

# Church Members Handbook





MEMBER'S  
HANDBOOK

FOR THE

***CHURCH OF THE  
NAZARENE***

**Members Handbook  
For the  
Church of the Nazarene**

**Church of the Nazarene Manual 2009 – 2013 simplified and  
condensed by Neville Bartle.**

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## Contents

<b>Core Values .....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Introduction .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Articles of Faith .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Rules for Church Members .....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Covenant of Christian Conduct .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Church Organisation .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>The Local Church.....</b>	<b>27</b>
<b>The District Assembly .....</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>The General Assembly .....</b>	<b>44</b>
<b>The Minister .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Articles of Faith StudyMap.....</b>	<b>54</b>

## **Core Values of the Church of the Nazarene**

The Core Values are a summary of the important values of the Church of the Nazarene.

**We are a Christian people,** united with all true believers in proclaiming Jesus Christ as Lord. We believe that God loves us so much that he gave his only son, Jesus to be our Saviour. We believe that because of the sacrificial death of Jesus, all people may receive forgiveness of sins and be restored to a right relationship with God. Since we have been reconciled to God, we believe that we must also be reconciled to one another. We should love each other as we have been loved by God, and forgive each other as we have been forgiven by God. We accept the Holy Bible as the source of spiritual truth. We belong to the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition and affirm the historic creeds and beliefs of the Christian faith.

**We are a holiness people,** called by Scripture and drawn by grace to worship God and to love Him with our whole heart, soul, mind, and strength, and our neighbours as ourselves. We believe that in response to our faith, the Holy Spirit begins to transform and empower us day by day to be a people of love and spiritual discipline, ethical and moral purity, compassion and justice. It is the work of the Holy Spirit that restores us in the image of God and produces in us the character of Christ. Holiness in the life of believers is most clearly understood as Christ likeness.

**We are a people with a mission** to make Christ like disciples ... going into all the world. Our mission begins as we gather together for worship and then moves outward into the world.

Our mission is to receive new believers into the fellowship and to start new worshipping congregations.

Our mission is to share God's love for the lost and His compassion for the poor and broken by helping to meet the real needs of hurting people. We are committed to inviting people to faith, to caring for those in need and to include in our fellowship all who will call upon the name of the Lord.

We are committed to train and educate so that men and women will be equipped as Christian leaders to accomplish the service God calls us to.

# **Members Handbook For the Church of the Nazarene**

## **Introduction**

This booklet is a guide to help church members understand how the Church of the Nazarene operates. The official constitution for the Church of the Nazarene is the Manual. It is a legal document and very detailed. Many people, especially those who speak English as a second language, find the English wording to be very technical and difficult to follow. This booklet uses simple English and brings together the main points related to the local church and district activity. The numbers in brackets refer to the relevant sections in the Manual (2009-2013) so that people may look there for additional information.

### **Mission Statement ( Manual p 62)**

The work of the Church of the Nazarene is to make known to all people the transforming grace of God who forgives our sins and cleanses our hearts through the blood of Jesus Christ. Our mission is to make Christlike disciples, to incorporate disciples into fellowship and church membership, and to teach and instruct them so they may be involved in ministry. Our goal is to see people established in living a holy life that is pleasing to God.

It is in the local church that people are saved, taught, encouraged and established in their faith and sent forth for service. Local churches are therefore very important. For administrative purposes, local churches are grouped together into districts and regions.



# Articles of Faith (1-22)

## 1. Triune God

We believe in one God who is eternal, without limits, and that He is creator and ruler of the universe. God is holy in every part of his being and is revealed to us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

(Genesis 1; Leviticus 19:2; Deuteronomy 6:4-5; Isaiah 5:16; 6:1-7; 40:18-31; Matthew 3:16-17; 28:19-20; John 14:6-27; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; Galatians 4:4-6; Ephesians 2:13-18)

## 2. Jesus Christ

We believe in Jesus Christ, the second person of the Godhead, who was always with God, but became human and was born of the Virgin Mary. Jesus is not a man who became a God, nor is he God dressed up as a man. Instead he is fully God and fully human with the two natures combined into one.

We believe that Jesus Christ lived a sinless life of perfect obedience, died a sacrificial death and in so doing defeated all the powers of evil. Through God's mighty power, he was raised to life and as the perfect Son of God/Son of Man ascended into heaven where he intercedes for us.

(Matthew 1:20-25; 16:15-16; Luke 1:26-35; John 1:1-18; Acts 2:22-36; Romans 8:3, 32-34; Galatians 4:4-5; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:12-22; 2:15; 1 Timothy 6:14-16; Hebrews 1:1-5; 7:22-28; 9:24-28; 1 John 1:1-3; 4:23, 15)

## 3. The Holy Spirit

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Godhead, who convinces the world of sin, gives new life to those who repent and believe in Jesus, guides, teaches and sanctifies believers.

(John 7:39; 14:15-18, 26; 16:7-15; Acts 2:33; 15:8-9; Romans 8:1-27; Galatians 3:1-14; 4:6; Ephesians 3:14-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:7-8; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 3:24; 4:13)

## 4. The Holy Scriptures

We believe that the 66 books of the Bible are the inspired word of God. We believe the Bible shows us all that we need to know for our salvation.

