

## **Proposed Amendments to the Constitution and Bylaws of the World Communion of Reformed Churches**

Key:

Proposed **deletions** from the current Constitution and Bylaws are highlighted in red.

Proposed **additions** are highlighted in yellow.

Any **notations** are highlighted in green (and will not be included in the Constitution or Bylaws).

*NB: copyediting for gramatical clarity/consistency has also taken place but is not noted as it did not substantively change the text.*

**Constitution of the World Communion of Reformed Churches (WCRC)**  
**Family of Reformed and Uniting Churches**

**WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES (WCRC)**  
**THE CONSTITUTION**

**PREAMBLE**

Jesus Christ is the foundation and head of the Christian church.

It is in Christ that the Word became flesh and the gospel is embodied.

It is to God in Christ that the Holy Scriptures, inspired by the Holy Spirit, bear witness.

It is through Christ that God gives abundant life and spiritual vitality to the members of the church in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The churches in **the this** World Communion of Reformed Churches are called together in the name of the one God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Under **the this** sovereign God, with Christ's followers across the globe, **the members of the communion we** belong to the one, holy, catholic and apostolic church.

**ARTICLE I - NAME AND SUCCESSION**

The name of this organization **shall be is the** World Communion of Reformed Churches. The following constitute the name of the organization in French, German and Spanish:

Communione mondiale d'Églises réformées (CMER)

Weltgemeinschaft Reformierter Kirchen (WGRK)

Comunión Mundial de Iglesias Reformadas (CMIR)

**The World Communion of Reformed Churches is an international non-governmental and non-profit organization, registered as a corporation under public law in Germany and as a 501(c)3 corporate entity in the State of Michigan in the United States of America. The membership of the registered entities is the same.**

**As of the Uniting General Council meeting in 2010 the World Communion of Reformed Churches succeeds the Reformed Ecumenical Council and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and its antecedents, as a united ecumenical body for Reformed churches Christians.**

**ARTICLE II – BASIS**

The basis of the World Communion of Reformed Churches **shall be is** the Word of the triune God, incarnate in Jesus Christ and revealed in the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments through the power of the Holy Spirit. It is to this triune God that the church bears witness. The World Communion of Reformed Churches is committed to embody a Reformed

identity as articulated in the historic Reformed confessions and the ecumenical creeds of the early church, in the historic confessions of the Reformation, and as continued in the life and witness of the greater Reformed, United and Uniting community.

### ARTICLE IV III – VALUES

- A. The World Communion of Reformed Churches strives is called to demonstrate and live the oneness in Christ we profess and to carry out its ministry in ways a way that enables all members churches to share their gifts, and to honour and be committed to God's saving purposes for the good of all and for the transformation of the world. The World Communion of Reformed Churches will serves its the members with love and care, encouraging their mutual support and nurture of one another.
- B. The World Communion of Reformed Churches in its order and actions is called to respect, defend and advance the dignity of every person. In Jesus Christ all human differences must lose their power to divide. No one shall be disadvantaged for, among other reasons, race, ethnicity or gender, and no individual or church may claim or exercise dominance over another.
- C. The World Communion of Reformed Churches embraces God's covenant promises for the redemption and restoration and renewal of the whole creation through Jesus Christ of all that God has made. In doing so, it affirms the biblical calling of the members to recognize the gift of baptism in one another, and the call to be unified in ministry, and together a unifying effort in ministry that will bear witness to God's justice and peace and to the integrity of creation.

