trauma of their minor child.

Any reported parental complaints about suspected or alleged mistreatment/abuse of their child should be reported to the pastoral staff and review Advisory Board. Use the reporting mechanism set forth in the policy.

There should be no administration of any medication or remedies without current (within three months) written parental authorization on file.

There should be no photography or audio taping of any minor without pastoral authorization.

II. On Premises Policy

Child is to use restroom in immediate area of class/group.

Buddy system for restroom needs.

Do not set a child outside room by himself for disciplinary action, or otherwise leave a child alone and without supervision.

III. Off Premises Activities/Vehicles

All activities must be approved by the pastoral staff

All Rick Prevention policies shall govern all activities, including transportation

Parent permission slips for each individual activity must be signed for each participant and kept with the leader.

Transportation other than with church vehicles requires written permission of the parent and evidence of appropriate insurance on the vehicle. The driver must be over the age of 25 years.

Each vehicle must contain at least three persons (2 adult rule).

IV. Child Abuse Policy

It is our intent to follow State regulations in the reporting of child abuse. If you suspect that a child is being physically abused, sexually abused, or harmfully neglected, please report your concern to the pastoral staff. Pastoral staff will be responsible for complying with the State regulations. In addition, if our State requires volunteers or employees to report incidents personally, we will assist you in contacting the appropriate agency.

In cases where reporting is deemed necessary, our pastoral staff will work closely with the family and any of the helping agencies involved. Our desire is to provide protection for the children, and support for the family.

Any suspected or alleged child abuse (physical, sexual, or neglect) by staff or volunteers can result in temporary removal from work/ministry pending the outcome of an investigation.

V. Discipline

We believe that our staff and volunteers must “train up a child in the way he should go” with love and caring concern. It is not our position to mete out punishment. Discipline is the parents’ domain. Our domain is to set boundaries and offer options by training, teaching and demonstrating acceptable behavior.

We never use corporal punishment (i.e. spanking, slapping, etc.), and we never discipline by humiliation (placing the child before the class as a “dunce” or other public reference to his/her misbehavior).

All children shall be disciplined in the same manner.

Incidents requiring discipline shall be responded to by offering the child a second chance.

If the child continues to disrupt the class, respond by giving the child a “time-out” away from the activity in progress. Please note, however that the child should never be placed in a room alone, or with only one other adult. If there are not two adults available to oversee the time-out in another area, the child should remain in the classroom.

If it is not feasible to have the child in time-out (i.e. additional adults not available, child is too disruptive, etc.) the child’s parents should be contacted and asked to come and get their child.

Additional guidelines may be found in the Basic Behavior Boundaries for Children and for Youth.

VI. Accountability of Worker for Work Activity with Children/Youth

Worker must have prior approval from the pastoral staff and review Advisory Board.

Worker must register each time they are involved in a classroom or outgoing activity.

Preschool department: Staff worker must adhere to policy of parent/guardians leaving minors under church responsibility. A sign-in sheet is required. No child may be picked up without parent/guardian signature. This pertains to activities on or off premises.

I have read each provision stated in the Adult/Minor Worker Policy concerning adult/child involvement, and I understand and agree with each provision:

Signature _____

Date _____

One copy to be signed and returned; the other kept for your information.

REVIEW ADVISORY BOARD QUESTIONS

CONFIDENTIAL

Each applicant must be asked the same questions (even if you think you know the answer) so that the review is as objective as possible. Please realize that this is for the protection of both the applicant and members of the review Advisory Board. Each member of the review Advisory Board will make notes on the Review Advisory Board Response form. These forms will become part of the applicant's file.

Name of Interviewer (please print) _____

Interview was conducted on (date) _____ by (phone or personal) _____

Subject of Interview _____

Describe briefly how you came to give your life to Jesus. Who do you say Jesus is? Who is Jesus to you?

Have you received the baptism into the Holy Spirit and have spoken in tongues as an evidence of that baptism?

Could you share with us why want to work with and minister to our children/youth?

What are your strong points, gifts, and/or what do you love to do? What do you have to offer our children/youth?

What is your spiritual "growing edge?" What is God teaching you right now in your life? How do you feel about your prayer life, Bible reading, church attendance and using your gifts?

What would you desire the children to glean from you?

Describe any fears or concerns you have about teaching children or youth.