(Luke 24:44-47; John 10:35; 1 Corinthians 15:3-4; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; 1 Peter 1:10-12; 2 Peter 1:20-21)

## 5. Sin, Original and Personal

We believe that sin came into the world through the disobedience of Adam and Eve. This sin brought death and separation from God. We believe that sin is of two kinds; the self-centred sinful nature that resists God and actual sins that people commit.

**5.1** We believe that as a result of Adam's sin, all people are born with a sinful nature. The sinful nature resists God and continually pulls people to commit acts of sin. We believe that the sinful nature remains within the heart of the Christian until removed through the cleansing work of the Holy Spirit.

**5.2** The sinful nature is different to acts of sin in that it is an inward desire that pulls people to commit sin. People are not held accountable for it until they either neglect or reject God's remedy for it.

**5.3** Sin is a deliberate breaking of God's known law. It is not the same as mistakes, forgetfulness or other shortcomings, which **are a** result of our fallen human condition. Attitudes and responses that are contrary to the Spirit of Christ are called sins of the spirit. Sin is primarily and essentially the breaking of the law of love, and unbelief in the saving work of Jesus.

(Original-sin: Genesis 3; 6:5; Job 15:14; Psalm 51:5; Jeremiah 17:9-10; Mark 7:21-23; Romans 1:18-25; 5:12-14; 7:1-8:9; 1 Corinthians 3:1-4; Galatians 5:16-25; 1 John 1:7-8)

Personal sin: Matthew 22:36-40 (with 1 John 3:4); John 8:34-36; 16:8-9; Romans 3:23; 6:15-23; 8:18-24; 14:23; 1 John 1:9-2:4; 3:7-10)

## **6. Atonement**

We believe that Jesus Christ suffered, shed his blood and died on the cross to make a full and complete atonement for our sin and to bring us back into fellowship with God. We believe there is no other way to be saved, and that Jesus died for **all** people. Jesus provides salvation to little children and those who are incapable of making decisions for themselves. **All** others must repent and believe in order to receive salvation.

(Isaiah 53:5-6, 11; Mark 10:45; Luke 24:46-48; John 1:29; 3:14-17; Acts 4:10-12; Romans 3:21-26; 4:17-25; 5:6-21; 1 Corinthians 6:20; 2 Corinthians 5:14-21; Galatians 1:3-4; 3:13-14; Colossians 1:19-23; 1 Timothy 2:3-6; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:9; 9:11-14; 13:12; 1 Peter 1:18-21; 2:19-25; 1 John 2:1-2)

## **7. Preventive Grace**

We believe that people were created in the image of God and so have the ability to choose between right and wrong. Adam sinned, and as a result all people are born with a sinful nature, and are unable to save themselves by their own good works.

We believe that the grace of God is free and given to all people. God's grace makes it possible for any person to turn from sin to righteousness, and believe on Jesus for pardon and cleansing from sin if they so desire.

We believe that even though a person is saved and sanctified they may fall into sin and be eternally lost unless they repent of their sins.

(Godlikeness and moral responsibility: Genesis 1:26-27; 2:16-17; Deuteronomy 28:1-2; 30:19; Joshua 24:15; Psalm 8:3-5; Isaiah 1:8-10; Jeremiah 31:29-30; Ezekiel 18:1-4; Micah 6:8; Romans 1:19-20; 2:1-16; 14:7-12; Galatians 6:7-8

Natural inability: Job 14:4; 15:14; Psalms 14:1-4; 51:5; John 3:6a; Romans 3:10-12; 5:12-14; 20a; 7:14-25

Free grace and works of faith: Ezekiel 18:25-26; John 1:12-13; 3:6b; Acts 5:31; Romans 5:6-8; 18; 6:15-16, 23; 10:6-8; 11:22; 1 Corinthians 2:9-14; 10:1-12; 2 Corinthians 5:18-19; Galatians 5:6; Ephesians 2:8-10; Philippians

2:12-13: Colossians 1:21-23; 2 Timothy 4:10a; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 3:12-15; 6:4-6; 10:26-31; James 2:18-22; 2 Peter 1:10-11; 2:20-22)

## **8. Repentance**

We believe that all have sinned and are far away from God. We believe the Holy Spirit works in the lives of all who have sinned and draws them back towards God. We believe that all who sincerely turn from their sin, that is repent, and believe in Christ will receive pardon and spiritual life.

(2 Chronicles 7:14; Psalms 32:5-6; 51:1-17; Isaiah 55:6-7; Jeremiah 3:12-14; Ezekiel 18:30-32; 33:14-16; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 3:1-14; 13:1-5; 18:9-14; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 17:30-31; 26:16-18; Romans 2:4; 2 Corinthians 7:8-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Peter 3:9)

## **9. Justification, Regeneration and Adoption**

We believe that all who believe in Jesus Christ and accept him as Lord and Saviour are justified. This means that God forgives the sins committed, releases them from the penalty of sin and accepts them as righteous.

10. When a person accepts Jesus as his or her Saviour, that person is born again, and is given a new moral nature. This new spiritual life is one of faith, love and obedience towards God.

11. We believe that God in his mercy not only forgives us, and gives us a new spiritual life, but he also adopts us into the family of God.

12. These three things, forgiveness, new birth and adoption, all take place at the same time and are dependent upon our repentance and faith in Christ. The Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirit and gives us the assurance that God has saved us.