NOTE: ARTICLES "III-IDENTITY" AND "V-MISSION AND PURPOSES" HAVE BEEN COMBINED INTO A SINGLE ARTICLE WITH ADDITIONAL CHANGES NOTED BELOW:

### ARTICLE IV – VALUES IDENTITY, MISSION AND PURPOSES

- A. Drawing on the heritage of the Reformed confessions, as a gift for the renewal of the whole church, the World Communion of Reformed Churches is a communion of churches through shall foster communion among its member churches by:
1. Affirming the gifts of unity in Christ promoting unity in and among churches through mutual recognition of baptism, membership, pulpit and table fellowship, and ministry and witness;
  2. interpreting Reformed theology for contemporary Christian witness;
  3. encouraging the renewal of Christian Reformed worship and spiritual life within the Reformed tradition;
  4. renewing a commitment to partnership in God's mission, through worship witness, diaconal service and work for justice, so as to foster mission in unity, mission renewal and mission empowerment;
  5. encouraging leadership development and nurture of the covenant community;
  6. engaging other ecumenical organizations and churches of other traditions in the ecumenical movement through dialogue and cooperation in ministry;
  7. expressing unity and solidarity with those minorities living in the context of marginalization and violence, Reformed Churches and movements worldwide.

- B. The World Communion of Reformed Churches shall assist its member churches by:
1. widening and deepening understanding and community among the member churches and helping them to fulfill their own responsibilities in the service of Christ;
  2. facilitating the transformation of the member churches into interdependent missional communities that support, empower and challenge each other as partners in the one mission of God;
  3. promoting the full and just participation of all members, of all ages, in all aspects of the church's life and its public witness;
  4. promoting the full and just partnership of women and men in church and society;
  5. encouraging and promoting diaconal service in the church;
  6. expressing unity and solidarity with those of its members who are persecuted or marginalized.
- C. The World Communion of Reformed Churches shall **also** contribute to the ecumenical movement and the transformation of the world by:
1. promoting economic and ecological justice, global peace and reconciliation in the world;
  2. promoting and defending religious, civil and all other human rights wherever threatened throughout the world;
  3. encouraging and promoting relief and sustainable development in the world and focusing on the eradication of poverty;
  4. providing Reformed perspectives on church unity.

## ARTICLE VI – MEMBERSHIP

### Composition

1. A. All current member churches of the Reformed Ecumenical Council and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches shall be members of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. A church that is under suspension in either preceding body at the time of the formation shall remain under suspension in the World Communion of Reformed Churches.  
**Other** Churches of the Reformed, Presbyterian, Congregational, Waldensian, other First Reformation, United and Uniting traditions are eligible for membership, if such a church affirms this constitution.
- B. Member churches are expected to join in achieving the **Aims Mission** and Purposes of the World Communion of Reformed Churches by, among other things, participating in meetings, **financially supporting its existence**, taking seriously its actions and decisions and engaging in its collective work.
- C. Fellowships **and associations** of churches that affirm a Reformed identity and include in their membership World Communion of Reformed Churches' members are eligible for associate membership. Such associate members shall share in the fellowship and programs of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, participate on a reciprocal basis without a vote in governance, and thereby strengthen the broader Reformed family's participation in the church ecumenical.
- D. An institution established by one or more member churches or whose faith basis and operation are in agreement with that of the historic Reformed confessions are eligible for affiliate membership, without voting privileges.

- E. Membership in the World Communion of Reformed Churches does not limit the autonomy of any member church or restrict its relationships with other churches or with other ecumenical organizations.
- F. Members in the World Communion of Reformed Churches shall support the work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches through an annual financial contribution reflecting the resources and membership of that church. The General Council or the Executive Committee shall set a minimum contribution requirement for all member churches, associate and affiliate members.

#### Procedural Issues

- G. Application for membership shall be made to the office of the General Secretary not later than six months before a General Council meeting. Admission to membership shall be by decision of the Executive Committee following consultation with other member churches in the region. The General Council shall ratify new members by a two-thirds majority of ballots cast. A new member shall not vote on the ratification of its own membership.
- H. A member church may terminate its membership by giving notice in writing to the office of the General Secretary. They will be encouraged to give reasons for this action.

### VI - SUSPENSION OF MEMBERSHIP

The Executive Committee may suspend the membership of a member church for actions in violation of the Basis, Values, or Aims Identity, Mission and Purposes of this constitution or for persistent failure to support or communicate with the organization, subject to the following conditions as stated in the Bylaws.

