

BYLAWS AND STANDING RULES

OF THE INTERNATIONAL MINISTERIAL CONGRESS



International Ministerial Congress
Church of God (Seventh Day)

International Ministerial Congress of the Church of God (Seventh Day)

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*The contents of this manual are arranged in the order in which they are listed below.
Each section has its own index, and the pages in each section or subsection are numbered separately.*

International Ministerial Congress Bylaws

Standing Rules of the International Ministerial Congress



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Bylaws of the International Ministerial Congress

Index

Article I		Article IX	
Name	2	Finances	5
Article II		Article X	
Object	2	Statement of Faith	6
Article III		Article XI	
Membership	2	Publication of Doctrines, Practices & Policies..	7
Article IV		Article XII	
Officers and Their Duties	3	Ministerial Standards	7
Article V		Article XIII	
Nominating Committee	4	Committees	7
Article VI		Article XIV	
Election of Officers	4	Parliamentary Authority	8
Article VII		Article XV	
Executive Committee	4	Amendments	8
Article VIII			
Meetings	5		



Bylaws of the International Ministerial Congress

ARTICLE I Name

The name of this organization shall be the International Ministerial Congress of the Church of God (Seventh Day), hereinafter referred to as the Congress.

ARTICLE II Object

The object of the Congress shall be to coordinate the evangelistic effort of the Church and to promote doctrinal unity among its membership.

ARTICLE III Membership

SECTION 1.

Membership Qualification:

Membership in the Congress shall be open to any church, association of churches, national conference or council who agrees with the object, theology, and polity of the Congress as stated in these Bylaws.

SECTION 2

Definition of Membership:

A. Charter Members - National churches, conferences or councils which were affiliated with the Church of God (Seventh Day) with principal offices in Denver, Colorado, USA, and participated in the organization of the International Ministerial Congress, in October 1978, and who have actively participated in the Congress sessions since its inception. They are: United States & Canada, Mexico, Jamaica, Guatemala, El Salvador, Honduras, Trinidad & Tobago, England, Philippines, and Australia.

B. Full Members - Those granted membership in the Congress by a majority vote of the Congress in session after 1978.

SECTION 3

Issuance of Membership:

Application for membership in the Congress shall be made to the Officers of the Congress at least six months prior to the next session. Upon determining that the applicant (1) understands the polity of the Congress, (2) will provide financial support for the Congress in accordance with its economic situation, and (3) understands and supports the theology of the Congress, the officers shall issue a Provisional Membership to the applicant entitling it to attend the next session of the Congress without the privilege of deliberation or voting. The officers shall present the Provisional Membership to the Congress with its recommendation that the Congress issue Full Membership to the Provisional Member by a majority vote.

Provisional Membership expires in five years.

SECTION 4.

Membership Review and Status:

- A. Membership Review - The Officers of the Congress shall make a quadrennial review of the membership status of each member of the Congress to determine who is active or inactive. A report of their findings shall be presented to the next Congress in session for its consideration.
- B. Active Member - Any church, association of churches, national conference or council that:
1. Subscribes to, and advocates the theology contained in the Statement of Faith, Article X, of these Bylaws and their interpretation as adopted by the Congress thus promoting the doctrinal unity of the Congress.
 2. Cooperates with the polity of the Congress



by their attendance and financial support of the programs and missions of the Congress.

C. Inactive Member - any church, association of churches, national conference or council whose membership status has been reduced by a majority vote of the Congress to that of a Provisional Member because of their failure to be:

1. Diligent in attendance of Congress sessions.
2. Willing to press toward doctrinal unity through the consideration of the Congress' Statement of Faith or its interpretation of the same.
3. Supportive of the finances and the evangelistic mission of the Congress.

D. At any time that a member is considered to have become inactive, it shall be the responsibility of the Officers of the Congress to notify the member in question, in writing, that it is being considered as inactive for reasons set forth in paragraph C above. The member who has been so notified by the Officers of the Congress of their apparent inactivity must be diligent to work with the Officers of the Congress to correct their deficiencies. In the event that a member fails to correct its deficiencies, the Officers, by a majority vote, shall recommend to the Congress that the membership in question be reduced to that of a Provisional Member.