(Luke 18:14; John 1:12-13; 3:3-8; 5:24; Acts 13:39; Romans 1:17; 3:21-26, 28; 4:5-9, 17-25; 5:1, 16-19; 6:4; 7:6; 8:1, 15-17; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:17-21; Galatians 2:16-21; 3:1-14, 26; 4:4-7; Ephesians 1:6-7; 2:1, 4-5; Philippians 3:3-9; Colossians 2:13; Titus 3:4-7; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 1:9; 3:1-2, 9; 4:7; 5:1, 9-13, 18)

## **10. Christian Holiness and Entire Sanctification**

13. We believe that after being born again, there is another work of God in which believers commit themselves totally to God, and are set free from original sin. This enables them to live a life of loving obedience to God and love for others.

When we are sanctified, the blood of Jesus cleanses our hearts, and the Holy Spirit fills our hearts, giving us power to serve God and live a godly life. The Holy Spirit witnesses to our spirit that he has cleansed and filled us.

Sanctification is made possible through the death of Jesus. The human side of sanctification involves entire consecration and faith that God will sanctify. This experience is also known as "perfect love," "heart purity," "baptism of the Holy Spirit" and "Christian holiness."

We believe there is a big difference between a pure heart and a mature character. God can purify our hearts in an instant but a mature character comes about through spiritual growth over a period of time.

We believe that the person who is sanctified has a desire to grow in grace. This growth is not automatic, but must be carefully nurtured through spiritual disciplines, so as to develop a Christlike character and personality. The person who does not work at growing spiritually will damage their witness and God's grace in their lives may be frustrated and even lost.

(Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Malachi 3:2-3; Matthew 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17; John 7:37-39; 14:15-23; 17:6-20; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 15:8-9; Romans 6:11-13, 19; 8:1-4, 8-14; 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Galatians 2:20; 5:16-25; Ephesians 3:14-21; 5:17-18, 25-27; Philippians 3:10-15; Colossians 3:1-17; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; Hebrews 4:9-11; 10:10-17; 12:1-2; 13:12; 1 John 1:7, 9)

("Christian perfection," "perfect love": Deuteronomy 30:6; Matthew 5:43-48;

22:37-40; Romans 12:9-21; 13:8-10; 1 Corinthians 13; Philippians 3:10-15; Hebrews 6:1; 1 John 4:17-18)

"Heart purity" Matthew 5:8; Acts 15:8-9; 1 Peter 1:22; 1 John 3:3

"Baptism with the Holy Spirit" Jeremiah 31:31-34; Ezekiel 36:25-27; Malachi 3:2-3; Matthew 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17; Acts 1:5; 2:1-4; 15:8-9

"Fullness of the blessing" Romans 15:29

"Christian holiness" Matthew 5:1-7:29; John 15:1-11; Romans 12:1-15:3; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 4:17-5:20; Philippians 1:9-11; 3:12-15; Colossians 2:20-3:17; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 4:7-8; 5:23; 2 Timothy 2:19-22; Hebrews 10:19-25; 12:14; 13:20-21; 1 Peter 1:15-16; 2 Peter 1:1-11; 3:18; Jude 20-21)

## 11. The Church

15. The Church is made up of all people who confess Jesus Christ as Lord. They have entered into a covenant relationship with God through the new birth and have become part of the Body of Christ. The Church expresses its life in united worship, preaching the word of God, participating in the sacraments, obeying Christ and encouraging one another in their Christian lives.

The Church is to continue the work of Christ in the world through holy living, evangelism, discipleship and practical service. All of this is done through the power of the Holy Spirit.

The Church exists both as local congregations and as a universal body, and expresses its life and worship in different ways in different cultures. The Church sees that God calls some people to special ministries and encourages them to carry on a ministry of evangelism and loving service. The Church lives under God's rule as it waits for the joyous coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Exodus 19:3; Jeremiah 31:33; Matthew 8:11; 10:7; 16:13-19, 24; 18:15-20; 28:19-20; John 17:14-26; 20:21-23; Acts 1:7-8; 2:32-47; 6:1-2; 13:1;

14:23; Romans 2:28-29; 4:16; 10:9-15; 11:13-32; 12:1-8; 15:1-3;

1 Corinthians 3:5-9; 7:17; 11:1, 17-33; 12:3, 12-31; 14:26-40; 2 Corinthians 5:11-6:1;

Galatians 5:6, 13-14; 6:1-5, 15; Ephesians 4:1-17; 5:25-27;

Philippians 2:1-16; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12; 1 Timothy 4:13; Hebrews 10:19-25; 1 Peter 1:1-2, 13; 2:4-12, 21; 4:1-2, 10-11; 1 John 4:17; Jude 24; Revelation 5:9-10)

## 12. Baptism

16. We believe that Christian baptism is a sacrament commanded by Jesus Christ. Baptism declares a person's faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and one's desire to follow Jesus in obedience and righteousness.

Since baptism is a symbol of the new covenant, young children may be baptized at the request of their parents if they will promise to train their children in Christian living.

People may be baptized by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, depending on the choice of the applicant.

*(Matthew 3:1-7; 28:16-20; Acts 2:37-41; 8:35-39; 10:44-48; 16:29-34; 19:1-6; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-28; Colossians 2:12; 1 Peter 3:18-22)*

## 13. The Lord's Supper

17. We believe that the communion supper was instituted by Jesus. It is a memorial to Jesus' sacrificial death and brings spiritual life and blessings to all who receive it in faith. It is for all who have faith in Christ, and believe that through his death, they have received life and salvation. The communion service also reminds us that Jesus will return.

Only those who have faith in Christ and love for their fellow believers should participate in the communion service.