1. Such action may be proposed to the Executive Committee by one or more member churches, after such church or churches have previously presented their concerns to the church in question. A proposal to suspend a member church shall be presented to the Executive Committee at least six months prior to its meeting.
2. The Executive Committee that has received a proposal for suspension shall conduct an investigation. The officers shall develop an investigative process for the specific charges. The process shall be approved by the Executive Committee.
3. The Executive Committee shall take final action only after the church in question has been given sufficient opportunity to defend itself.
4. After such an investigation has been completed, the Executive Committee may decide by a two-thirds vote of members present to suspend the membership of the member church in question or refer the case to the next General Council. When an Executive Committee decides suspension, it may be lifted at any subsequent Executive Committee meeting.
5. When a member church is suspended at a General Council meeting, that suspension may be lifted at any subsequent General Council meeting upon recommendation of the then current Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall, therefore, maintain

communication with that member church about the matters related to the cause for suspension.

6. Any member church that fails to make membership contributions and does not communicate the reason to the secretariat for three consecutive years shall have the privileges of membership withdrawn by the Executive Committee until the requirements of membership are fulfilled. A member church whose membership privileges are withdrawn shall be considered an inactive member. An inactive member church may attend a General Council meeting as an observer but will not have the right to speak or vote. Inactive members do not qualify for financial support from the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
7. A suspended member church may send observers to plenary sessions of the General Council but shall not have the right to vote or address plenary sessions of the General Council except by extraordinary permission of the President. A suspended member church shall not have any financial obligations to the World Communion of Reformed Churches during the suspension.

#### **ARTICLE VII - GENERAL COUNCIL**

- A. The General Council is the main governing body of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. The General Council is legally constituted to transact the business of the World Communion of Reformed Churches when representatives of one-half plus one of its member churches are present to establish a quorum.
- B. The General Council shall:
  1. provide leadership for the World Communion of Reformed Churches in achieving the aims and purposes of the organization;
  2. adopt and amend the Constitution and the Bylaws;
  3. make and adopt policies and programs for the World Communion of Reformed Churches;
  4. elect officers and members of the Executive Committee;
  5. consider matters brought before it by member churches;
  6. ratify decisions of the Executive Committee.
- C. Decisions of the General Council concerning its organization and institutional activities shall be binding.
- D. Decisions of the General Council involving the life and witness of the member churches are advisory in character.

#### **ARTICLE VIII - MEETINGS OF GENERAL COUNCIL**

- A. The General Council shall ordinarily meet once in every seven years.
- B. At the request of at least one-fifth of the member churches, the Executive Committee shall convene the General Council into special session.

- C. The time, place, and program of a General Council meeting shall be determined by the Executive Committee.
- D. The General Council, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee, shall adopt rules of procedure for the conduct of its business.

### ARTICLE IX - COMPOSITION OF GENERAL COUNCIL

- A. Participants at the General Council are appointed delegates, associate and affiliate delegates, ecumenical delegates, consultants, observers, guests and visitors.
- B. Member churches shall be entitled to appoint delegates on the basis of their baptized membership according to the following plan bearing in mind the following principles. It is common in Reformed history to count membership based on the total of baptized members. That is consistent with covenant theology in that the children of believers are members of the church. It is also acknowledged that some churches in the World Communion of Reformed Churches count membership based on professing members (also called by some confirmed or confessing adults) as the recording of membership. The World Communion of Reformed Churches will accept the information the member church submits based on the normal counting procedure. The same numbers will be used for attendance at the General Council meeting and for the basis used to determine membership contributions.

1. three delegates for churches with up to 200,000 members
2. four delegates for churches with 200,001 to 300,000 members
3. five delegates for churches with 300,001 to 500,000 members
4. six delegates for churches with 500,001 to 750,000 members
5. seven delegates for churches with 750,001 to 1,000,000 members
6. eight delegates for churches with 1,000,001 to 1,500,000 members
7. nine delegates for churches with 1,500,001 to 2,000,000
8. ten delegates for churches with more than 2,000,000.

