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2  
3 **PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE**  
4 **CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS**  
5 **OF THE VIRLINA DISTRICT**  
6 **CHURCH OF THE BRETHREN**  
7

8 **PREAMBLE**

9 God is the active creator of all things. God speaks and the world is formed. God acts and the human family  
10 is created in God's image. God calls all persons into the family of God.  
11

12 Through Jesus Christ, God speaks, acts and calls into being a new community; a community of love,  
13 compassion, justice and peace. Christians are those people who accept that call and strive to follow the one whose  
14 name they bear.  
15

16 We, the Virlina District of the Church of the Brethren, accept God's call. By the power of the Holy Spirit we  
17 seek to be faithful to the Gospel in word and deed. Drawing upon our Pietist and Anabaptist traditions, we affirm that  
18 faith cannot be constrained by simple statements and creeds. Therefore, we hold the New Testament to be our rule of  
19 faith and practice.  
20

21 In order that we may operate within the confines of our world, we adopt this constitution and by-laws for our  
22 structure and function. May God's Word become flesh through the ministry and mission of the Virlina District.  
23

24 **MISSION STATEMENT**

25 *"God saw everything that He had made, and, indeed, it was very good." (Genesis 1:31 NRSV)*  
26

27 *"...be transformed by the renewing of your minds,*  
28 *so that you may discern what is the will of God*  
29 *what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:2 NRSV)*  
30

31 That which God creates, God also redeems. Therefore the mission of the Virlina District is to:

- 32 - be faithful caretakers of this wondrous gift through outdoor ministries
- 33 - promote renewal through education, spiritual growth and worship.  
34

35 *"But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people,*  
36 *in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness*  
37 *into his marvelous light." (I Peters 2:9 NRSV)*  
38

39 Through baptism, each Christian is called to be in ministry. Therefore the mission of the Virlina District is to:

- 40 - equip and strengthen local congregations;
- 41 - join with congregations in calling and training persons for set-apart ministry;
- 42 - identify and develop human and material resources for the work of the District.  
43

44 *"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations,*  
45 *baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,*  
46 *and teach them to obey everything that I have commanded you." (Matthew 28: 19-20a NRSV)*  
47

48 *"...truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family,*  
49 *you did it to me." (Matthew 25:40 NRSV)*  
50

51 As those who continue the work of Jesus, the mission of the Virlina District is to:

- 52 - encourage congregations to call new disciples;
- 53 - establish fellowships that share the vision of the Church of the Brethren;
- 54 - create and support compassion, justice, peace and love.

1 Ours is a great calling. May God bless our efforts in mission and ministry. Amen.

2

3 **ARTICLE I. -PURPOSE**

4 The purpose of the District shall be to administer and coordinate the religious and business activities of the  
5 Church of the Brethren within the bounds of the District, seeking to fulfill the great commission of Jesus Christ  
6 (Matthew 28: 18-20). The District shall recognize its relationship to the denomination by being subject to the policies  
7 and cooperative with the program of the denomination and in other appropriate ways, (e. g. members of Standing  
8 Committee elected by District Conference serve as delegates to Annual Conference). The District may appoint  
9 representatives to cooperative religious bodies as need and opportunity arises. The District shall have power to own  
10 and convey real estate, and to be trustee of property, endowment and other funds.

11

12 The District is a group of congregations located in geographic proximity to each other. Having common  
13 purposes the District enables member congregations to do together what they cannot do separately and provides  
14 resources and help to member congregations to discover and carry out their own unique ministries.

15

16 **ARTICLE II. - NAME AND MEMBER CONGREGATIONS**

17 The Virlina District of the Church of the Brethren shall be comprised of those congregations, fellowships,  
18 projects, and special ministries located within West Virginia beginning at the confluence of the Ohio and Big Sandy  
19 Rivers northward along the Ohio River, thence east along the Kanawha River to the western boundary of Kanawha  
20 County; thence along the northern boundaries of Kanawha, Fayette and Greenbrier Counties to the West  
21 Virginia/Virginia border; thence along the northern boundaries of Alleghany, Botetourt and Bedford Counties, and the  
22 City of Lynchburg; thence along the James River, including the entirety of Nelson County east of the main line of the  
23 Norfolk Southern Railway, to the western boundary of Henrico County; thence along the northern boundaries of  
24 Henrico, Hanover and New Kent Counties to the south bank of the York River to the Atlantic Ocean. On the south,  
25 the line, beginning at the confluence of the Ohio and Big Sandy Rivers, runs along the boundary of Kentucky and West  
26 Virginia; thence along the Virginia/West Virginia border to Interstate 77; thence south to Wytheville, VA along the  
27 route of Interstate 77 to the North Carolina/Virginia border including the entirety of Carroll County; thence east to U.S.  
28 Highway 52, south on U.S. Highway 52 to U.S. Highway 601 at Mt. Airy, NC; thence south on U.S. Highway 601 to  
29 the North Carolina/South Carolina border, but including the entirety of Cabarrus County; thence following the North  
30 Carolina/South Carolina state line to the Atlantic Ocean, and as amended.