*(Exodus 12:1-14; Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20; John 6:28-58; 1 Corinthians 10:14-21; 11:23-32)*

## 14. Divine Healing

18. We believe that God heals the sick in answer to the prayers of his people and we encourage people to pray in faith for the healing of the sick. We also believe God heals through the means of medical science.

*(2 Kings 5:1-19; Psalm 103:1-5; Matthew 4:23-24; 9:18-35; John 4:46-54; Acts 5:12-16; 9:32-42; 14:8-15; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; 2 Corinthians 12:7-10; James 5:13-16)*

## **15. Second Coming of Christ**

19. We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ will come again. Those believers who are living will not go before those who have already died. Those who are abiding in Jesus, shall be caught up with the risen saints to meet the Lord in the air, so that we shall always be with the Lord.

(Matthew 25:31-46; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:9-11; Philippians 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 9:26-28; 2 Peter 3:3-15; Revelation 1:7-8; 22:7-20)

## **16. Resurrection, Judgement, and Destiny**

20. We believe that the bodies of both the righteous and the unrighteous shall be raised from the dead and reunited with their (spirits).

21. We believe in a future judgement in which every person will appear before God to be judged according to his or her deeds in this life.

22. We believe that those who refuse to repent and believe in Christ shall suffer eternally in hell. We also believe that glorious and everlasting life is assured to all who believe in, and obediently follow our Lord Jesus Christ.

(Genesis 18:25; 1 Samuel 2:10; Psalm 50:6; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2-3; Matthew 25:31-46; Mark 9:43-48; Luke 16:19-31; 20:27-38; John 3:16-18; 5:25-29; 11:21-27; Acts 17:30-31; Romans 2:1-16; 14:7-12; 1 Corinthians 15:12-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Thessalonians 1:5-10; Revelation 20:11-15; 22:1-15)



# Rules For Church Members

People who have accepted Jesus as their Saviour, and who desire to join in the fellowship of the Church of the Nazarene should live a godly life. The word of God instructs us of how we should live.

## **Church members should do the following: (27.1)**

1. Love God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, and one's neighbour as oneself (Exodus 20:3-6; Leviticus 19:17-18; Deuteronomy 5:7-10; 6:4-5; Mark 12:28-31; Romans 13:8-10).
2. Share the gospel with those who are not saved, invite them to church, and seek to lead them to Christ (Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8; Romans 1:14-16; 2 Corinthians 5:18-20).
3. Be courteous to all people (Ephesians 4:32; Titus 3:2; 1 Peter 2:17; 1 John 3:18).
4. Be helpful, kind, patient and forgiving to fellow Christians (Romans 12:13; Galatians 6:2, 10; Colossians 3:12-14).
5. Seek to do good to all who are hungry, sick, imprisoned, and in need (Matthew 25:35-36; 2 Corinthians 9:8-10; Galatians 2:10; James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17-18).
6. Give tithes and offerings to support the work of the church (Malachi 3:8-10; Luke 6:38; 1 Corinthians 9:14; 16:2; 2 Corinthians 9:6-10; Philippians 4:15-19).
7. Faithfully attend the regular church worship services (Hebrews 10:25, Acts 2:42), take communion (1 Corinthians 11 23-30), and conduct private and family devotions (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim 2:15; 3:14-16; Deuteronomy 6:6-7; Matthew 6:6).

## **Church members should avoid the following (27.2):**

1. Taking the name of God in vain (Exodus 20:7; Leviticus 19:12; James 5:12).

2. Doing unnecessary secular things on the Lord's Day so that it loses its sacredness (Exodus 20:8-11; Isaiah 58:13-14; Mark 2:27-28; Acts 20:7; Revelation I:10).

3. **Sexual immorality of all forms** (Exodus 20:14; Matthew 5:27-32; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7).

4. **Habits or practices that are destructive to us physically or mentally. We are to remember that we are the temples of the Holy Spirit** (Proverbs 20:1; 23:1-3; 1 Corinthians 6:17-20; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 5:18).

5. Quarrelling, gossiping, and spreading **stories that hurt the good names of others** (2 Corinthians 12:20; Galatians 5:15; Ephesians 4:30-32; James 3:5-18; 1 Peter 3:9-10).

6. **Dishonesty, cheating in business, telling lies** (Leviticus 19:10-11; Romans 12:17; 1 Corinthians 6:7-10).

7. Being proud in dress and behaviour. People **should dress in simplicity and modesty so as to reflect a holy life** (Proverbs 29:23; 1 Timothy 2:8-10; James 4:6; 1 Peter 3:3-4; 1 John 2:15-17).

8. **Music, literature and entertainments that dishonour God** (1 Corinthians 10:31; 2 Corinthians 6:14-17; James 4:4).

## **We should always:**

**Be in wholehearted fellowship with the church. Not going against church leadership, but being committed to its doctrines and rules, and actively involved in outreach and ministry** (Ephesians 2:18-22; 4:1-3, 11-16; Philippians 2:1-8; 1 Peter 2:9-10).

## **The Covenant of Christian Conduct**

*(This is a shortened and simplified version of the Covenant of Christian Conduct. You may refer to the Manual (pages 46-60) for the official text and fuller details)*

### **A. The Christian Life**

**33.** The church joyfully proclaims the good news that we may be delivered from all sin to a new life in Christ. By the grace of God we Christians should no longer follow the sinful nature and the old patterns of conduct. Instead we are to "put on the new self" —a new and holy way of life as well as the mind of Christ (Ephesians 4:17-24).