E. Reinstatement - An Inactive Member status, determined by the Congress in session, may be reinstated to Active Membership by a majority vote of the Congress in session.

SECTION 5.

Membership Zones:

Membership of the Congress shall be organized into world zones as set forth in the Standing Rules. The Officers of the Congress shall appoint an ambassador in each zone to represent the goals and objectives of the Congress to the membership in their respective zones.

SECTION 6.

Deliberation and Voting:

Each member of the Congress shall be entitled to one Representative Delegate who shall deliberate and vote in the quadrennial sessions of the Congress on behalf of their national

church(es). Officers of the Congress and Executive Delegates are ineligible to be selected as Representative Delegates. Qualifications for additional non-voting delegates shall be set forth by the Congress in its Standing Rules.

ARTICLE IV Officers and Their Duties

SECTION 1.

Officers of the Congress shall be:

- A. The President shall preside over sessions of the Congress of its officers and of the Executive Committee; hold Officers and Executive Delegates responsible to carry out their assignments; and act as a field representative for the Congress.
- B. The first Vice-President shall be a member of the Executive Committee and shall exercise the powers and duties of the President in the case of his absence or disqualification.
- C. The second Vice-President shall be a member of the Executive Committee and succeed the first Vice-President in the event of his absence or disqualification.
- D. The secretary shall record the minutes of Congress sessions and of the Executive Committee meetings; duplicate and distribute minutes of the Congress and its Executive Committee to their respective memberships in a timely manner; make an annual report of the work of the Congress to the leadership of member churches; notify members of the time, place, and agenda of the next Congress session and distribute study materials.
- E. The treasurer shall keep a faithful record of all funds and properties of the Congress, receive and disburse funds at the direction of the Congress and/or its Officers, and make reports of the same in a timely manner to the members of the Congress.

SECTION 2.

The Officers of the Congress may:

- A. Appoint an Executive Director who shall act as field representative for the Congress in the event the President chooses not to perform this assignment or is unable to do so. The Officers shall develop a job description for the Executive Director, but the position need not be filled by an officer of the Congress.



- B. Consult with member churches on doctrinal issues and, upon the request of a member church, mediate differences that may arise among its leaders or between its leadership and membership.
- C. Deliberate and vote in meetings of the Congress.

ARTICLE V Nominating Committee

SECTION 1.

Selection:

A Nominating Committee of four delegates shall be selected as follows:

- A. Two shall be elected by the Congress in session.
- B. Two shall be named by the Officers of the Congress within thirty days after they take office.
- C. Vacancies shall be by the appointment of the Officers of the Congress.

SECTION 2.

Term of Office:

The Nominating Committee shall serve from the time of its selection until it reports to the next Congress in session and the election of officers is held.

SECTION 3.

The Nominating Committee shall interview each nominee to:

- A. Acquaint the candidate with the duties of the office for which he is being nominated.
- B. Determine the candidate's interest and ability to serve the respective office and obtain his consent to serve if elected.

ARTICLE VI Election of Officers

SECTION 1.

Election Procedure:

Officers of the Congress shall be elected in the following manner:

- A. Candidates shall be limited to those offered by the Nominating Committee.

- B. The Nominating Committee shall offer a minimum of two candidates for each office.
- C. The Nominating Committee shall announce its initial slate of candidates to the Congress at least 24 hours prior to the election.
- D. The election shall be by ballot vote and shall take place only after the nominees have briefly expressed their vision and plans for the office to which they have been nominated.
- E. A majority vote shall be required to elect each officer.

SECTION 2.

Term of Office:

The term of office shall be four years. Terms shall begin at the close of the Congress session in which officers are elected, and shall continue through the next session of the Congress or until their successors are elected. Officers may succeed themselves.

SECTION 3.

Filling a Vacancy:

In the event a vacancy occurs in the office of the President, the first Vice-President shall be elevated to President, and the second Vice-President shall take the office of first Vice-President. The Officers shall fill any vacancy that may occur in the offices of second Vice-President, Secretary, or Treasurer.

ARTICLE VII Executive Committee

SECTION 1.