James 3:1 says “Not many of you should presume to be teachers, my brothers, because you know that we who teach will be judged more strictly.” We would be interested in knowing how you feel about having an accountability that is as high as that of pastor.

As you know, each classroom is monitored by Ministry Team personnel. How would you feel about having someone drop in to the classroom without warning? How would you feel about the classroom being monitored by video camera?

What else would you like us to know about you?

How do you feel about this interview process?

Signed (interviewer) _____ Date _____

REFERENCE RECORD INSTRUCTIONS

CONFIDENTIAL

This a record of contact made with a reference, church or organization identified by an applicant for youth or children's/youth work. All information is to be kept confidential and is to be used for determination of suitability for children's/youth work only. It is extremely important that the date, time and person spoken to be noted. Also, the person taking the reference should be clearly indicated.

Name of applicant _____

Reference or church contacted _____

(If a church or youth organization, identify both the organization and minister/staff person contacted)

Date _____ Time _____

Method of contact _____

(e.g. telephone, letter, personal conversation)

Summary of conversation (summarize the reference's or minister's remarks concerning the applicant's fitness and suitability for youth or children's work _____

Do you consider him/her to be a Christian believer? How do you know? _____

Does he/she verbalize and demonstrate in life a commitment to the Lord? ___yes___no. How do you know?

Examples? _____

What strength have you observed in this person that would cause you to believe that he/she would be an effective minister to children? _____

Have you observed any weaknesses which would indicate that this person would be unsuitable as a minister to children? _____

Is there any reason why you wouldn't have him/her as a volunteer in ministry or a staff position in your organization? ___yes___no If no, why? _____

Have you ever known him/her to work or have ministry with children? ___yes___no In what capacity? For how long? How did he/she perform? _____

Does he/she respond to training? ___yes___no ___not sure

What areas of training would you recommend for him/her? _____

Are you aware of any conduct on the part of the applicant that would indicate that the applicant would be unsuitable for ministry to children? ___yes___no

Explain: _____

Have you ever reported this person for child abuse or sexual misconduct with a minor? yes no

Please explain. Were there any witnesses? _____

What was the outcome? _____

Have you any knowledge he/she has been reported for child abuse or sexual misconduct with a minor?

yes no

Summary of other comments:

Name of Review Board Member making reference contact:

Signature_____Date_____

INDIVIDUAL RELEASE AND HOLD-HARMLESS AGREEMENT

I understand that participation in the _____ which is sponsored
(Describe Activity)

by the _____, and is to be held on _____
(Church Group) (Date)

involves a certain degree of risk that could result in injury, death or loss or damage to person or property. After carefully considering the risk involved, and in view of the fact that the church is a not-for-profit organization, I hereby release, hold-harmless and waive all claims associated with this activity which I may have against this church, it's employees, officers, directors, agents, volunteers and members.

Name of Participant (please print): _____

Signature (if 18 and over): _____ Date: _____

If participant is under 18 years of age, this release must be signed by a parent or guardian.

Name of Parent/Guardian (please print): _____

Phone _____

Signed Parent/Guardian: _____ Date: _____

PARENTAL CONSENT FOR MEDICAL CARE FOR MINORS

California Family Code 6900 et seq. states that unless a specific exception applies, a minor's guardian or parent must consent to medical care. The exceptions include pregnancy and contraception-related services, STI/STD/HIV testing and treatment, drug and alcohol abuse treatment, outpatient mental health services and sexual assault-related services.

IN CALIFORNIA, MINORS ARE INDIVIDUALS UNDER 18 YEARS OF AGE.

If your minor son or daughter will participate in church activities, you are to complete and return medical treatment form below.

Minor's Name (printed) _____ Date of Birth _____

I hereby authorize (church) _____ to provide to my minor son or daughter any diagnostic tests or treatment that is deemed advisable, and is to be provided by any medical practitioner/or facilities as needed. This authorization is given in advance of any specific diagnosis or treatment that may be required.

The undersigned parent/guardian of _____, a minor (less than age 18), authorizes _____, as agent for the undersigned, to consent to any diagnostic tests or treatment that is deemed advisable, and is to be provided by any medical practitioner or facilities as needed. This authorization is given in advance of any specific diagnosis or treatment that may be required.