31

32 **ARTICLE III. - INCORPORATION**

33 The District shall be incorporated under, and pursuant to, the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia where  
34 its principal office is located. The District Office shall be the principal place of business. The affairs of the corporation  
35 shall be managed by the District Board whose chairperson, vice-chairperson, secretary, and/or treasurer shall be the  
36 legal officers of the corporation. The District Executive Minister shall be the chief executive officer of the corporation,  
37 acting at the direction of the Board. The Board may designate from among its legal officers who will sign specific legal  
38 documents.

39

40 **ARTICLE IV. - DISTRICT CONFERENCE**

41 A. Purpose of District Conference

42 It is a meeting to which delegates and other interested persons from the member congregations come  
43 in business sessions to give implementation to District purpose. District Conference is the final  
44 authority of the District on policy, program, and procedure. With worship and fellowship as a vital  
45 part of the District Conference, the following agenda is indicative of its principal business function:

- 46 1. Celebrate achievements.
- 47 2. Survey continuing opportunities and needs.
- 48 3. Outline objectives, determine priorities, and set goals.
- 49 4. Approve strategy and accept policy.
- 50 5. Elect conference officers, the District Board, and other personnel as called for in this  
51 constitution.
- 52 6. Organize for action and delegate responsibility.
- 53 7. Dedicate human and material resources.
- 54 8. Challenge participants to go forth in service.

- 1 B. Conference Delegate Body  
2 1. All members of the congregations and fellowships of the District shall have the privilege of  
3 moving and discussing the business of District Conference. However, only the official  
4 delegates shall have the right to vote.  
5 2. There shall be four delegates including the Pastor and Church Board Chairperson from each  
6 member congregation and recognized fellowship with 200 members or fewer. Larger  
7 congregations shall have one delegate more for each additional 100 members or major fraction  
8 thereof.  
9 3. Each congregation and recognized fellowship shall be represented by the following as  
10 delegates:  
11 a. Pastor.  
12 b. Church Board Chairperson, or equivalent, whose alternate shall be the Vice  
13 Chairperson or equivalent.  
14 c. Elected delegates based on membership.  
15 4. Delegates other than the Pastor and Church Board Chairperson shall be elected for a two-year  
16 term with half of their number being selected each year.  
17 5. The congregation may provide for alternate delegates in case any regular delegate cannot  
18 serve. If an alternate for an elected delegate should serve during the first year of the term the  
19 alternate shall complete the term. In case of a pastoral vacancy, the Interim Pastor or a  
20 member of the Church Board designated by the local congregation may serve in place of the  
21 Pastor.  
22

- 23 C. Conference Officers  
24 1. The officers of District Conference shall be the Moderator, Moderator-elect, and Clerk.  
25 2. The Moderator-elect shall be elected by District Conference to serve a two-year term: the first  
26 year as Moderator-elect, the second year as Moderator.  
27 3. The Clerk shall be elected by District Conference to serve a three-year term.  
28 4. Conference appointments may be made by the officers subject to the approval of District  
29 Conference.  
30

- 31 D. Conference Committees  
32 1. Nominating and Personnel Committee  
33 The Nominating and Personnel Committee shall consist of twelve members. One member  
34 shall be elected by District Conference from each of the nine areas (see By-Laws, Article X)  
35 to serve on the Nominating and Personnel Committee. They shall serve for one three-year  
36 term and may not succeed themselves. The Moderator-elect serves as chairperson of the  
37 committee. The Moderator and Clerk of the District Conference shall complete the committee.  
38 2. District Conference Program and Arrangements Committee  
39 The District Conference Program and Arrangements Committee shall consist of eight  
40 members. The Moderator serves as chairperson. Other members shall be the Moderator-elect,  
41 the Clerk, and five persons elected by District Conference. They shall serve for one three-year  
42 term and may not succeed themselves.  
43

- 44 E. Standing Committee Delegates  
45 The appropriate number of delegates shall be elected by District Conference to represent the District  
46 on the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference Standing Committee. The directives of Annual  
47 Conference shall be followed in determining their eligibility and tenure.  
48

## 49 **ARTICLE V. - DISTRICT BOARD**

- 50 A. Purpose of the District Board  
51 The District Board, hereinafter referred to as the Board, shall manage and administer the work of the  
52 District within the respective budgets, as authorized by District Conference. The Board is the legal  
53 agent of the District and shall be empowered to act on behalf of the District Conference *ad interim*  
54 except for those actions specifically reserved for District Conference as set forth in this constitution

1 and by-laws.

2  
3 B. Board Members

4 The District Board shall consist of ~~33~~34 members. Thirty members shall be elected by the  
5 Conference. Of these thirty, each area shall be represented on a basis of one board member per seven  
6 hundred fifty members, or fraction thereof. The remainder of the thirty, if any, will be elected at large.  
7 Ten members shall be elected to the Board annually. ~~The chairperson of the New Church  
8 Development Committee shall serve as a voting member of the District Board by virtue of office.  
9 The New Church Development Committee and the Outdoor Ministries Committee shall each  
10 select two representatives, one of whom shall be the Chairperson of the respective committees,  
11 to serve on the Board with vote. The Outdoor Ministries Committee shall select two  
12 representatives (including the Chairperson) to serve on the Board with vote. In the event the  
13 board representative is elected chairperson of the Outdoor Ministries Committee, the  
14 vice-chairperson of the committee shall serve.~~ The District Moderator, Moderator-elect, Treasurer,  
15 Financial Secretary, District Executive Minister, ~~Associate District Executive Minister~~, Camp  
16 Director, Standing Committee Delegates, and any Church of the Brethren Mission and Ministry Board  
17 members residing within the District shall be ex-officio members without vote. If a board member is  
18 elected to the position of District Moderator, Moderator-elect, Treasurer or Financial Secretary, their  
19 former position on the Board shall be declared vacant.