Composition of the Executive Committee:

An Executive Committee of nine members shall be composed of the five Officers of the Congress and four Executive Delegates elected by the ministerial bodies of the Active Member churches as defined by these Bylaws. The Congress in session shall designate, by a majority vote, the four member churches that shall elect the Executive Delegates from their own national ministerial ranks with the following stipulations:

- A. Executive Delegates shall be selected by designated IMC members in a manner customary for their respective churches. These selections shall be completed no later than one year before the next Congress session.



- B. The terms of office for the Executive Delegates shall be eight years.
- C. He shall be a minister with a minimum of 10 years ministerial and administrative experience.
- D. He shall have attended at least two Congress sessions.
- E. He must be physically able to attend the Congress sessions occurring within his term of office.
- F. He shall not serve as the Representative Delegate from his national church nor shall he be an Officer of the Congress, but may deliberate and vote in the Congress.
- G. The sending church must notify the Officers of the Congress of the identity of its Executive Delegate or his replacement within 30 days after his election.

SECTION 2.

Selection of an Alternate:

A. In the event an Executive Delegate is unable to attend, serve out his term, or is disqualified, the electing church shall select a replacement to complete his unfulfilled term. However, should a designated member church fail to name an Executive Delegate within one year of the next Congress or should the Executive Delegate fail to attend for ANY reason, the Officers of the Congress shall appoint a replacement from the ministerial bodies of the Charter Members of the Congress, to fulfill the Executive Delegate's term.

SECTION 3.

Assignment of the Executive Committee:

The assignment of the Executive Committee shall be as follows:

A. Serve as a monitor to ensure the stability and integrity of the Congress. It shall have the authority to veto, by a two-thirds vote, any questionable resolution adopted by the Congress which it deems to be necessary in order to achieve the Object of the Congress and preserve the continuity of its Statement of Faith. A veto nullifies the action which was taken by a vote of the Congress. In no event shall a veto take place without a brief statement explaining the reasons for the veto. In such an event, the Congress may reconsider the adoption of its resolution with the necessary changes in order to make the resolution acceptable to the Executive Committee.

- B. A veto must be announced to the Congress by the Executive Committee within 24 hours after the Congress' adoption of a questionable resolution except on the last day of the Congress in session in which case the Executive Committee must make the announcement of its veto no less than one hour before adjournment.
- C. The Congress may override a veto of the Executive Committee by a three-fourths vote.

ARTICLE VIII Meetings

SECTION 1.

Regular meetings of the Congress shall be held every four years on even-numbered years. The time and place of the session shall be established by the Officers of the Congress and announced one year in advance.

SECTION 2.

Special meetings of the Congress may be called by the Officers of the Congress or by petition of member conferences or councils whose combined delegations constitute a quorum. The time and place of a special meeting must be announced six months in advance of the meeting. Business conducted in special meetings shall be confined to that which is stated in the call. Business of an emergency nature not stated in the call may be considered by a two-thirds vote of the Congress in session.

SECTION 3.

A majority of the delegates to the Congress shall constitute a quorum in all matters of business, except for amendments to Article VIII which shall require a quorum of two-thirds of the delegates.

ARTICLE IX Finances

SECTION 1.

Each member council of the Congress shall make an annual contribution to support the work of the Congress.



SECTION 2.

The Officers of the Congress shall compile a budget for operations and submit it to the Congress in session for ratification.

SECTION 3.

Each conference or council shall be assessed, as determined by the Officers of the Congress, a registration fee for each delegate it sends to a session of the Congress.

ARTICLE X Statement of Faith

SECTION 1. The Scriptures

We believe the Scriptures, contained within the Old and New Testaments, are inspired by God, inerrant in the original writing, and the only infallible rule by which human conduct and religious beliefs and practices should be determined.

SECTION 2. God, the Father

We believe in one God, the Eternal Spirit, and Creator, Preserver and Ruler of the universe, who is infinite in wisdom, holiness and love. By His own initiative God offers salvation to every one and is worthy of our love, reverence, and obedience.