Parent/Guardian Name (print)

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Child's Doctor contact info: _____

FOR CHURCH STAFF USE ONLY

Telephone consent to treat the above-named minor was given by _____

Relationship to student: Parent Legal Guardian

Date _____ Time _____ am/pm # called _____

Signature

Witness signature

REPORT OF INCIDENTS OR CONCERNS

This report must be given to the pastor in charge of the activity during which the incident allegedly took place or was first mentioned. If this pastor is not available, or is the one in question, the report should be given to a member of the Youth and Children Worker's Review or Advisory Board. All incidents of suspicious behavior are to be taken seriously and reported.

Name of person reporting: _____

Position: _____

Date of report: _____ Date and Time of Incident: _____

Church Activity (Children's church, Youth Service, Church Picnic, etc.):

Injured party's name: _____

Description of incident, comment or observation of concern: _____

Were there other adult witnesses? Yes No If yes, please list their names:

Any additional concerns or previously reported incident relative to this person: _____

If a minor, were parents/ Guardians notified? ___yes ___ No date/time _____

Is this an incident that requires mandatory reporting to authorities? ___yes ___no

Were authorities notified? ___ yes ___ no Detail: who did the notification, to whom and when: _____

Was medical attention given? ___ Yes ___ No. if so, by whom _____

Was the insurance company notified ___yes ___no Detail: who did the notification, to whom and when:

Signature: _____ date: _____

CLASSROOM/ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Each activity or class for children or youth must have a completed registration form. These forms are to be completed at the beginning of any activity. Any additional comments added at the end, and must be turned into the pastor or staff member in charge of the children/youth program.

Activity or Class: _____

Regular Teacher/ Director: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____ am/pm Location: _____

List of all Adult workers (Staff and Volunteers):

Name	Position
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

List of all adult guests (including parents of children or youth who stay longer than to drop off or pick up child):

_____	_____
_____	_____

List of child/youth participants (or attach a roll sheet):

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Report any incidents which may be of concern: _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____

ADVISORY BOARD NOMINEE APPLICATION

Date: _____

Name: Rev./Mr./Ms. (circle one) _____

Address: _____ City/Zip _____

Home phone _____ Cell _____ Email _____

Official Member of which church (city, name):

1. Will you permit your name to be submitted to the Network Superintendent as a nominee for the position of Advisory Board member at _____ Church? Yes No

2. Do you feel you meet the qualifications for an Advisory Board member as stated in Article VII, Section 2 of the church bylaws? Yes No

3. Do you affirm the TENETS OF FAITH as given in the church bylaws?
 Yes No

a. The Scriptures Inspired

b. One True God

c. The Deity of the Lord Jesus Christ

d. The Fall of Man

e. The Salvation of Man

f. The Ordinances of the Church

1. Baptism in Water

2. Holy Communion

g. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit

h. The Initial Physical Evidence of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit

- i. Sanctification
- j. The Church and its Mission
- k. The Ministry
- l. Divine Healing
- m. The Blessed Hope
- n. The Millennial Reign of Christ
- o. The Final Judgment
- p. The New Heavens and the New Earth

4. Do you believe in and faithfully practice tithing? ___ Yes ___ No
5. If appointed as an Advisory Board member, will you pledge to work harmoniously with the pastor and other members, and will you agree to function in your office with wholehearted submission to the church bylaws? ___ Yes ___ No
6. If appointed, I commit to honoring this as an Assemblies of God church, with all the opportunities, relationships and responsibilities that implies. ___ Yes ___ No

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION FAMILY HISTORY

Spouse's Name: _____

Name(s) and Age(s) of any children living at home: _____

CHRISTIAN BACKGROUND

Date saved: _____

Baptized in the Holy Spirit? Yes ___ Date: _____ Still seeking ___

CHURCH SERVICE

Ministries: _____

Church Offices Held: _____

Length of Membership at current church: _____

WORK EXPERIENCE

AUTHORIZATION FOR BACKGROUND CHECK

(Please read and sign this form in the space provided below. Your written authorization is necessary for completion of the application process.)

I, _____, hereby authorize this church to investigate my background and qualifications for purposes of evaluating whether I am qualified for the position for which I am applying. I understand that this church will utilize an outside firm or firms to assist it in checking such information, and I specifically authorize such an investigation by information services and outside entities of the company's choice. I also understand that I may withhold my permission and that in such a case, no investigation will be done, and my application for employment will not be processed further.