**33.1.** The Church of the Nazarene seeks to relate timeless biblical principles to contemporary society, in such a way that the doctrines and rules of the church are known and understood in a variety of cultures. We hold that the Ten Commandments provide our basic Christian ethic and should be obeyed.

**33.2.** We also believe that the Holy Spirit guides the church to develop a collective Christian conscience. The Church of the Nazarene as an international church seeks ways to develop a holy way of life. The Covenant of Christian conduct should be followed carefully as a guide and help to holy living. People who do not follow these guidelines hurt the witness of the church and weaken their own spiritual lives.

**33.3.** It is impossible, and not helpful, to list every known sin in the world. It is important that all church members seek the help of the Holy Spirit to distinguish right from wrong. "Test everything. Hold on to the good. Avoid every kind of evil." (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22)

**33.4.** Church leaders are to give biblical teaching that will help people discriminate between good and evil.

**33.5.** Education is very important for the social and spiritual well-being of society. Public schools usually provide only a secular education. It is important that the church through its Sunday schools, day schools, colleges and seminaries teach biblical principles and high ethical standards. Holiness teaching should also be done in our

homes. Christians should be encouraged to work in public schools and provide a Christian witness and influence there.

**34.** The following practices should be avoided.

**34.1. Avoid Entertainments that Destroy Christian Values.**

Christians should follow three important principles.

1. Christian stewardship applies to relaxation as well as work.
2. Christians are called to live holy lives. There are many books, radio and television programs and things on the Internet that come into our homes. We must avoid all literature and programs that would lead us away from God and holy living. We should support and encourage those things that are good and helpful.
3. As Christians we should speak out against those things that ignore God and promote evil, violence and immorality. We should avoid all entertainment that makes sin look appealing and exciting, and undermines God's standard of holiness of heart and life.

Our people must be taught to use prayerful discernment and choose the high road of holy living. We should use the following standard that was given to John Wesley, "Whatever weakens your reason, impairs the tenderness of your conscience, obscures your sense of God, or takes off the relish of spiritual things, whatever increases the authority of your body over mind, that thing for you is sin." (Romans 14:7-13; I Corinthians 10:31-33; Ephesians 5:1-18; Philippians 4:89; 1 Peter 1:13-17; 2 Peter 1:3-11)

**34.2.** Avoid lotteries and other forms of gambling for these destroy both individuals and society. (Matthew 6:24-34; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-13; 1 Timothy 6:6-11; Hebrews 13:5-6; 1 John 2:15-17).

**34.3.** Do not become members of organisations that require people to take an oath of secrecy. (1 Corinthians 1:26-31; 2 Corinthians 6:14-7:1; Ephesians 5:11-16; James 4:4; 1 John 2 15-17)

**34.4.** Avoid all forms of dancing that hinder spiritual growth and break down moral reserve. (Matthew 22:36-39; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 10:31-33; Philippians 1:9-11; Colossians 3:1-17)

**34.5.** Avoid drinking and or selling intoxicating liquor. Selling or using tobacco or drugs such as marijuana.

The Bible and human experience both show that drinking alcoholic drinks and using tobacco may create many social problems. Since our goal is to live a holy life then we should not use these things. The Bible teaches that our body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, therefore we call our people to total abstinence from all intoxicants. Our lives should always be a good witness to others.

(Proverbs 20:1; 23:29-24:2; Hosea 4:10-11; Habakkuk 2:5; Romans 13:8; 14:15-21; 15:1-2; 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 6:9-12, 19-20; 10:31-33; Galatians 5:13-14, 21; Ephesians 5:18)

**34.6.** We should not use strong drugs that affect a person's thinking or feelings, without directions from a doctor. (Matthew 22:37-39; 27:34; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:19-20; 9:24-27)

## **B. Marriage and Divorce**

**35.** There are many forces working in society to weaken and destroy marriage and the Christian family. It is important that pastors preach clearly the biblical plan that marriage is to be permanent. Churches need to develop programs that will strengthen and help Christian families.

Marriage was designed by God and is the mutual union of one man and one woman for fellowship, helpfulness, and bearing children. People should not enter into marriage hastily but after prayer for God's guidance. The marriage covenant is binding as long as both shall live, and breaking the marriage is a breach of God's plan of the permanence of marriage. (Genesis 1:26-28, 31; 2:21-24; Malachi 2:13-16; Matthew 19:3-9; John 2:1-11; Ephesians 5:21-6:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-8; Hebrews 13:4)

**35.1.** The Bible teaches that marriage is the commitment of a man and a woman to each other for life, reflecting Christ's sacrificial love for the church. Marriage is intended to be permanent and divorce is against the clear teaching of Christ. Divorce is not beyond the forgiving grace of God when this is sought with repentance, faith, and humility. We recognize that some people are forced to divorce against their will, and some people get divorced for legal or physical protection.

(Genesis 2:21-24; Mark 10:2-12; Luke 7:36-50; 16:18; John 7:53-8:11; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 7:10-16; Ephesians 5:25-33)

**35.2.** Ministers of the Church of the Nazarene should teach their congregations the sacredness of marriage. They should always provide counselling to a couple before conducting any wedding. This also applies to those who have been divorced and wish to remarry. Ministers shall only conduct weddings for those who have a biblical basis for marriage (107-7.1)

**35.3.** Members of the Church who are in unhappy marriages should try to find ways to correct the problems. This should be done in harmony with their vows and the clear teachings of Scripture. They should seek to protect the family and not bring shame on Christ or his church. Couples with serious marriage problems should seek counsel and advice from their pastor and other spiritual leaders.