SECTION 3. Jesus, the Son

We believe in Jesus, the Messiah and Savior, only begotten Son of the Father, conceived by the Holy Spirit, and born of a virgin. We affirm His pre-existence, incarnation, sinless life, death as a substitutionary atonement, entombment for three full days and nights, bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven, present work as Mediator and High Priest and His personal, visible, imminent, premillennial return to rule on earth as Judge and King.

SECTION 4. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit as the manifestation and power which proceeds from the Father and the Son to regenerate, sanctify, teach, guide and preserve all believers. Obedience to God and "fruit of the Spirit" are evidence of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit in the believer's life.

SECTION 5. Man and Sin

We believe that man was created sinless in the image of God. Through Adam's disobedience, man became a sinner by nature and by choice and thereby incurred sin's penalty, physical death and ultimately, if in an unsaved condition, eternal death (annihilation).

SECTION 6. Man and Death

We believe that physical death is a state of unconsciousness for all persons, righteous and wicked, a state which will remain unchanged until their resurrections. The righteous will receive eternal life and the wicked will suffer annihilation.

SECTION 7. Man and Salvation

We believe that man is saved from eternal death (annihilation) solely by the grace of God through faith, apart from human merit, works or ceremonies. Christ's death is given as payment for sins, and is offered to all who will accept it.

SECTION 8. The Church

We believe the Church of God, consisting of baptized believers who keep the faith of Jesus and the commandments of God, is of divine origin under the Lordship of Christ and exists universally and locally for the preaching of the gospel, for the nurture and fellowship of the believers and for service to the human race.

SECTION 9. Church Ordinances

We believe Christ prescribed two ordinances for the church which confirm faith in Him. 1) Baptism by immersion symbolizes the believer's death to sin and new birth in Christ. 2) Lord's Supper as an annual memorial of Christ's death symbolizes the believer's continued union with the Savior. Footwashing as an act of humility accompanies the Lord's Supper.

SECTION 10. The Ten Commandments

We believe the Ten Commandments, including the true seventh-day Sabbath, existing from creation and included in both the old and new covenant, constitute the basic code of conduct for all mankind. They are to be observed today, as an expression of one's love to God and fellowman.



SECTION 11. Christian Living

We believe the Christian, in keeping with his confession of faith in Christ, is called to a holy and godly life in thought, word and deed. This is exemplified in one's interaction with others, beginning in the home, which God established with the institution of marriage, and extending to the church and community. It is because a Christian has been redeemed, not in order to be redeemed, that he should: 1) reflect that his body is the "temple of the Holy Spirit" by his choice of entertainment, dress, conduct, personal habits and diet which includes eating only those meats designated by the Bible as "clean" for food. 2) respond to the physical and spiritual needs of humanity by relieving suffering, hunger, ignorance, loneliness and by witnessing for the gospel. Accordingly, a Christian's participation in warfare is contrary to his humanitarian calling. 3) serve God "in spirit and truth" by refraining from religious practices and celebrations which intermix Christianity with paganism. 4) support the church's mission by active involvement and financial stewardship of tithes and offerings. 5) maintain his relationship with God through prayer, fasting, Bible study, worship and obedience.

SECTION 12. Prophecy and Second Coming of Christ

We believe that Bible prophecy identifies certain religious, social, and political events and trends, including the rebirth of Israel, which precede and point to the imminent return of Christ, to establish His kingdom on earth, culminating in the eternal Kingdom of God. The fulfillment of Bible prophecy serves to strengthen the faith of the people of God.

ARTICLE XI Publication of Doctrines, Practices and Policies

SECTION 1.

Each national conference or council may amplify and/or supplement Article X by publishing and distributing its own listing of such doctrines, practices and policies as are needed to translate and facilitate the spirit and intent of Article X into the particular culture and life-setting of its people.

SECTION 2 .

Publication of doctrines, practices and policies by a conference or council shall be submitted to the Congress for review. Failure to uphold the spirit and intent of Article X or failure to promote and maintain doctrinal unity may be cause for denying the participation of a national conference or council in the Congress.

ARTICLE XII Ministerial Standards

SECTION 1.

Each national conference or council shall establish ministerial standards and qualifications for its own national or regional ministerial body.