Signature of Nominee _____ Date _____

Signature of Witness _____ Date: _____

NA Church Advisory Board
Confidentiality Agreement & Fiduciary Duties
City, Name of Church
Contact Information

I. Confidentiality of Advisory Board Discussions and Advisory Board Documents

In performing the functions of an Advisory Board, it is necessary for Advisory Board members to acquire information of a confidential, sensitive, financial and/or personal nature, whether it be with regards to the church as a whole, and/or regarding individual members thereof. In order to encourage and foster open and candid discussion at its meetings, and to facilitate transacting appropriate church business, the Advisory Board of this church believes confidentiality must be maintained and sensitive information should not be disclosed to individuals outside of the Advisory Board, except to the extent necessary to transact the actual business of this church, and then only to interested individuals.

Therefore, in agreeing to serve as a member of the Advisory Board of this church, each Advisory Board member and staff member agrees to keep confidential any and all information disclosed, discussed, or learned at its meetings, including, without limitation, any and all documents, financial records, correspondence and reports, unless compelled by legal process to disclose such information, or as otherwise agreed by the Advisory Board. Such non-disclosure does not preclude disclosing actions adopted by the Advisory Board and/or decisions made regarding agenda items, to the extent such results are recorded in the Board Meeting Minutes and/or are required in order to transact this church's business. However, disclosing any information concerning the Advisory Board's discussion and or deliberation of such items is prohibited. Advisory Board members acknowledge that any violation of this policy could cause harm to this church, frustrate Advisory Board deliberations and jeopardize financial and business interests of the church and privacy of its members. Therefore, any Advisory Board member who violates this policy shall be subject to termination of his/her Board position.

II. Fiduciary Duties

As individuals empowered to serve this church and the SoCal Network, Advisory Board Members recognize their roles as fiduciaries who operate in positions of trust and confidence, and are required to demonstrate good faith and candor. As such, in order to ensure compliance with applicable laws and to protect this church, its members, officers, staff, and SoCal Network from potential liability regarding conflicts of interest and violation of fiduciary obligations, Advisory Board members agreed to comply with the following:

- A. **Duty of Loyalty** Advisory Board Members agree to abide by the duty of loyalty generally required of an officer, director, staff member, or committee member of a non-profit organization. This duty of loyalty requires acting in a manner that is in the best interests of the non-profit organization and all its members, rather than personal interests. This includes supporting, and not opposing directly or indirectly or taking any other stance against, the policies and positions duly adopted by this church's Advisory Board or by SoCal Network. As representatives of this church, officers, directors, staff, and committee members are obligated to maintain this duty of loyalty in all manner of activities during their

terms of office. This duty of loyalty is not intended to, nor should it discourage debate within Board or committee meetings. Such debate is encouraged and is part of the individual's responsibility in the deliberation process.

- B. **Corporate Opportunity** Advisory Board members are precluded from seizing a "corporate opportunity" for personal interest. This means that such an individual may not take advantage of a business opportunity in which the officer or Advisory Board member knows this church has a genuine interest and where such an opportunity would be consistent with this church's purposes, mission and goals as a church corporation. Further, if the officer or Advisory Board member becomes aware of such an opportunity, he or she is obliged to disclose such opportunity to this church and allow this church to act first. Upon such full disclosure, if the church declines to act, the member is free to pursue the transaction for his or her own advantage, as long as in so doing, no impermissible private inurement exists.
- C. **Duty of Care** Advisory Board members agree to exercise a duty of care, which means acting with such care, including reasonable inquiry, as is appropriate under the circumstances. The duty to make reasonable inquiry arises only when circumstances indicate that further inquiry is needed. Members may rely on information, opinions, reports, or statements, including financial statements, prepared or presented by officers or employees of the church, the SoCal Network, counsel, independent accountants and other similarly-situated professionals, or committees to which such authority has been appropriately delegated.

III. Conflicts of Interest

Advisory Board members agree to avoid "conflicts of interest" that may arise as a result of self-dealing transactions. Self-dealing transactions are any transactions to which the church is a party and in which one or more of its directors, officers, Advisory Board members and/or staff has a material financial interest, unless the transaction is specifically excluded from coverage by statute, or is otherwise approved or validated in accordance with law. Transactions excluded from the definition of "self-dealing transactions" include the following:

- Actions of the board fixing directors' or officers' compensation;
- Board action making a loan of money or property to, or guaranteeing the obligation of a director or officer;
- Transactions that are part of the church's programs that are approved in good faith and without unjustified favoritism, even if one or more directors or their families benefit as a part of a class of persons intended to benefit from the program; and
- Transactions of which the interested party has no actual knowledge and that do not exceed the lesser of one percent of the gross receipts of the church for the preceding fiscal year, or \$100,000.