**35.4.** Because of ignorance, sin, and human weakness many people do not follow God's plan. We believe God can save these people just as Jesus helped the woman of Samaria. Where people have divorced and remarried, they are to seek God's grace and his help in their marriage relationship. These people may be accepted as Church members provided they show that they have repented and are aware of the sanctity of marriage.

### **C. Induced Abortion**

**36.** The Church of the Nazarene believes that life, even that of an unborn child is sacred and is given to us by God. We are opposed to abortion by any means. We realize that there are rare cases where the life of the mother, or the unborn child, or both are in danger. In such situations, termination of the pregnancy should only be done after sound medical and Christian counselling.

We are opposed to abortion and therefore must also be committed to programs that help mothers and children. Where there is an unwanted pregnancy, the church must provide support of love,

prayer, and counsel. This may include homes for expectant mothers and the creation of Christian adoption services.

Often people seek abortion because they have not followed Christian standards of sexual responsibility. The church needs to provide clear teaching on human sexuality from a Christian perspective.

(Exodus 20:13; 21:12-16; Job 31:15; Psalms 22:9; 139:3-16; Isaiah 44:2, 24; 49:5; Luke 1:23-25, 36-45; Romans 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 6:16; 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-6)

### **D. Human Sexuality**

**37.** Human sexuality is one expression of the holiness and beauty that God intended for his creation. It is one of the ways in which the covenant between husband and wife is sealed and expressed. Human sexuality is sanctified by God only when it occurs within marriage and expresses love and loyalty.

Children should be taught the sacred character of human sexuality within the context of love, patience, and trust in the Christian home.

Ministers and teachers in the church should state clearly the Christian understanding of human sexuality. They should urge Christians to see it as good and holy, and guard against those things that would weaken and distort it.

All forms of sexual intimacy that occur outside of marriage between a man and a woman are contrary to God's laws.

Homosexuality is one form by which human sexuality is used wrongly. We affirm the biblical position that such acts are sinful and

subject to the wrath of God. We believe the grace of God is sufficient to overcome the practice of homosexuality. (I Corinthians 6:9-11). (Genesis 1:27; 19:1-25; Leviticus 20:13; Romans 1:26-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; 1 Timothy 1:8-10)

### **E. Christian Stewardship**

**38. Meaning of Stewardship.** The Scriptures teach that God is the owner of all persons and all things. We are stewards to care for and

use wisely both life and the things we possess. One day we must give an account of our stewardship to God. God has established the system of tithing which means giving one-tenth of our income back to God. This demonstrates both God's ownership and our stewardship.

(Malachi 3:8-10; Matthew 6:24-34; 25:31-46; Mark 10:17-31; Luke 12:13-24; 19:11-27; John 15:1-17; Romans 12:1-13; 1 Corinthians 9:7-14; 2 Corinthians 8:1-15; 9:6-15; 1 Timothy 6:6-19; Hebrews 7:8; James 1:27; 1 John 3:16-18)

**38.1. Storehouse Tithing.** Storehouse tithing is a scriptural and Practical way for church members to faithfully and regularly give their tithe to their local church. All Nazarene church members are urged to faithfully give at least one tenth of their income to their local church. Freewill offerings should be given in addition, to support the whole church at local, district, regional, and general levels.

Local churches are urged to pay district, regional, and general budget assignments on a regular monthly basis.

**38.3. Support of the Ministry.** "The Lord has commanded that those who preach the gospel should receive their living from the gospel" (1 Corinthians 9:14). The church needs to support its ministers who have been called by God, and who give themselves wholly to the work of the ministry. To do this church members need to give their tithe regularly and pay their pastor every week.

**38.4. Life Income Gifts and Bequests.** Christians should be faithful in paying their tithes and giving offerings while they are alive. They should also think of what they will do with the money and possessions that are left when they die. Christians should prayerfully make a legal will and consider giving towards the ongoing work of the church.

## F. Church Officers

**39.** We direct local churches to elect as officers only persons who profess the experience of entire sanctification, and who demonstrate a holy life through the grace of God.



They should also be in harmony with the doctrines, policy and practices of the Church of the Nazarene and support the church faithfully in attendance, and with tithes and offerings.

### **G. Rules of Order**

**40.** The church is to follow the correct procedures according to *Robert's Rules of Order* in conducting the business meetings of the church at local, district, and general church levels.

### **H. Amending the Covenant of Christian Conduct**

**41.** The Covenant of Christian Conduct can be removed or changed only by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting at a given General Assembly.

## **Church Organization**

There are three main ways to organize a church:

1. Some churches have leaders with lots of authority.
2. Some churches give the congregation lots of authority. There is not any one leader or person with lots of authority. Instead, the leadership is shared among the elders of the congregation.
3. A representative form of government where authority is shared by both the ministers and the congregation.

The Church of the Nazarene has a representative form of government and has a pastor and a church board who share the responsibility of leading and managing the work of the church.

We believe that it is important to have superintendents who assist the local churches in fulfilling its mission and objectives. The authority of the superintendent should not interfere with the independent action of a fully organized church. Each church should enjoy the right to select its own pastor, manage its own finances, and all the other matters related to its local life and work **(28-28.2)**.