20  
21 C. Board Officers and Organization

22 The Board shall be organized annually by the Secretary of the Board during District Conference after  
23 the election of new board members for the next District Conference year. The Chairperson, Vice-  
24 chairperson, the Commission Chairpersons, and Board Representative to the Outdoor Ministries  
25 Committee, shall be selected by the Board from among its elected members. The District Executive  
26 Minister shall serve as secretary of the Board. The Board shall appoint a treasurer and financial  
27 secretary. **The Moderator-Elect shall serve on a commission of their choice without vote.** All  
28 members of the Board, excluding the Board Chairperson, District Moderator, **Camp Director**,  
29 Standing Committee Delegates and Mission and Ministry Board members, shall be assigned to  
30 commissions upon the basis of aptitude and interest. The Board will appoint one of its members to be  
31 a voting member of the Outdoor Ministries Committee. This person shall be a voting member of the  
32 Commission on Nurture. There shall be an approximate equal number of elected members on each  
33 commission. The Board Chairperson shall be ex-officio member of all commissions and committees.  
34 The Treasurer and Financial Secretary shall be on the Commission on Stewardship with full privileges  
35 of the commission. No person can serve **simultaneously** as an elected member of ~~both~~ the District  
36 Board, **and the New Church Development Committee** or the Outdoor Ministries Committee  
37 **simultaneously**.

38  
39 D. Commissions and Committees

- 40 1. The work of the Board shall be implemented by the following:
- 41 a. Commission on Nurture
  - 42 b. Commission on Witness
  - 43 c. Commission on Ministry
  - 44 d. Commission on Stewardship
  - 45 e. New Church Development Committee
  - 46 f. Outdoor Ministries Committee
- 47 2. The commissions shall be responsible to the Board. Each shall elect its own vice-chairperson  
48 and secretary.
- 49 3. **The New Church Development Committee and the** Outdoor Ministries Committee shall  
50 be accountable to the Board. ~~It~~ **Each** shall elect its chairperson, vice-chairperson, **and**  
51 secretary, ~~and treasurer~~.
- 52 4. The Commissions and the Outdoor Ministries Committee may find it advantageous to appoint  
53 task groups for specific assignments, chosen on the basis of interest and ability.

54  
55 E. Committees

- 1           1.       Executive Committee  
2                 There shall be an Executive Committee of the Board consisting of the following: the  
3                 Chairperson and Vice-chairperson of the Board, who shall be the officers of the committee,  
4                 the four commission chairpersons, the chairperson of the New Church Development  
5                 Committee and the chairperson of the Outdoor Ministries Committee. The District Executive  
6                 Minister shall serve as secretary of the Executive Committee. The District Moderator,  
7                 Moderator-elect, Treasurer, Financial Secretary; **and the** District Executive Minister ~~and~~  
8                 **Associate District Executive Minister** shall be ex-officio members without vote.  
9
  
- 10           2.       Outdoor Ministries Committee  
11                 There shall be an Outdoor Ministries Committee consisting of thirteen voting members. Six  
12                 voting members will be elected by District Conference (Two each year); six voting members  
13                 will be elected by the District Board (Two each year). A District Board member from the  
14                 Commission on Nurture serves on the committee with full privileges. The Chairperson shall  
15                 be elected from the voting members of the committee and shall be a member of the District  
16                 Board Executive Committee with vote. The ~~Associate District Executive Minister~~, Camp  
17                 Director and Treasurer shall be ex-officio without vote.  
18  
19                 The Outdoor Ministries Committee shall organize annually. The term and tenure for all  
20                 members shall be the same as for other District offices.  
21
  
- 22           3.       New Church Development Committee  
23                 There shall be a New Church Development Committee consisting of eight to fifteen (8-15)  
24                 members. These persons shall be appointed by the District Board Executive Committee and  
25                 confirmed by vote of the District Board. The Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Secretary  
26                 shall be elected from the membership of this committee. The Chairperson shall be a member  
27                 of the District Board and the District Board Executive Committee with vote.  
28
  
- 29           4.       Historical Committee  
30                 a.       There shall be a Historical Committee of ~~three~~ **five** members appointed by the board.  
31                 b.       The Secretary of the Board shall serve as executive of this committee.  
32

33       F.       **Review of Financial Statements Auditing Committee**

34       The District Board shall provide for an annual **review of the corporate financial statements by a**  
35       **certified public accountant (CPA). audit.** ~~The Auditing Committee shall consist of one or more~~  
36       **persons selected by the District Board. Normal tenure shall apply to auditors except in the case**  
37       **of a certified public accountant (CPA) who may have indefinite tenure.** ~~The auditor's report of~~  
38       **the annual review** shall be distributed to the District Board and made available to the District  
39       Conference.  
40