A self-dealing transaction may be approved or validated before the transaction is consummated, through compliance with the following procedures:

1. In any transaction involving this church and an officer of this church, Advisory Board member, staff or committee member, any corporation, partnership or other entity in which an individual is an officer, director, staff, or committee member has or expects or intends to have a financial or other beneficial interest, such individual, prior to any discussion or decision concerning the transaction, shall fully disclose to this church's Advisory Board or

the appropriate committee considering the transaction the material facts of the transaction and the individual's interest or relationship.

2. Upon such disclosure, the individual shall take no further part in the meeting during which time the proposal is considered and voted upon.
3. After receiving such disclosure, prior to approving the transaction, the board or committee must conclude that the transaction is for the benefit of the church, is fair and reasonable to the church and furthers the church's purposes. Before authorizing or approving the transaction, the board or committee must consider alternative arrangements and determine that it could not obtain a more advantageous arrangement with reasonable effort from disinterested parties, or that the transaction furthers the church's purposes, even if more advantageous arrangements are otherwise available.
4. Approval of the transaction must be without the participation or the vote of the interested individual.
5. The interested individual's presence at the meeting may be counted in determining whether a quorum of the Advisory Board or committee is present, but that individual shall not vote on the transaction.

IV. Participation in Deliberations and Actions

In any case in which there is a question regarding breach of a duty of loyalty, duty of care, conflict of interest, or corporate opportunity raised, the implicated officer or Advisory Board member shall not participate in the meeting for the entire time the matter is discussed and voted upon.

I have read and understand the above expectations for the position of Advisory Board member of this church and agree to be bound by the Confidentiality Agreement and will abide by these additional duties and obligations.

Signature

Date

NA ADVISORY BOARD MEMBER REPLACEMENT REQUEST

(TO BE COMPLETED BY PASTOR)

Name and address of member leaving the Advisory Board: _____

(if more than one board member is leaving, please list additional names/addresses on the back)

Reason for leaving: _____ Resigned _____ Death _____ Relocation _____ Other
(please explain on reverse)

CONTINUING BOARD MEMBERS

Secretary _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip _____

Phone:(_____) _____ email _____

Treasurer _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip _____

Phone:(_____) _____ email _____

Board Member _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Zip _____

Phone:(_____)_____email _____

Board Member _____

Address:_____

City:_____ Zip_____

Phone:(_____)_____email _____

Board Member _____

Address:_____

City:_____ Zip_____

Phone:(_____)_____email _____

Board Member _____

Address:_____

City:_____ Zip_____

Phone:(_____)_____email _____

Please forward this completed form to your Regional Executive Presbyter or designee.

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING AGENDA

City, Name of Church

Contact Information

Date: _____

Time: _____

REQUIRED AGENDA ITEMS AT EACH MEETING

- I. Scripture and Prayer
- II. Minutes of Prior Advisory Board Meeting (sent to each Advisory Board member and Field Director/Sectional Regional Executive Presbyter prior to the meeting)
- III. Pastor's Report (submitted in writing to Field Director/Sectional Regional Executive Presbyter)
Spiritual Life of the Church
Update progress report on fulfilling goals agreed on in last meeting.
- IV. Secretary's Report (cite attendances as applicable)
Main service(s) attendance _____
Children's ministry(ies) attendance _____
Youth _____
Men _____
Women _____
Alternate services _____
- V. Financial Report (sent to each Advisory Board member and Field Director/Sectional Regional Executive Presbyter prior to the meeting)
Review of Profit and Loss reports
Review of Balance Sheet
Review of Special Funds and balances
Review of all other accounts (e.g. Building, Church Departments, Benevolence, etc.)
- VI. Unfinished Business
 - A.
 - B.
 - C.
- VII. New Business
 - A.
 - B.
 - C. Date for next Advisory Board meeting.
- VIII. Assignments and projects between now and next Advisory Board meeting.
- IX. Adjournment