## The Organization and Government of the Church of the Nazarene

Dr. Bresee, who was the founder (person who started) of the Church of the Nazarene, had been a minister for many years in the Methodist church. He felt the church needed leaders who could encourage and supervise pastors. He did not use the word bishops but called the leaders, superintendents. You can think of the superintendent as a team leader or coach who encourages and supports the pastors on his district.

On the Eastern side of the United States, there were some churches who were very strong in preaching the need for Christians to live holy lives. They felt that sometimes bishops interfered too much in the running of the local church. They therefore emphasized the need for local church boards to have authority to look after the running of the local church.

When these two groups decided to come together to form the Church of the Nazarene, they worked hard to find a way to combine these different ideas about church leadership. They agreed that they needed superintendents who would encourage, give advice and leadership to churches. They also agreed that local churches should have the authority to choose their own pastor and look after all the affairs of the local church. The pastor should work in unity with a church board to look after the local church.

At the district level, the district superintendent works with a District Advisory Board to guide and direct the churches. At the general (global) level, the general superintendents work with the General Board to lead and direct the church.

There are three levels of church government in the Church of the Nazarene. They are:

1. Local Church
2. District Assembly
3. General Assembly

It is important to understand how each level operates in order to understand how the whole church functions.

## **The Local Church**

The most important part of the Church of the Nazarene is the local church. This is where people come to worship, new people become Christians and grow in their Christian lives. This is where people become church members.

### **Church Membership (107-110)**

There are 4 things a person must do in order to become a member of the Church of the Nazarene:

1. Testify that they have accepted Jesus Christ as their Saviour.
2. Be in agreement with the beliefs of the Church of the Nazarene.
3. Promise to follow the rules of the Church of the Nazarene.
4. Promise to support the church with their time, talent and treasure; by faithful attendance, participation in its programs and financial support.

A church member is much more than a person who attends a church, A church member is a person who has made a public commitment to be actively involved and fully supportive of the local church.

### **How to Become a Church Member**

1. People who want to become members must know that Jesus is their Saviour.
2. They must attend classes that explain the doctrines of the church.
3. Attend classes that explain the rules of the church on how Christians should live.

The Evangelism and Church Membership Committee interviews those who wish to be church members. If they are approved for membership, then they will be accepted into membership by the pastor in a public church service.

### **Church Meeting (113)**

A church meeting is an official meeting of a local church when the church members meet together to discuss and make decisions concerning the life, growth and organization of the local church.

The Pastor is the chairman.

The church board secretary is the secretary of the church meeting.

The Annual Church Meeting must take place less than 3 months before the District Assembly.

An increasing number of churches have a Women's Fellowship and a Men's Fellowship as a part of the activities and programs of the church. These are not mentioned in the Manual of the Church of the Nazarene, but I have included them here, as they are a very important part of many churches.

### **Work of the Church Meeting**

The church meeting has two functions:

1. Hear reports
2. Conduct elections

The church meeting will hear reports from:

1. Pastor (413.15)
2. NMI President (153.2)
3. NYI President (151.4)
4. Women's Fellowship President
5. Men's Fellowship President
6. Those with local preachers license (428.1)
7. Secretary of church board (135:2)
8. Treasurer (136.5)
9. Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries (SDMI) Superintendent (146.6)

The church meeting must elect the following:

1. Stewards (137)
2. Trustees (141,142.1)
3. SDMI Superintendent (146)
4. Sunday School Ministry Board (145)
5. Women's Ministry President
6. Men's Ministry President

### **Work of the Pastor**

A pastor is an elder or one who holds a district minister's license. The pastor feels that God has called him or her to preach God's word and to care for God's people. The pastor has much work to do. It is outlined in the Manual (412-420). All of this work can be divided into 3 main areas:

#### **1. Preaching and conducting of worship services.**

- Preaching
- Baptism, communion, weddings and funerals
- Directing the evangelistic work of the church

#### **2. Looking after the church members.**

- Visiting the members.
- Caring for the sick and poor.
- Comfort those who mourn.
- Encouraging people in their Christian lives.
- Helping sinners to repent and turn to God.
- Helping Christians to be filled with the Holy Spirit and live a holy life.
- Teaching and strengthening Christians in their faith in God.

### **3. Organizing the work of the church.**

- Receiving people into membership.
- Give oversight to the various departments of the church. (NYI, NMI, Sunday School, Women's Fellowship, Men's Fellowship etc)
- Prepare a report to the annual church meeting and give a report to the District Assembly.

### **The Call of a Pastor (115-123)**

When a church wants to call a pastor, it must follow the following steps:

1. Meet with the district superintendent and choose one name for the church to vote on. They must call an elder or a person with a minister's license (District) to be the pastor. The church board discusses with the district superintendent whom they want to call. They vote and the person must receive a majority vote by the church board. The district superintendent must approve the person. (115)
2. This name is then presented to all the members of the church and they will vote "yes" or "no". The person must receive at least a 2/3 favourable vote to be elected.
3. The church board informs the pastor that they are calling him. They must also tell the pastor what salary the pastor will receive and what their expectations are. (115.4)
4. The pastor who has been called must give a reply within 15 days. (115.1)
5. Sometimes, the district superintendent and District Advisory Board can appoint a pastor. This can happen if any of the following conditions apply:

- a. The church is not yet 2 years old.
- b. It has less than 35 members.
- c. The district is giving part of the pastor's salary

### **Resignation of a Pastor (120)**

A pastor may resign from a church by writing a letter of resignation and giving it to the church board and the district superintendent. If the church board accepts the resignation and the district superintendent approves it in writing, then the resignation becomes official. The pastor must however continue as pastor of the church for another 30 days after his resignation has been accepted by the church board and the district superintendent.