1. Up to four delegates for churches with up to 300,000 members
2. Up to six delegates for churches with 300,001 to 1,000,000 members
3. Up to eight delegates for churches with more than 1,000,000 members

- C. Where a church sends two or more delegates, no more than half shall be ordained ministers, and the delegation shall be gender-balanced. Where a church sends two delegates, at least one shall be a woman. Where a church sends four or more delegates, at least one half of the delegates shall be women and at least one delegate shall be thirty years of age or younger on the date the General Council is convened.

The delegation shall be gender balanced and no more than half shall be clergy. At least one delegate shall be thirty years of age or younger on the date the General Council is convened.

- D. Each of the officers of the World Communion of Reformed Churches shall be an ex officio delegate (with vote) to any General Council that meets during the officer's term of office.
- E. Delegates shall have the right to vote and to move or second a motion in all sessions of the General Council.

### ARTICLE X - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

- A. The Executive Committee shall have twenty-two (22) elected members elected by the General Council, including six (6) officers. The Moderator, President or Convener of each Regional Council shall be members, and the General Secretary shall be a member an ex officio member (without vote). The Executive Committee is legally constituted to transact the business of the World Communion of Reformed Churches when a majority of its members are present to establish a quorum.
- B. In order to have the widest possible voices to make informed decisions the moderator, president, convener or secretary of each Regional Council may attend Executive Committee meetings as a corresponding member. Corresponding members are persons representing specific geographical or organizational entities related to the World Communion of Reformed Churches and are invited to participate in officially called meetings with voice but without the power to make or to second motions or to vote.
- C. The Executive Committee may invite Executive Secretaries to participate in its meetings in an advisory capacity.
- D. If any member of the Executive Committee is unable to attend a particular meeting of the Committee, an alternate may be appointed under the provisions in the Bylaws.
- E. The Executive Committee shall meet annually.
- F. When the President and the General Secretary deem it necessary to secure a decision of the Executive Committee between its meetings, a vote by mail, email, telephone conference or other electronic means may be taken. In such cases the required majority (one-half plus one) is based on all the members of the Executive Committee.
- G. The Executive Committee shall:
  - 1. exercise general oversight of the work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches between meetings of the General Council including, but not limited to, the formation of departments, committees and commissions to carry out the work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
  - 2. authorize the President and/or the General Secretary to speak for the World Communion of Reformed Churches between meetings of the General Council. The Executive Committee may, by way of exception and if needed, appoint one or more additional persons to speak for the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
  - 3. perform all duties specified elsewhere in this Constitution and in the Bylaws or committed to it by the General Council.



4. approve the annual financial reports and adopt the annual budget.
5. fill vacancies among the officers and in its own membership, as specified in the Bylaws, which may occur between meetings of the General Council.
6. elect a General Secretary and appoint Executive Secretaries.
7. decide on admission to and suspension of membership in the World Communion of Reformed Churches subject to ratification by the next General Council.

## **ARTICLE XI – OFFICERS OF THE WORLD COMMUNION OF REFORMED CHURCHES**

- A. The General Council shall elect a president and four (4) vice-presidents the following officers from among the appointed delegates to the General Council, to hold office from their installation until their successors are elected and installed in office: These elected officers shall hold office from the time of their installation until their successors are elected and installed in office.
1. a President
  2. four vice presidents
  3. a General Treasurer

- B. The officers of the World Communion of Reformed Churches shall have power to
1. Approve the agendas for Executive Committee meetings.
  2. Ensure coherence in the interdepartmental work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
  3. Provide advice and direction to the General Secretary.
  4. Report for review to the Executive Committee concerning the actions they have taken.
  5. Oversee the assets of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

The officers of the World Communion of Reformed Churches shall be formed into an officers committee with power to act to perform their responsibilities as stated in the Bylaws.

- C. Any two of the following: the President (or one of the Vice-Presidents if substituting for the President), the General Secretary and the General Treasurer are authorized to sign jointly for all legally required registrations, opening of bank accounts and other legal transactions of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

## **ARTICLE XII - GENERAL SECRETARY**

- A. The General Secretary shall be the chief executive officer of the World Communion of Reformed Churches and shall be responsible to the General Council and to the Executive Committee to direct and coordinate the work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. The General Secretary is responsible for advising the Executive Committee and the officers of risks and potential liabilities that may pertain.
- B. The General Secretary shall serve a term of seven years and shall be eligible for one renewal for another seven-year term. A comprehensive performance review will be scheduled at the midpoint of each seven-year term and prior to the decision to

appoint the General Secretary to a second seven-year term. The performance review is conducted by persons appointed by the Executive Committee.