ADVISORY BOARD MEETING MINUTES

City, Name of Church

Contact Information

- I. Meeting called to order at Date: _____ Time: _____
- II. Minutes of Prior Advisory Board Meeting presented and approved (or amended)
- III. Pastor's Report accepted as presented
- IV. Secretary's Report accepted as presented (or amended)
- V. Financial Report accepted as presented (or amended)
- VI. Unfinished Business
 - A. (Example) Budget for next year presented for review. It was moved and seconded that the budget be adopted as presented. Motion Carried
 - B. (Example) The attached list of 12 names was presented for acceptance as new members of the church. After reviewing each name, it was moved and seconded that the entire list be accepted. Motion Carried.
- VII. New Business
 - A. (Example) The facilities sub-committee presented the results of their annual facilities review. It was noted that the roof is in disrepair and that the Heating-Ventilation/Air Conditioning systems on the roof need replacing. The Advisory Board asked the sub-committee to solicit at least 3 bids for each item to be presented at the next regular Advisory Board meeting.
 - B. (Example) The Youth Ministries Director requested a one-time gift from the General Fund for the purpose of giving scholarships to needy students that they might go to Youth Convention. Motion was made, seconded and after little discussion carried.
- VIII. Action
 - A. (Example) Before next meeting the Treasurer will see that the Youth Director has the funds necessary for Convention and the Facilities sub-committee will receive bids for roofing and HVAC.
- IX. Next Advisory Board Meeting is _____
- X. Adjournment at _____

An original "hard copy" of these minutes signed in ink by the secretary shall be kept in perpetuity at the church office. Each year's copies shall be bound in such a way as to reveal tampering.

_____ Advisory Board Secretary

_____ Regional Executive Presbyter or Designee

Ministry Description: Business Manager

As Business Manager, you have many important roles and hold a vital position in our church. You will be responsible for verifying the accuracy of the reports received from the Bookkeeper, Ushers, and Group Ministry Leaders, paying authorized bills and keeping the accounting records up to date. You will report to and work directly with the Treasurer. Your adherence to the internal controls is a large factor in the success of our church's internal control system as a whole and thus calls for strong character and integrity.

Responsibilities:

You must be familiar with all of the procedures outlined in the Internal Controls Manual.

You must be familiar with the accounting procedures and programs used by the church.

Your signature or initials on any document indicates you have reviewed it and approve of it.

INCOMING FUNDS

- Verify the deposit receipt to the *Usher/Counter Offering Report* and the *Cash Receipts Spreadsheet*. Follow up on any discrepancies with the originator of the report.
- Using the *Cash Receipts Spreadsheet*, enter the deposit into the church's accounting records.
As part of the Bank Reconciliation process, verify that the deposits on our accounting records are properly recorded on the bank statement.

OUTGOING FUNDS

No checks are to be issued until the documents have proper approval (refer to the manual for specifics).

OTHER ISSUES

Bank Statements: Bank statements are delivered UNOPENED to the Treasurer for review. When returned to you, perform the bank reconciliation. Notify the Treasurer of any unusual or large discrepancies.

Petty Cash: You are responsible for maintaining the integrity of Petty Cash. You must be sure to obtain receipts for all petty cash expenditures. The receipts are to be kept in the petty cash box until you reconcile and replenish petty cash. Whenever petty cash is given out and no receipt is available, complete a *Petty Cash Receipt*. In order to replenish Petty Cash, complete the *Petty Cash Reconciliation*). Present the completed form to the Treasurer for approval.

Your signature below indicates you have read and understand the requirements of the position and agree to faithfully execute the requirements to the best of your ability.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Ministry Description: Bookkeeper

You play a vital role in safeguarding the assets of your church. You are responsible for verifying the contributions, depositing them into the bank and updating the donors' contributions record. You have a responsibility for maintaining accurate records as well as the safekeeping of contributions to the church. Your role is very important to our church and calls for strong character and integrity.

YOUR SIGNATURE OR INITIALS ON ANY DOCUMENT INDICATES YOU HAVE REVIEWED IT AND APPROVE OF IT.

You must be familiar with all of the procedures outlined in the Internal Controls Manual.

Weekly Job Functions:

Obtain the *Usher/Counter Offering Reports*, the contributions and the contribution envelopes.

Count the money and verify the total agrees to the total on the *Usher/Counter Offering Reports*.

Immediately investigate any discrepancies with the person who signed the report.

Enter the donor information from the contribution envelopes into your church's contribution-tracking program.

Complete the *Cash Receipts Spreadsheet*.

