

General Constitution and Principles

Adopted by the General Council, May 26-30, 1912

Amended by the General Council, March 25-28, 1913

The Christian and Missionary Alliance, owing to providential developments, finds itself called to readjust itself to a larger fellowship on the basis of the recognition of Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming Lord, and comprising the following constituent elements:

1. Individual Christians of whatsoever evangelical name.
2. Groups of Christians of various evangelical churches in any locality.
3. Undenominational churches conducted on independent lines.
4. City and highway missions.
5. All foreign missions and missionaries under the Alliance.

Objects

The objects sought by this Society include the following:

1. To promote unity of faith in the Lord Jesus in His fullness, earnest effort for the conversion of souls, and the deepening of the spiritual life of Christians everywhere, by means of teaching and testimony in the power of the Holy Spirit, without reference to ecclesiastical uniformity, but in cordial sympathy with all evangelical Christians or organizations.
2. That Christians in a given locality, in sympathy with the truths for which the Alliance stands, but of different church affiliations, may be afforded fellowship with one another and with the larger association of kindred believers, without affecting their denominational relations, may be stimulated as loyal witnesses to Jesus Christ in His fullness, and may have a common channel for voluntary cooperation in world-wide full gospel efforts.
3. That denominational churches and city and highway missions of kindred spirit and type may have the opportunity of voluntary association with this larger fellowship, and of co-operation in spreading the full gospel at home and abroad.
4. That the foreign missionaries and missions of the Alliance may enjoy the widest possible fellowship and support.

As a condition of sharing this fellowship, it is understood that all individual members, local groups, undenominational churches, city, highway and foreign missions uniting in this association shall accept the supervision provided for in the accompanying Constitution, and that the independent churches formed out of Branches of the Christian

and Missionary Alliance, and the city and highway missions, shall agree to such legal relations in respect of property as shall secure the perpetual use of permanent investments for the full gospel work under the charge of the Alliance.

This condition does not interfere with the interdenominational character of the Alliance. Its attitude toward such independent churches and companies is simply the same as toward individuals, namely, one of cordial recognition and helpfulness. It is to be clearly understood that such full relations between the Alliance and these churches or companies are always effected on the initiative of the churches or companies themselves, and not through the solicitations of the Alliance. The latter merely accepts the trusteeship for the properties of such churches or companies, and the responsibility of supplying or approving their ministers or leaders, with a view to assuring their permanent adherence to the full gospel truths for which the Alliance stands.

In addition to these various constituent elements, the Alliance also welcomes the co-operation of such evangelical denominations and groups of churches or Christians, not identified with it in corporate relations, as may be disposed to send their missionaries under its Board and contribute their missionary offerings through its Treasurer.

Membership

The condition of membership shall be belief in God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit; in the verbal inspiration of the Holy Scripture as originally given; in the vicarious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; in the eternal salvation of all who believe in Him and the eternal punishment of all who reject Him; recognition of the truths of the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, Sanctifier, Healer and Coming King, as taught by the Christian and Missionary Alliance; full sympathy with the Society's principles and objects, and co-operation by contributing to its work.

Organization and Government

The organization of the Alliance shall be on the principle of local, district and international Branches, each circle being organized in detail consistently with the general type of organization defined in the following Constitution. All legislative and executive features shall be upon the basis of well-balanced liberty and responsibility, heading up in a periodic representative Council of supreme legislative authority, and in an executive Board of Managers.

I. Legislative Body

The ultimate power of the Society shall be vested in its entire membership, and delegated by them to a General Council, thoroughly representative of the whole constituency, on some agreed basis of selection. This council shall consist of all the officers and members of the Board of Managers, and such representatives of particular Departments as that Board may appoint, together with representatives of Branches and affiliated churches,

and all foreign missionaries of the Christian and Missionary on furlough. This Council shall for the present meet annually, and shall at each Annual Meeting itself determine the time and place of its next meeting. It shall be the supreme legislative body of the Alliance. It shall not attempt executive work, but shall after well-matured nomination elect a Board of Managers for this purpose. It shall require full reports from this Board, and its legislation shall limit and direct the line of administration carried out by the Board.