- C. The General Secretary shall make all necessary arrangements for the convening, reporting and proper conduct of the General Council.
- D. The General Secretary shall supervise the personnel of the World Communion of Reformed Churches and be responsible for the proper functioning of the secretariat.
- E. All publications and communications shall be under the supervision of the General Secretary. The General Secretary is the official spokesperson for the policies and statements of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.

### **ARTICLE XIII - EXECUTIVE SECRETARIES**

- A. Executive Secretaries shall be appointed for the operations of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
- B. The number of Executive Secretaries serving at any one time and the scope of their responsibilities is determined by the Executive Committee upon recommendation of the General Secretary.
- C. Executive Secretaries shall serve a term of five years and shall be eligible for one renewal for another five-year term. A comprehensive performance review will be scheduled at the midpoint of each five-year term and prior to the decision to appoint an Executive Secretary to a second five-year term. The performance review is conducted by the General Secretary.

### **ARTICLE XIV - FINANCE**

- A. The World Communion of Reformed Churches shall be financed by contributions from member churches, associate and affiliate members, and gifts from individuals, congregations, organizations and other sources.
- B. The General Treasurer and the General Secretary General Secretary in consultation with the General Treasurer shall be responsible for the preparation of the annual budget, which shall be presented to the Executive Committee for approval.
- C. The financial accounts of the World Communion of Reformed Churches shall be audited annually by auditors approved by the Executive Committee. The audited accounts shall be adopted presented annually by to the Executive Committee for adoption.

### **ARTICLE XV - DEPARTMENTS, COMMITTEES, OFFICES AND COMMISSIONS**

- A. The General Council or the Executive Committee may form departments, committees and commissions to carry out the work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches.
- B. All committees or commissions shall be accountable to the General Council and the Executive Committee.
- C. Departments and offices shall be accountable to the General Council and the Executive Committee through the General Secretary. They shall function in a manner

that promotes the coherence of the programs of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. To this end they are not independent entities but function interdependently.

## **ARTICLE XVI - ORGANIZATION OF REGIONAL COUNCILS**

To promote the closest possible community and cooperation among member churches in a particular area of the world and the effectiveness of the total work of the World Communion of Reformed Churches the General Council may authorize the organization of a Regional Council composed of the member churches in that defined geographical area. Such a Regional Council shall be accountable to the General Council of the World Communion of Reformed Churches through its appointed administrative structures.

- A. The number, boundaries and names of the **areas** **Regional Councils** shall be determined by the General Council or by the Executive Committee in consultation with the member churches of the region.
- B. The organization of a Regional Council shall be effected by the member churches within the area, in conformity with the Constitution and Bylaws of the World Communion of Reformed Churches. Each Regional Council shall adopt its own Bylaws subject to ratification by the Executive Committee.
- C. Each Regional Council shall meet from time to time within the geographic area, provide for an Administrative Committee and elect officers pursuant to its Bylaws.
- D. **Each Regional Council shall elect a President, a Moderator or a Convener** **A Convener or Secretary and a Treasurer for each Regional Council shall be elected by the Regional Council, subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee.**
- E. **Each Regional Council shall elect a Secretary and a Treasurer to serve the Regional Council, subject to confirmation by the Executive Committee.** **Normally a Vice-President, or another member of the Executive Committee, shall be a corresponding member of each Regional Council.**

## **ARTICLE XVII – LEGAL STATUS**

- A. **The World Communion of Reformed Churches is an international non-governmental and non-profit organization, organized as an association, pursuant to articles 60ss of the Swiss Civil Code (CC). Its registered office is in Geneva, Switzerland. In the event of dissolution of the association, any remaining assets, after the payment of existent liability, shall be distributed pro rata to the member churches or the successor entity.**
- B. **The World Communion of Reformed Churches shall have a sister international organization, WCRC, registered in the USA. Membership of the two international, non-governmental, not-for-profit, tax-exempt organizations shall be the same. The two sister organizations shall be governed by the same General Council, Executive Committee and Officers.**

## **ARTICLE XVII - DISSOLUTION**

In the event that the World Communion of Reformed Churches ceases to exist as a corporate entity, any remaining assets, after the payment of existing liabilities, shall be distributed pro rata to the member churches.