41       **ARTICLE VI. - SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

42       The District Conference, District Board, or the Executive Committee of the Board may constitute or authorize  
43       such other continuing or short-term committees as necessary to enable the District and/or local church to best  
44       accomplish its purpose. When the specific assignment of a committee is achieved, the committee shall be dissolved.  
45       Refer to Article 5, Section C, #2 (By-Laws) for detail of the process of review and dissolution.  
46

47       **ARTICLE VII. - RELATED INSTITUTIONS**

48       The District may enter into relationship with separately organized religious institutions such as homes for the  
49       aging, colleges, and other institutions of interest to the District. In each instance there shall be mutual agreement  
50       between the District and said institution as to the nature of the relationship. The involvement of the District in terms  
51       of financial support, selection of Trustees, program endorsement, receiving of reports, etc., shall be subject to District  
52       Conference action.  
53

54       **ARTICLE VIII. - THE AREA PLAN**

1 The District shall function through nine designated areas in order to facilitate the organization and  
2 administration of District affairs.

3  
4 **ARTICLE IX. - FISCAL YEAR AND DISTRICT CONFERENCE YEAR**

- 5 A. The financial year of the district for reporting purposes shall be the calendar year unless otherwise  
6 adopted by the Church of the Brethren Annual Conference.
- 7 B. The district conference year for election and reporting purposes shall be from the adjournment of one  
8 annual district conference to the adjournment of the next annual district conference.

9  
10 **BY-LAWS**

11 **ARTICLE I. - PERSONNEL SELECTION AND TENURE**

- 12 A. The Nominating and Personnel Committee shall prepare a ballot for delegates at District Conference  
13 to elect officers of District Conference, members of committees, Standing Committee delegates, Board  
14 members, and such other positions as are to be elected by District Conference.  
15
- 16 B. The ballot shall include only the names of the persons who have consented to be nominees and have  
17 agreed to fulfill the responsibilities of the office, if elected. Prior to the election, information about  
18 each nominee shall be given to the delegates. Following the election a letter shall be sent to each  
19 nominee reporting the results. These duties shall be the responsibility of the Nominating and Personnel  
20 committee.  
21
- 22 C. Elections and appointments shall be conducted in such a way as to secure leadership from all parts of  
23 the District, and be representative of the District membership. Board membership shall provide a good  
24 balance between pastors and lay members.  
25  
26 When an area representative, District Board member, member of Nominating and Personnel  
27 Committee, etc. moves from the respective area, the member shall complete the current year of service  
28 but shall then be replaced by another person from that area.  
29
- 30 D. The term of office for all elected or appointed personnel shall be three years beginning after the  
31 District Conference at which they are elected, unless otherwise stated in the constitution or by-laws.  
32 No one shall be eligible to serve more than two terms in succession; any part of a term shall be  
33 considered as a full term.  
34
- 35 E. Anyone who does not serve in an elected or appointed position in a responsible way and is absent from  
36 meetings for six months may have the office declared vacant by the Board.  
37
- 38 F. Approximately one third of the membership of the Board and continuing committees shall be elected  
39 in anyone year.  
40

41 **ARTICLE II. - EMPLOYED STAFF**

- 42 A. District Executive Staff  
43 The District shall employ district executive staff. They shall be persons qualified by training,  
44 experience, and personal dedication to Christ and the church to guide, counsel, and encourage district  
45 and local-workers in the development of vital and well-balanced church programs.  
46 1. District Executive Minister  
47 The District Executive Minister shall be the executive officer of the Board and shall give  
48 general oversight to the implementation of District ministries. The District Executive Minister  
49 shall serve as secretary of the District Board, custodian of all official papers, and be  
50 responsible for pastoral placement.  
51 2. ~~Associate District Executive Minister~~  
52 ~~The Associate District Executive Minister will work with the District Executive Minister~~  
53 ~~in the implementation of goals and priorities as established by the District Board and~~  
54 ~~District Conference.~~

1 ~~3.~~ Other Executive Staff

2 Additional Executive Staff may be employed as District needs justify and funding makes  
3 possible.  
4

5 B. Other Staff

- 6 1. Clerical Staff for the District Office shall be employed by the District Executive Minister and  
7 confirmed by the District Board Executive Committee.  
8 2. When the work and size of the District warrant it, additional qualified staff shall be employed.  
9

10 **ARTICLE III. - STAFF EMPLOYMENT PROCEDURES**

- 11 A. Selection, employment, evaluation and compensation of District Executive staff and other professional  
12 persons, except where otherwise designated, as well as the termination of such services, shall be the  
13 responsibility of the Board in keeping with denominational procedures and policies and in consultation  
14 with the appropriate **General Board denominational** staff personnel.  
15  
16 B. The terms of employment for all personnel shall be carefully stipulated and reviewed annually. Such  
17 terms shall be set forth in writing on approved forms and shall be considered an agreement between  
18 the contracting parties.  
19  
20 C. When there is multiple staff, the division of responsibility and the lines of authority shall be clearly  
21 defined and annually reviewed by the appropriate District officials. Although there must be close  
22 cooperation and harmony between staff members, in the final analysis all personnel are responsible  
23 to the Board except where otherwise designated.  
24  
25 D. There shall be a written position description for each employee.  
26