SECTION 2.

Ministerial standards and qualifications of each national conference or council shall be submitted to the Congress for ratification.

SECTION 3.

Each national conference or council shall issue documentation to its own ministerial body and shall adopt disciplinary procedures necessary to protect the Church against any unethical practice.

ARTICLE XIII Committees

SECTION 1.

The Officers of the Congress shall act as an agenda committee. An outline of the program along with the subjects to be discussed during the session shall be sent to the membership of the Congress at least six months prior to the session.

SECTION 2.

A Registration Committee of three shall be appointed by the Officers of the Congress. The Registration Committee shall register and certify all delegates present and report on matters of a quorum to the Congress in session.

SECTION 3.

A Resolution Committee of five shall be appointed by the president and confirmed by the Congress. All business to be introduced to the



Congress, including biblical studies, shall be submitted through this committee. Resolutions may originate with this committee.

ARTICLE XIV Parliamentary Authority

Roberts Rules of Order Newly Revised shall be the parliamentary authority for the Congress.

ARTICLE XV Amendments

SECTION 1.

Amendments to the Bylaws:

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular or special meeting of the Congress provided;

- A. The proposed amendment has been recommended to the Congress by a majority vote of the ministerial body of a member church, association of churches, national conference or council, or by the Officers of the Congress.
- B. The wording of the proposed amendment had been distributed to the member churches of the Congress no less than one year prior to the meeting in which it is to be considered.
- C. It is adopted by a two-thirds vote.

SECTION 2.

Amendment to the Statement of Faith:

Amendments may be made to Article X, Statement of Faith, by adding a statement or by amending a statement in a regular or special meeting of the Congress provided:

- A. The proposed amendment to the Statement of Faith is recommended to the Congress by a majority vote of the ministerial body of a member church, association of churches, national conference or council or by the Officers of the Congress.
- B. The wording of the proposed amendment accompanied by a Bible study in support of the amendment has been distributed to the member churches of the Congress one year prior to the meeting in which it is to be considered.
- C. It is adopted by a two-thirds vote.

SECTION 3.

Interpretation of the Statement of Faith:

An interpretation of any of the Statements of Faith contained in Article X, may be considered in a regular or special meeting of the Congress provided:

- A. It has been recommended to the Congress by a majority vote of the ministerial body of a member church or by the Officers of the Congress.
- B. The wording of the proposed interpretation accompanied by a Bible study in support of the interpretation has been distributed to member churches of the Congress one year prior to the meeting in which it is to be considered.
- C. It is adopted by a two-thirds vote.
- D. Statements of Faith that have been interpreted by the Congress in the future shall be marked with an asterisk and the interpretation shall be published as a Standing Rule in an Appendix to the Congress Bylaws.



Standing Rules of the International Ministerial Congress

Index

Standing Rule I — Order of Business2	Standing Rule III — Representative and Alternate Delegates2
Standing Rule II — World Zones2	Standing Rule IV — Seating Observers...2



Standing Rules of the International Ministerial Congress

I. Order of Business

- A. Call to Order
- B. Registration Committee Report
- C. Officers' Reports
- D. Committee Reports
- E. Program
 - 1. New Business
 - 2. Biblical Discussion
 - 3. Workshops and Instructions
- F. Adjournment

II. World Zones

The membership of the Congress shall be organized into seven zones as follows:

Zone One: United States and Canada.

Zone Two: Mexico, Central America, and the Caribbean.

Zone Three: South America.

Zone Four: Asia.

Zone Five: Africa.

Zone Six: Australia and the Pacific Rim.

Zone Seven: Europe, Russia, the Baltic States, and the Middle East

III. Representative and Alternate Delegates

Members of the Congress shall be entitled to one Representative Delegate who shall deliberate and vote on its behalf. Additional delegates may be sent as alternates at the discretion of a member church but will not have voting privileges in the business of the Congress. A Representative Delegate may yield his time in discussion of business to any alternate delegate representing his national church(es).

IV. Seating Observers

Ministers of the Church of God who are not members of the Congress may be admitted as observers by registering with the registration committee and paying the registration fee.