## **ARTICLE XVIII – AMENDMENTS**

- A. This Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds affirmative vote of the delegates in attendance at any meeting of the General Council, provided the proposed amendment has been transmitted to each member church, to members of the Executive Committee and to the Regional Councils at least six months before it is submitted for approval.
- B. The Bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the delegates in attendance at a meeting of the General Council, provided notice of at least 24 hours has been given to the delegates attending that meeting.
- C. The Bylaws may also be amended between meetings of the General Council by the Executive Committee. Such changes shall be submitted to ratified by the next General Council for ratification.
- D. When it is necessary to amend or suspend the Bylaws, the Executive Committee shall require a two-thirds vote majority for such a motion to take effect.

## **ARTICLE XIX – OFFICIAL LANGUAGE VERSION**

The English version of this document is the definitive document for interpretation purposes.

**Bylaws of the World Communion of Reformed Churches**  
**Family of Reformed and Uniting Churches**

**I. GENERAL COUNCIL**

- A. The Executive Committee shall serve as the Business Committee of the General Council.
- B. The President, with the advice of the Executive Committee, shall appoint from among the delegates such Standing Committees and Task Groups as may be necessary for the efficient operation of the General Council when in session.

C. The status and classification of participants at a General Council meeting shall be as follows:

1. Each member church shall have a formula-specified number of voting delegates.
2. An associate delegate is one who represents an associate-member organization. Associate delegates have the right to speak but may not vote.
3. An affiliate delegate is one who represents an affiliated organization. Affiliate delegates have the right to speak but may not vote.
4. An ecumenical delegate is one who represents a recognized ecumenical fraternal organization. Ecumenical delegates have the right to speak but may not vote.
5. Guests are those individuals who have been invited to attend the General Council meeting. Guests have the right to speak but may not vote.
6. Observers are representatives from member churches or other communions who are considering becoming members of the World Communion of Reformed churches. Observers may participate in the activities of the General Council but do not have the right to vote.
7. Consultants may be present at the General Council or Executive Committee meeting upon invitation by the officers. A consultant may be asked to address the assembly on the issue for which the consultant is present. A consultant's right to speak is limited to that specific matter, and the consultant may not vote.
8. Visitors are those individuals who attend the public sessions of the General Council for personal reasons. Visitors do not have the right to speak, make motions, or vote.

**II. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

- A. Elections
1. The General Council shall elect officers from among the delegates to that General Council, taking into consideration geographical distribution, cultural and denominational diversity, gender, age and experience.
  2. The General Council shall elect an Executive Committee from among the appointed delegates to that General Council, taking into consideration geographical distribution, cultural and denominational diversity, gender, age, experience and the advice of Regional Councils.

3. The Executive Committee members shall hold office from their installation until their successors are elected and installed in office.
4. Members of the Executive Committee shall be eligible to serve for not more than two consecutive terms.
5. The General Council, upon recommendation of the Executive Committee, shall elect a Nominating Committee of not more than ten persons, two of whom must be under 30 years of age, one of them female and one male. The nomination procedure shall take into consideration geographical distribution, cultural and denominational diversity and gender.
6. Members of the Nominating Committee are not eligible for election as officers or as members of the Executive Committee. The Nominating Committee shall receive and consider proposed nominations from delegates **and** from Regional Councils and shall make its own proposals.
7. The Nominating Committee shall present to the General Council a slate of nominations for officers and for members of the Executive Committee. When the proposal of the Nominating Committee has been presented, nominations from the floor may be proposed as an alternative to any of the nominees recommended by the Nominating Committee.
8. The election of General Council officers and Executive Committee members shall take place no sooner than twenty-four hours after the presentation of all candidates.
9. Each member of the Executive Committee shall be required to disclose potential and real conflict of interest issues. A signed form for such disclosures shall be retained in the office of the General Secretary.
10. Delegates elected to the Executive Committee are ordinarily expected to represent the interests of the General Council.