27 **ARTICLE IV. - CONFERENCE OFFICERS, DELEGATES AND FINANCIAL OFFICERS -**  
28 **QUALIFICATIONS AND DUTIES**

- 29 A. All officers and delegates shall be members in good standing of a member congregation of **this district**  
30 **of** the Church of the Brethren and shall serve faithfully in their respective offices.  
31  
32 B. The Moderator shall preside at business sessions of the District Conference and shall be ex-officio  
33 member of the Board and Executive Committee. The Moderator shall be chairperson of the Conference  
34 Program and Arrangements Committee and shall serve on the Nominating and Personnel Committee.  
35 The Moderator shall study the needs of the District and give interpretation and counsel to the Board  
36 and District Conference, and to other appropriate District agencies.  
37  
38 C. The Moderator-elect shall perform the duties of the moderator in the Moderator's absence or at the  
39 Moderator's request and shall become familiar with the program of the District in preparation for  
40 moderatorship. The Moderator-elect shall be an ex-officio member of the Board and Executive  
41 Committee and shall serve on one of its commissions. The Moderator-elect shall be chairperson of the  
42 Nominating and Personnel Committee and a member of the District Conference Program and  
43 Arrangements Committee.  
44  
45 D. The Clerk shall record the minutes of District Conference and shall, in cooperation with the designated  
46 District Executive Minister, prepare them for publication and distribution to the churches. The Clerk  
47 shall be a member of the Program and Arrangements Committee and Nominating and Personnel  
48 Committee.  
49  
50 E. Congregational delegates and alternates shall be elected from the active membership of the  
51 congregation. Delegates shall be expected to attend all sessions of District Conference. They shall  
52 report and communicate actions and concerns from District to congregations and vice-versa. (See  
53 Annual Conference Minutes, 1947.)  
54  
55 Delegates shall be informed of the work and opportunities of the Church of the Brethren at all levels

1 of its organization and program. Delegates shall be expected to attend local congregational business  
2 meetings. Delegates shall be elected at the time of general elections in the congregations and shall  
3 serve on a year-round basis. Delegates' names and addresses shall be reported to the District Office  
4 when elected. Delegates shall register at District Conference in order to officially represent their  
5 congregation.

6  
7 F. Financial Officers (Appointees of District Board who serve the District)

- 8 1. The Treasurer shall be custodian of all district funds, disbursing them as authorized by the  
9 District Conference and the District Board. The Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of  
10 the District Board and Executive Committee and shall serve on the Commission on  
11 Stewardship. The Treasurer shall make written reports to the District Board and to the District  
12 Conference as requested and submit the financial records for an annual external review.
- 13 2. The Financial Secretary shall receive all funds for the unified budgets of Camp Bethel and the  
14 District Board and deposit them promptly in a depository designated by the Board. In the  
15 absence of the Financial Secretary, the District Executive Minister and/or Camp Director may  
16 substitute in order to expedite prompt deposits. The Financial Secretary shall be an ex-officio  
17 member of the Board and Executive Committee and shall serve on the Commission on  
18 Stewardship. The Financial Secretary shall prepare quarterly a report of the giving from  
19 member congregations and of all other receipts. The reports shall be made available to the  
20 Commission ~~of Commission~~ on Stewardship, the District Board and the congregations. The  
21 records shall be submitted for an annual external review.

22  
23 **ARTICLE V - DISTRICT BOARD FUNCTIONS**

24 A. The Executive Committee of the Board shall:

- 25 1. Recommend District Executive Staff for employment by the Board.  
26 2. Counsel with or provide for counsel for the District Executive Staff regarding their work and  
27 records of agreement including periodic evaluation.  
28 3. Assist the chair of the Board in developing agendas, reviewing business items and making  
29 recommendations to the Board.  
30 4. Formulate and recommend the District budget to the Board including setting the salaries for  
31 all staff personnel.  
32 5. Direct the work of church development of new or merging congregations and the dissolving  
33 of congregations.  
34 6. Serve *ad interim* when the work of the Board can be expedited without infringing upon the  
35 Board's responsibilities and authority.

36  
37 B. The Board shall:

- 38 1. Fulfill the directives of the District Conference and make an annual report to the Conference.  
39 2. Develop and review annually position descriptions for each District Executive staff person  
40 which clearly outline responsibilities and accountability by delegation of said responsibilities  
41 to appropriate sub-groups.  
42 3. Assign, supervise, coordinate and review annually the work of the Commissions and  
43 Committees and also interpret the rules of procedure of the Commissions and Committees.  
44 4. Review the reports and approve the budget of the Outdoor Ministries Committee.  
45 5. Assist the member congregations in self study and fulfilling their mission.  
46 6. Project long-range planning, set goals, and initiate and terminate programs.  
47 7. Promote, administer and supervise the denominational program through the Commissions and  
48 Committees of the District.  
49 8. Employ and direct the work of the District Executive Staff.  
50 9. Make all appointments for which the Board is responsible and clarify the responsibilities of  
51 each.  
52 10. Fill vacancies in District offices occurring between District Conferences and fill such other  
53 vacancies not provided for otherwise.  
54 11. Have responsibility for all District funds, endowments and annuities, and hold title to District



1 properties. Distribute and invest District funds as authorized by the District Conference.  
2 Negotiate the purchase and sale of property, and the borrowing and lending of money on  
3 behalf of the District.