Make two copies of the spreadsheet. Attach one to the *Usher/Counter Offering Reports*, provide one to the Treasurer and keep the original in a chronological file.

Complete the deposit slip. Attach a copy to the *Usher/Counter Offering Reports*.

Deposit the funds into the bank.

Attach the deposit receipt to the *Usher/Counter Offering Reports*. You now have a completed deposit package.

The completed deposit package contains

The *Usher/Counter Offering Reports*

The *Cash Receipts Spreadsheet*

A copy of the deposit slip

The original deposit receipt

Submit the completed deposit package to the Business Manager.

For all completed *Donated Items* Forms received, enter the donation information into the church contribution-tracking program

Your signature below indicates you have read and understand the requirements of the position and agree to faithfully execute the requirements to the best of your ability.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Ministry Description: Usher

Your role as an Usher is very important to our church and calls for strong character and integrity. Although your responsibilities range from greeting guests, seating attendees and collecting contributions, this job description will focus only on your role in the collection and counting of contributions. You play a vital role in the collection and safeguarding of church donations.

YOUR SIGNATURE OR INITIALS ON ANY DOCUMENT INDICATES YOU HAVE REVIEWED IT AND APPROVE OF IT.

Weekly Job Functions:

- There must always be more than one usher present during the collection and counting process.
- The contributions must be taken to a secure room for counting.
- Each usher must separately count the contributions.
- Complete the *Usher/Counter Offering Report in ink*.
- Each usher must sign or initial the *Usher/Counter Offering Report*.

The head usher places the *Usher/Counter Offering Report* along with the contributions and contribution envelopes into the church safe or lockbox.

Your signature below indicates you have read and understand the requirements of the position and agree to faithfully execute the requirements to the best of your ability.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Ministry Description: Group/Ministry Leaders

Although as a Group and/or Ministry Leader you have many important roles pertaining to the leadership and execution of your ministry, the job description below will focus only on your role in the collection and handling of donations and contributions. Our goal is to maintain a uniform collection and recording process for the safekeeping and accuracy of all donor contributions. Your role as a group or ministry leader is vital to our church and requires strong character and integrity.

YOUR SIGNATURE OR INITIALS ON ANY DOCUMENT INDICATES YOU HAVE REVIEWED IT AND APPROVE OF IT.

Essential Job Functions:

Keep the contributions in a secure location until the function has ended.

Examples of contributions you may receive are:

- Voluntary donations
- Fundraising income
- Sales of food or drinks, etc.

Immediately after the function has ended, count the contributions and complete the *Usher/Counter Offering Report*, in ink. It is preferable (although it might not be possible) to have two people involved in the counting and *Usher/Counter Offering Report* preparation.

Provide the contributions and *Usher/Counter Offering Report* to the Bookkeeper

Your signature below indicates you have read and understand the requirements of the position and agree to faithfully execute the requirements to the best of your ability.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

OFFERING AND ATTENDANCE REPORT

Date: _____

SERVICE ATTENDANCE RECORD:

_____ Main Worship Service _____ Small Groups _____ Mid Week Services
_____ Children's Ministries _____ Youth Services _____ Men's Ministries
_____ Women's Ministries _____ Other

NAMES OF OFFERING COUNTERS:

Name: _____

Name: _____

Offering given to: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

CASH:

DONOR GIVING: Name (from check or envelope)

CURRENCY

\$ 1.00 _____ \$ _____

1. _____ \$ _____

\$ 5.00 _____ \$ _____

2. _____ \$ _____

\$ 10.00 _____ \$ _____

3. _____ \$ _____

\$ 20.00 _____ \$ _____

4. _____ \$ _____

\$ 50.00 _____ \$ _____

5. _____ \$ _____

\$100.00 _____ \$ _____

6. _____ \$ _____

Subtotal A \$ _____

7. _____ \$ _____

8. _____ \$ _____

COIN

9. _____ \$ _____

\$.50 _____ \$ _____

10. _____ \$ _____

\$.25 _____ \$ _____

11. _____ \$ _____

\$.10 _____ \$ _____

12. _____ \$ _____

\$.05 _____ \$ _____

13. _____ \$ _____

\$.01 _____ \$ _____

14. _____ \$ _____

15. _____ \$ _____

Subtotal B \$ _____

Subtotal C \$ _____

TOTAL OFFERING (A+B+C) \$ _____