B. Alternates **and consultants**

1. If any member of the Executive Committee is unable to attend a particular meeting of the Executive Committee, the President and the General Secretary, after due consultation, may appoint an alternate from the same region, to serve for that particular meeting as a member of the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Committee may invite churches or organizations to appoint a representative to attend meetings of the Executive Committee. Such an invited representative shall be able to participate in the meeting without the right to vote.

C. Removal from office

1. When an officer or member of the Executive Committee is deemed by another officer or member to have failed to perform his or her duties a hearing or hearings shall be conducted.
2. **The member shall be offered the opportunity to make a response in writing or in person (at her or his own expense) to the Executive Committee.**
3. Having heard the accusations, having considered the appropriate evidence and having heard the response the accused person chooses to make, the Executive Committee may reprimand, suspend or remove the accused person, or declare that the person's service will continue. The seriousness of the offence will determine the action to be taken—not necessarily the number of occasions of transgression.
4. **When an officer or member of the Executive Committee has been found guilty of an offence by the ecclesiastical procedures of his or her church, the Executive**

Committee may declare the office or membership vacant after having taken note of the official statement of the charges (formal accusation), decision and censure (judgment, sentence). The member shall be offered the opportunity to make a response in writing or in person (at her or his own expense) to the Executive Committee. Whether or not there is a response, the Executive Committee may remove or suspend the person, or take no action.

#### D. Vacant positions

When the position of a member of the Executive Committee becomes vacant through death, resignation in writing to the General Secretary, removal from office by action of the Executive Committee or non-attendance over an extended period, the Executive Committee may fill such vacancy in the following manner:

1. If When the office of President becomes vacant, the Executive Committee shall fill the office of President by election from among the Vice-Presidents.
2. If When the office of a Vice-President becomes vacant, the Executive Committee shall fill the office by election from among members of the Executive Committee.
3. If the office of General Treasurer becomes vacant, the Executive Committee shall select a person to fill the position.
4. 3. If When a general position on the Executive Committee becomes vacant, the Executive Committee may fill the vacancy by election from among those who were delegates to the previous General Council, taking into consideration geographical distribution, cultural and denominational diversity, gender, age and experience.

#### E. Meetings

1. The Executive Committee shall meet once a year, the specific time and place to be set by the Executive Committee at its previous meeting or by way of circular decision as provided for in article X.E of the Constitution or by the President and the General Secretary. Failing this, the President and the General Secretary decide as to the time and place of the Executive Committee's meeting. If they cannot come to an agreement, the President decides. The President and the General Secretary may call special meetings of the Executive Committee and shall do so at the request of a majority of the members of the Executive Committee.
2. A quorum shall be a majority of the total membership of the Executive Committee.

#### F. Criteria for Travel Subsidies

1. The Executive Committee establishes the criteria used in granting travel subsidies for attendance at the General Council meeting and when subsidies are offered to attend WCRC events.
2. No member church shall receive travel subsidy for more than two delegates to any one meeting.
3. Travel subsidy will normally not be granted to the general secretary of a member church.
4. When travel subsidies are approved the travel arrangements must be made through the WCRC office.