- 4 12. Approve all capital funds campaigns by commissions, committees and organizations within  
5 the District.
- 6 13. Prepare the District budget for presentation to the District Conference.
- 7 14. Provide for an annual review of financial accounts and procedures.
- 8 15. Allocate and define authority with respect to the establishment of bank accounts and the  
9 signing of checks and other legal documents.
- 10 16. Arrange for bonding of District personnel.
- 11 17. Receive, consider and make disposition of concerns brought by any person or church group.
- 12 18. Coordinate the District program.
- 13 19. Process queries or other business initiated by congregations or the District Board and process  
14 according to denominational polity.
- 15 20. Plan or otherwise provide in-service training opportunities for Board members, employed  
16 staff, and other District personnel.
- 17 21. Recommend to District Conference the recognition of fellowships and the chartering of  
18 congregations.
- 19 22. Give direction to the formation of special interest and/or age groups within the District. All  
20 such organizations shall exist to aid in fulfilling the mission of the church at large in the  
21 District. All such organizations shall be subject to the oversight and direction of the Board or  
22 its respective commissions.
- 23 23. Recognize ministers.
  - 24 a. Initiative for licensing, **commissioning**, and ordaining persons to the ministry may  
25 originate either with the individual, local congregation, the District Commission on  
26 Ministry, or the District Board.
  - 27 b. All candidates for licensing, **commissioning**, and ordination shall be interviewed by  
28 the Commission on Ministry.
  - 29 c. The Commission on Ministry shall recommend candidates for **commissioning and**  
30 ordination to the District Board for approval and shall have the authority to license  
31 individuals.
  - 32 d. Approved candidates shall be reported to the local congregation for its action.
  - 33 e. When the congregation approves a recommended candidate for licensing **or**  
34 ordination, the Commission on Ministry shall then schedule the appropriate service.
- 35 24. Handle problems of discipline and appeal.
  - 36 a. When problems of discipline arise, the District Board shall provide a reconciliation  
37 committee for the purpose of listening to, counseling with, and offering  
38 recommendations regarding the party or parties involved.
  - 39 b. The committee shall make a report to the Board when appropriate.
  - 40 c. The committee shall refer unresolved cases to the Board for its further consideration  
41 and action.
  - 42 d. Matters not resolved satisfactorily under the direction of the Board may be referred  
43 to the Standing Committee of Annual Conference.

44  
45 C. Special Committees

- 46 1. The Board shall provide supervision, training and instruction to each special committee  
47 established by the District Conference, Board or Executive Committee **including an annual**  
48 **review of the committee.**
- 49 2. The Board shall evaluate the need for and effectiveness of each special committee every third  
50 year (staggered so that not all committees are evaluated in the same year). For special  
51 committees established by District Conference, the Board shall recommend to the District  
52 Conference whether the committee should continue or be dissolved. For committees  
53 established by the Board or the Executive Committee, the Board shall decide whether the  
54 committee should continue or be dissolved. The committee shall be dissolved unless  
55 continuation is approved by a majority vote.

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**ARTICLE VI. -COMMISSION AND COMMITTEE RESPONSIBILITIES (The lists are not exhaustive.)**

The listing of responsibilities below is regarded as suggestive.

A. Commission on Nurture

The Commission on Nurture shall:

1. Initiate and promote such program and work in the congregations as fosters the spiritual growth and development of persons.
2. Shall stimulate the congregations to have a vital encounter with God.
3. Promote the total cause of Christian education.
4. Provide opportunities for training leaders and workers.
5. Counsel and coordinate age and interest groups.
6. Provide resources and nurture the inner life of the congregation.
7. Provide supervision, training and instruction to each committee that the commission appoints including an annual review of the committee.
8. Evaluate the need for an effectiveness of each committee that the commission appoints every third year (staggered so that not all committees are evaluated in the same year) and recommend to the Board at its September meeting whether the committee should continue or be dissolved.

B. Commission on Witness

The Commission on Witness shall:

1. Direct and undergird the witness of the churches to the world.
2. Urge each congregation to share the love of God and the gospel of Christ with persons everywhere through the work of evangelism.
3. To support missions at home and abroad.
4. Provide service workers.
5. Act on social concerns.
6. Proclaim and use the power of God to meet the needs of the world.
7. Provide supervision, training and instruction to each committee that the commission appoints including an annual review of the committee.
8. Evaluate the need for and effectiveness of each committee that the commission appoints every third year (staggered so that not all committees are evaluated in the same year) and recommend to the Board at its September meeting whether the committee should continue or be dissolved.