II. The Executive Body

The authoritative control and direction of the entire work between the Annual Meetings of the General Council shall be committed to a Board of Managers, whose members must be located within reasonably convenient distance of the Alliance headquarters, so that a quorum can always be secured. Eight members shall constitute a quorum. The membership shall be large enough to be representative, but small enough to be effective. It shall not be lower than fifteen. The term of office shall be three years, one-third of the members retiring at each Annual Council, but being eligible for re-election. They shall be elected by ballot at the Annual Council, careful preliminary preparations being made for such ballot. The Board shall have the power to fill vacancies between meetings of the Council, and also to make its own By-Laws.

III. Officers

The Officers of the Society shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, a General Secretary, a Recording Secretary a Treasurer and Honorary Vice-Presidents. Of these, the President shall be elected triennially, and the Vice-President, General Secretary and Treasurer annually, by ballot or open vote of the General Council. The Recording Secretary shall be elected annually by the Board of Managers.

1. President

He shall be the recognized head of the entire organization, the presiding officer over the General Council, and the Board of Managers, of which body he shall be recognized as an *ex-officio* member. He shall also be an *ex-officio* member of all the special committees and Departments under the Board. His duties shall embrace the general oversight of the entire work at home and abroad, the visitation of the National Conventions and the various Districts, the preparation of an annual survey of the work for the Council, the presentation to the Council, and the Board, and the special Departments from time to time, of such matters as he may judge expedient, and in addition such deputation work at home and abroad as he may find practicable and for the best interests of the work.

2. Vice-President

He shall perform the duties of the President in the absence or disability of the President, and in the case of the death of the President, the Vice-President shall succeed to the office

of President until the next meeting of the General Council, when a President shall be elected to fill out the unexpired term of the deceased President.

3. General Secretary

He shall be the medium of correspondence for general matters in connection with the Society not pertaining to special Departments of the work.

4. Recording Secretary

He shall keep the records of the meetings of the Board and General Council, with such assistance as may be needed at the General Council.

5. Treasurer

His duties shall embrace the receiving of all funds contributed for the work, the sending out of prompt acknowledgments and of numbered receipts to all contributors, the preparation of a monthly report for the Board of Managers, and an annual report, properly audited, for the General Council. He shall also be the head of the Finance Department, and shall disburse all the funds of the Society on the order of this Department and the Board.

A Business Manager under the direct authority and supervision of the Treasurer and Finance Department shall have charge of the office, with such clerical help as may be required, for prompt and thorough dispatch of all official business.

IV Special Departments of Administration

There shall be a systematic division of administrative work among the following Executive Departments, which, with their heads or Secretaries, shall be appointed by the Board.

1. Finance Department

Having charge of all the receipts, disbursements and financial business of the Society. No disbursement is to be made except on the order of this Department, and audited statements to be presented, as required, to the Board, the council and the Annual Meeting. The Treasurer shall be the head of this Department.

This Department shall also act as a bureau of information on all points of law, forms of business, and such matters as bequests, conveyance of title deeds, etc.

2. Education Department

Having charge under one head of all the educational work of the Alliance, in accordance with the revised basis adopted by the Annual Council of 1912. The Educational Secretary shall be the head of this Department.

3. Home Department

Having general oversight of the interests of the home field, in consultation with the District and Local Executives, and being the medium of communication with the Board in all matters requiring readjustment or attention of any sort, and in general constituting a bureau of communication and arrangement between all available workers and needy fields, both old and new, and the recruiting agent of ministerial supply. It shall also have charge of the Young People's and Children's Work. The head of this Department shall give as much time as his other duties admit of to field visitation. The Home Secretary shall be the Head of this Department.

4. Foreign Department

Having the direction of the entire work of the foreign missionary fields, and covering missionary candidates, appointments, furloughs and retirements, assignment of missionaries and native workers to particular supporters, with some method of closer correspondence between the parties. The Foreign Secretary shall be the head of this Department.

5. Deputation Department

Having charge of special campaigns along missionary lines, as well as the missionary part of District Conventions, in co-operation with the District authorities, the oversight of the production and circulation of missionary literature in pamphlet form and through the missionary department of the *Alliance Weekly*. In general it shall constitute an agency for the promotion of public interest in missions, the recruiting of missionary reinforcements and the increasing of the financial resources of our foreign missionary work. The Deputational Secretary shall be the head of this Department.

6. Publication and Literature Department

Having charge of the publication and dissemination of periodicals, books, and tracts which conform to the distinctive testimony of the Alliance. The Publication Secretary shall be the head of this department.