NOTE: UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED, THE TEXT IN THE SECTION BELOW WAS MOVED FROM SECTION VI, PARAGRAPH J OF THE CONSTITUTION:



### III – SUSPENSION OF MEMBERSHIP

The Executive Committee may suspend the membership of a member church for actions in violation of the Basis, Values, or **Aims Mission** and Purposes of the Constitution or for persistent failure to support or communicate with the organization **subject to the following conditions**. **The following procedure shall be followed:**

1. Such action may be proposed to the Executive Committee by one or more member churches, after such church or churches have previously presented their concerns to the church in question. A proposal to suspend a member church shall be presented to the Executive Committee at least six months prior to its meeting.
2. The Executive Committee that has received a proposal for suspension shall conduct an investigation. The officers shall develop an investigative process for the specific charges. The process shall be approved by the Executive Committee.
3. The Executive Committee shall take final action only after the church in question has been given sufficient opportunity to defend itself.
4. After such an investigation has been completed the Executive Committee may decide by a two-thirds vote **of members present** to suspend the membership of the member **church** in question or refer the case to the next General Council. When an Executive Committee decides suspension, it may be lifted at any subsequent Executive Committee meeting.
5. When a member church is suspended at a General Council meeting, that suspension may be lifted at any subsequent General Council meeting upon recommendation of the then current Executive Committee. The Executive Committee shall, therefore, maintain communication with that member church about the matters related to the cause for suspension.
6. Any member **church** that fails to make membership contributions and does not communicate the reason to **with** the secretariat **for three consecutive years shall have the privileges of membership withdrawn by the Executive Committee until the requirements of membership are fulfilled** may be suspended by the Executive Committee. Such a member may be reinstated by the Executive Committee upon resumption of contact and fulfillment of its obligations. **A member church whose membership privileges are withdrawn shall be considered an inactive member. An inactive member church may attend a General Council meeting as an observer but will not have the right to speak or vote. Inactive members do not qualify for financial support from the World Communion of Reformed Churches.**
7. A suspended member **church** may send observers to plenary sessions of the General Council but shall not have the right to vote or address plenary sessions of the General Council except by extraordinary permission of the President. A suspended member **church** shall not have any financial obligations to the World Communion of Reformed Churches during the suspension. **Nor shall a suspended member be entitled to financial support.**
8. Any member church that fails to make a membership contribution and does not communicate the reason for such failure to the secretariat for three consecutive years shall have the privileges of membership withdrawn by the Executive Committee until the requirements of membership are fulfilled. A member church whose membership privileges have been withdrawn shall be considered an inactive member. An inactive church may attend a General Council meeting as an observer but will not have the right to speak or vote. Inactive members do not qualify for financial support from the World Communion of Reformed Churches.



#### **IV - OFFICERS COMMITTEE**

The elected officers shall form themselves into an officers committee (chaired by the President) to perform the following functions:

1. approve the agendas for Executive Committee meetings;
2. ensure coherence in the interdepartmental work of the WCRC;
3. provide advice and direction to the General Secretary;
4. report for review to the Executive Committee concerning the actions they have taken.  
oversee the assets of the World Communion of Reformed Churches;
5. Along with the General Secretary, conduct risk assessments as needed and report conclusions reached to the Executive Committee.

#### **V. FINANCES**

- A. The Executive Committee may propose to the member churches proportionate proportional financial contributions to the churches WCRC.
- B. Any proposals for the disbursements of any funds relating to the World Communion of Reformed Churches other than disbursements included in the annual budget shall be approved by the Executive Committee.
- C. In exceptional cases, the General Secretary shall be permitted to initiate an action with financial consequences, within the parameters of the purposes and aims of the World Communion of Reformed Churches, after consultation with and the approval of the President and the General Treasurer.
- D. If necessary for timely consideration, the Executive Committee may vote on the adoption of the budget by mail ballot, teleconference or other electronic means upon the recommendation of the officers.
- E. The General Treasurer and the finance secretary shall report regularly to the Executive Committee.
- F. The expenses of the President, the General Secretary, the General Treasurer and other members of the staff will be met from the funds of the World Communion of Reformed Churches when they attend meetings of the General Council and the Executive Committee.
- G. The expenses of delegates to the General Council and of members of the Executive Committee attending the General Council shall be paid by the churches of which they are members unless a prior agreement for support has been negotiated.
- H. The World Communion of Reformed Churches shall pay for the expenses of the Executive Committee meetings in accordance with established administrative guidelines.
- I. Each Regional Council shall submit to the General Secretary a copy of its annual audited financial statements.