C. Commission on Ministry

The Commission on Ministry shall:

1. Give counsel and guidance to all ministerial affairs in the District.
2. Seek ways to strengthen the relationship and understanding between congregations and pastors.
3. Provide training for local persons responsible for church-pastor relations.
4. Encourage pastors in their professional growth and effectiveness of the pastoral ministry.
5. Counsel and assist congregations and individuals in the various phases of extending and receiving a call to the ministry, such as: equipping and training for the ministry, and licensing and ordaining ministers.
6. Review the ministerial list periodically and shall make recommendations to the Board regarding those ministers who no longer appear to show interest or dedication in their ministerial calling.
7. Provide supervision, training and instruction to each committee that the commission appoints including an annual review of the committee.
8. Evaluate the need for and effectiveness of each committee that the commission appoints every third year (staggered so that not all committees are evaluated in the same year) and recommend to the Board at its September meeting whether the committee should continue or be dissolved.

- 1 D. Commission on Stewardship  
2 The Commission on Stewardship shall:  
3 1. Aid and challenge the congregations and District to be faithful stewards of all of God's gifts.  
4 2. Promote a program of general stewardship education and enlistment in the congregations.  
5 3. Supervise the financial interests of the District.  
6 4. Safeguard and utilize the property of the District.  
7 ~~5. Develop and maintain a talent bank.~~  
8 ~~6.5.~~ Solicit support for the basic work of nurture, witness, and ministry through the local  
9 congregations, the District, and the denomination.  
10 ~~7.6.~~ Provide supervision, training and instruction to each committee that the commission appoints  
11 including an annual review of the committee.  
12 ~~8.7.~~ Evaluate the need for and effectiveness of each committee that the commission appoints every  
13 third year (staggered so that not all committees are evaluated in the same year) and  
14 recommend to the Board at its September meeting whether the committee should continue or  
15 be dissolved.

- 16  
17 E. Outdoor Ministries Committee  
18 The Outdoor Ministries committee shall:  
19 1. Develop and promote outdoor ministry programs for congregations and the District.  
20 2. Plan, promote, and supervise the operation of Camp Bethel and its ministries.  
21 3. Conduct an annual evaluation of program in the light of the adopted philosophy and make  
22 projections for future direction.  
23 4. Report both the operating and capital phases of the program and recommend a budget to the  
24 District Board approval.  
25 5. Submit minutes, legal records and business records to be filed in the district office. Additional  
26 copies are to be retained at Camp Bethel. Historical and reference materials will also be  
27 lodged at the camp.  
28 6. Be responsible for selection and tenure of the Camp Director subject to approval of District  
29 Board; will formulate the director's position description.

- 30  
31 F. New Church Development Committee  
32 The New Church Development Committee shall:  
33 1. Develop and update a strategy for new church development for Virlina District.  
34 2. Survey areas for the District to determine potential for new church development utilizing the  
35 services of an outside consultant.  
36 3. Make recommendations to the Executive Committee for the approval of District Board on  
37 plans for the initiation and development of new congregations including location, site, timing,  
38 funding necessary and style of ministry considered most appropriate.  
39 4. Review and make recommendations concerning projects initiated by individuals or  
40 congregations within the District.  
41 5. Counsel with the Commission on Stewardship concerning financial arrangements and fund-  
42 raising efforts necessary for New Church Development.  
43 6. Appoint steering committees for new projects.  
44 7. Maintain an overview and supervisory responsibility for all New Church Development  
45 projects.

- 46  
47 G. Historical Committee  
48 The Historical Committee shall:  
49 1. Be concerned with all matters of historic interest to the District.  
50 2. Shall collect, preserve, write, and as authorized, publish such materials.

51  
52 **ARTICLE VII. - BUSINESS MEETINGS**

- 53 A. District Conference  
54 1. The District Conference shall convene once each year. Special meetings may be called at the  
55 discretion of the Conference officers in consultation with the Board. The Conference should

- 1 convene at a place centrally located.
- 2 2. District Conference shall begin on the second Friday night of November.
- 3 3. The District Conference Program and Arrangements Committee shall be responsible for length
- 4 of conference, conference program, obtaining leadership, determining the place of meeting,
- 5 securing facilities, providing for exhibits, registering delegates, and making other necessary
- 6 arrangements for the Conference.
- 7
- 8 B. District Board
- 9 The Board shall meet quarterly. Special meetings of the board may be called by the Executive
- 10 Committee. **All meetings of the District Board are open to the public, except for executive**
- 11 **sessions that deal with personnel issues, litigation, or sensitive matters.**
- 12
- 13 C. Commissions and Committees
- 14 The Commissions and Committees shall meet regularly or as the Board may direct.
- 15
- 16 D. Advance Notice
- 17 Adequate advance notice of all business meetings shall be given to the membership involved.
- 18

19 **ARTICLE VIII. - QUORUM**

- 20 A No quorum shall be required for District Conference except as may be specified by rules of order or
- 21 state corporation law. It is desirable to have as many delegates present as possible for the District
- 22 Conference.
- 23
- 24 B. For meetings of the Board and Commissions a majority of the elected members shall constitute a
- 25 quorum.
- 26

27 **ARTICLE IX. - RULES OF ORDER**

28 Unless otherwise specified in the by-laws, Robert's Rules of Order shall be the official rules of order for the

29 District Conference and the Board meetings.

30

31 **ARTICLE X. - AREAS**

32 The following areas shall be recognized as units to facilitate geographic representation, organization and

33 administration of District affairs. At the initiative of the District Board, or congregation(s) the board shall review the

34 congregational alignment and revise as circumstances may require.