7. Fraternal Relations Department

Having as its object the fostering of and making practically effective our policy of comity, fraternity and mutual co-operation in the Lord's work with the various evangelical churches, and especially endeavoring to secure and utilize, in harmony with all the other agencies of the Alliance, new channels of practical access to and influence upon Christians throughout the existing churches. The Secretary of Fraternal Relations shall be the head of this Department.

As far as possible each of these Departments shall be under the direction of a member of the Board. Where this is not practicable, some strong and experienced worker shall be selected for the position. Each Department shall be further supplemented by a small but

efficient Committee under the Secretary or head of the Department, and some of these Committees may be made up in part of members outside the Board. These Departments, while possessing no executive power apart from the action of the Board, shall have their regular meetings, and deal first with the matters pertaining to their Departments, getting them into shape for presentation to the Board, with recommendations of definite action.

V. Districts and Local Branches

The Home Field shall be divided by the General Council into certain geographical Districts, and these shall be subject to change from year to year by the action of General Council. Each of these Districts shall have a constitutional provision for local self-government, not inconsistent with this Constitution, on all matters exclusively affecting such District. This government shall be on the same lines as that of the national administration, including a District Conference for District administrative control, and an Executive Committee for detailed administration. Such District Conference shall be thoroughly representative of the whole District, and shall meet annually at a time most convenient for the District workers and least likely to interfere with the meeting of the General Council. It shall elect the District Executive Committee, of which the District Superintendent shall be the Chairman, and shall require reports from this Committee. It shall also appoint representatives to the General Council, on the basis of representation prescribed by that body, and make provision for the expenses of representatives attending such Council.

The District Executive Committee shall have control of all arrangements in connection with regular Conventions within the District, their speakers, etc., excepting only such general deputations as the Board may arrange from time to time in conference with the District.

District Conferences may sub-divide their Districts into smaller sections, according to State lines or otherwise, under special superintendents appointed by them. The combination of Branches and fields of operation ought to be adjusted with reference to convenience and spiritual efficiency rather than arbitrarily on mere State lines. District Conferences may also, if deemed necessary, nominate Assistant District Superintendents subject to the approval and appointment of the Board. In Districts not fully organized the Board shall take the initiative in perfecting the District organization.

Field Evangelists shall be appointed by the Board for the visitation of the whole field in connection with periodic Conventions and special evangelistic work. They shall be assigned by the Board, through the Home Secretary, to the Districts as may be found desirable and practicable, and their appointments within the Districts shall be arranged by the District Superintendents.

The members of the Alliance in a particular locality shall be organized as a Local Branch. The work shall be under the charge of a Local Superintendent in conjunction with the local Committee elected by members.

VI Foreign Mission Fields

These shall be under the general oversight and authority of the Board of Managers, but in all matters of local detail there shall be a similar administration to that of the home Districts. Each field shall be organized with an Annual Conference and an Executive Committee for the control of matters of local interest and detail not requiring the direct interposition of the Board. The Annual Conference shall elect the Executive Committee with the exception of its Chairman who shall be nominated by the Conference and appointed by the Board.

VII Titles to Property

1. All property for the use of the Society generally shall vest in the Christian and Missionary Alliance as incorporated under the laws of the State of New York.
2. All property of Districts, Local Branches, local schools and undenominational churches in affiliation with the Christian and Missionary Alliance may be held by said Districts, Local Branches, local schools and undenominational churches in affiliation as aforesaid, after they have been duly chartered by law, and every such local charter must contain a clause connecting it with the Christian and Missionary Alliance of New York as the parent religious Society, and expressing in said clause that should such District, or Branch, or school, or church, cease to exist as a corporate body or cease to be subject to the purposes, usages, doctrines and teaching of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, then all its property, appurtenances and effects then owned or held by it shall revert to and become the property of the Christian and Missionary Alliance as incorporated under the laws of the State of New York, and all such charters shall be approved by the Board of Managers before becoming effective.

In order to hold a check upon hasty legislation, when any matter has been adopted by a vote of the majority in a General Council, any three members of that Council may together immediately demand a vote of two-thirds majority, and the matter must then be laid over a day and be again voted on, and a two-thirds majority of the members present shall be necessary to adopt it.

No change shall be made in the above Constitution and Principles unless such change shall have been first approved by a two-thirds vote of the General Council and ratified by a General Meeting of the members of the Society, held after at least three months' notice of the time and place by publication in the official organ of the Society.