35

- 36 1. Franklin County:
- 37 Antioch, Bethany, Bethlehem, Boones Chapel (Snow Creek), Boones Mill, Cedar Bluff, Fairview
- 38 (Rocky Mount), Ferrum, Germantown Brick, Henry Fork, Monte Vista, Nineveh, Oak Grove (South),
- 39 Rocky Mount-First, Smith Mountain Lake.
- 40
- 41 2. Martinsville:
- 42 Bassett, Collinsville, Danville-Emmanuel, Jones Chapel, Mount Hermon, New Bethel, New Hope,
- 43 Schoolfield, Smith River.
- 44
- 45 3. North Carolina:
- 46 Concord-Living Faith, Durham-Peace Covenant, Eden-First, Fraternity, Maple Grove, Shelton.
- 47
- 48 4. Floyd County:
- 49 Beaver Creek, Burks Fork, Copper Hill, Duncan Chapel, Fairview (Floyd), ~~Floyd-Renacer~~
- 50 **Fellowship Floyd - Iglesia Cristiana Nueva Vida**, Laurel Branch, Parkway, Pleasant Valley, Red
- 51 Oak Grove, Saint Paul, Stonewall, Topeco, White Rock.
- 52
- 53 5. Roanoke County:
- 54 Green Hill, Lighthouse, Masons Cove, Mount Union, Peters Creek, Poages Mill, Red Hill, **Roanoke -**

1 **Iglesia Cristiana Renacer**, Roanoke-Oak Grove, Roanoke-Summerdean, Vinton.

2  
3 6. Roanoke City:

4 Roanoke-Central, Roanoke-First, ~~Roanoke-Renacer Fellowship~~, Roanoke-Hollins Road, Roanoke-  
5 Ninth Street, Roanoke-Williamson Road.

6  
7 7. New River Valley:

8 **Blacksburg - Iglesia del Buen Pastor**, Christiansburg, Coulson, Crab Orchard, Good Shepherd,  
9 Hiwassee, Oakvale, Olean, Pleasant View, Pulaski-First, Smith Chapel, Spruce Run.

10  
11 8. Eastern Virginia:

12 Bethel, Hopewell, Lynchburg, New Covenant, Newport News-Ivy Farms, Virginia Beach-Christian  
13 Church Uniting, Wakefield Chapel, West Richmond.

14  
15 9. Botetourt County:

16 Blue Ridge, Cloverdale, Daleville, Jetters Chapel, Moneta-Lake Side Fellowship, Mount Bethel, Mount  
17 Joy, PleasantDale, Saunders Grove, Selma, Trinity, Troutville (including New Bethel).

18  
19 **ARTICLE XI. - EFFECTIVE DATE AND AMENDMENTS**

20 A. The initial plan of organization of Virilina District Church of the Brethren became effective upon  
21 adoption by the uniting District Conference October 30, 1971 at the Christiansburg Church and  
22 became fully operative at the beginning of the fiscal year in 1972, succeeding the previous  
23 organizations of the First District of Virginia and the Southern District of Virginia, incorporated as  
24 First District Board of Virginia, Church of the Brethren, Inc. and District Board of the Church of the  
25 Brethren of the Southern District of Virginia, Inc.

26  
27 B. The Constitution and By-laws of the District may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the delegates  
28 present and voting at any regular session of a District Conference. Written notice of the proposed  
29 amendment shall be given with the call of the meeting issued at least thirty days prior to the meeting.  
30 **The District Board is authorized to make grammatical and other changes in compliance**  
31 **with District Conference actions without having the conference vote on such matters. Such**  
32 **changes shall be reported in writing to the next regularly scheduled District Conference.**  
33

34 This Constitution and By-laws have been revised and amended as follows:

35 By District Conference on November 15, 1986, at the Christiansburg Church of the Brethren.

36 By District Conference on November 14, 1992, at Bethel Baptist Church, Salem, VA.

37 By District Conference on November 9, 1996, at Bonsack Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA.

38 By District Conference on November 15, 1997, at Bonsack Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA.

39 By District Conference on November 14, 1998, at Derbyshire Baptist Church, Richmond, VA.

40 By District Conference on November 11, 2000, at Franklin Heights Baptist Church, Rocky Mount, VA.

41 By District Conference on November 10, 2001, at Bonsack Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA.

42 By District Conference on November 13, 2004, at Green Ridge Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA

43 By District Conference on November 12, 2005, at United Methodist Temple, Beckley, WV

44 By District Conference on November 11, 2006, at Franklin Heights Baptist Church, Rocky Mount, VA

45 Constitution and By-laws updated on December 1, 2010 to reflect previous actions of District Conference.

46 By District Conference on November 12, 2011 at Bonsack Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA

47 By District Conference on November 10, 2012 at Bonsack Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA

48 By District Conference on November 10, 2018 at Bonsack Baptist Church, Roanoke, VA

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