The pastor will work with the church secretary and prepare a correct list of the church membership roll with names and addresses. This list must have the same number of names as is recorded in the last district minutes.

### **Pastor/Church Relationship (122)**

Every year the pastor and the church board shall conduct a meeting in which they review their written understanding of the expectations, goals and performance of the church and pastor. The district superintendent must be told of the meeting so he can be part of it. The aim of the meeting is to take care of problems and differences and work to solve them in an atmosphere of love, acceptance and forgiveness. (121)

### **Renewing the call of a Pastor (123)**

After a pastor has completed two years of pastoral service, there will be a meeting of the church board to review the pastoral relationship. The meeting will be conducted by the district Superintendent, or an elder or layman appointed by the district Superintendent. The goal is to arrive at an agreement without a formal vote. If the church board is happy then the pastoral arrangement continues for 4 more years.

The church board may vote to present the matter to the church members. The church may call a special church meeting and the question shall be "Shall the present pastoral relationship continue." If the pastor fails to get majority vote by ballot then the pastor must leave at a time agreed on with the district superintendent. If the pastor gains majority, then the pastor continues. (122)

### **The Church Board (127)**

Every church has a church board. The members of the church board are:

1. Pastor
2. Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries
3. NYI president
4. NMI president
5. Stewards and trustees

### **Time of the Meeting (128)**

The meeting must be held before the 15<sup>th</sup> day of each month.

### **The Work of the Church Board (129-134)**

1. Work with the pastor to look after all the work of the church.
2. Call a pastor:
  - They must choose a person, and after obtaining the approval of the district superintendent, submit the pastor's name to the church meeting for election.
  - Decide the pastor's salary each year.
3. Elect
  - Church treasurer
  - Church secretary
  - Members to form an Evangelism and Church Membership Committee.
4. Make sure that district budgets, education budgets, and World Evangelism Funds are paid.



5. Make sure that all church finances are looked after properly and reported at the monthly board meetings and at the annual church meeting.
6. Appoint two people to count all church offerings.
7. Prepare a budget to cover the work of the church each year.
8. The church board can approve people to receive a local preacher's license if the pastor is an elder.
9. Recommend that a person who has held a local preacher's license can receive a District License.

### **The Church Secretary (135)**

The work of the church secretary is:

1. Write the minutes of the church meeting and the church board meetings.
2. Give a report to the church meeting of the activities of the church including the number of church members.
3. Look after all legal papers belonging to the church.
4. If there is a vote on a pastor, the secretary will notify the district superintendent of the results of the vote.

### **Church Treasurer (136)**

The work of the treasurer is:

1. To receive church money and pay out money **when** authorized to do so by the church board.
2. Record all income and expenditure in a proper financial record book.
3. Present a financial report to the church board each month and to the annual church meeting each year.

### **Stewards (137-140)**

This committee consists of at least 3 but not more than 13 members.

Their work is:

1. To serve as a church growth committee with responsibilities for outreach, evangelism, and extension' including the **start** of new churches.

2. To provide help to people who are needy and troubled. They should be involved in encouragement, visitation, caring for the sick and needy and involving other church members in ministry to needy people in the community.
3. They may also serve as the church membership committee.
4. Help in preparing for the communion service and in serving communion.
5. They also serve as the local stewardship committee and encourage people to give generously of time, talent and money to the Lord's work.

### **Trustees (141 — 144)**

There will be at least 3 and not more than 9 trustees. They are to be responsible for the land and buildings belonging to the church. They are responsible to raise the finances including pastors salary from the church so that the pastor may be free to give full time to the spiritual needs of the church.

### **Sunday School and Discipleship Ministries Board (145)**

In churches with less than 75 members, the church board may serve as the Sunday School Ministries Board. The Board is responsible for looking after the work of the Sunday School, children's club and all Bible study and teaching ministries of the church.

Their task is to reach the largest number of unreached people possible for Christ, bringing them into the church fellowship, teaching the word of God effectively, teaching the doctrines of the Christian faith and developing Christ-like character, attitudes, and habits; helping to establish Christian homes, preparing believers for membership in the church and equipping them for appropriate Christian ministries.

## **Nazarene Youth International (NYI) (150 — 151.5)**

NYI works in the local church to help and strengthen the youth.

The goal of NYI is:

- To help young people accept Jesus Christ as their Saviour.
- Instruct them in the word of God and the doctrines of the church.
- Help them grow in their Christian faith and holy character.
- Help them to become members of the church and active in the work of the church.
- Equip them so that they will be involved in ministry.

The youth of the local church can elect an NYI Council with a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. All of these must be church members.

There are more details in the NYI constitution.

## **Nazarene Mission International - NMI (153 — 155.3)**

The Nazarene Mission International works in the local church to generate prayerful interest and support for the missionary work of the church in other countries. The goal of NMI is:

1. Encourage people to pray for those who have not yet become Christians.
2. Inform the church about the work of the church in other countries.
3. Help young people to hear God's call and give themselves to Christian service.
4. Encourage people to give generously to the work of world evangelism.

NMI will have a council with a president, vice president, secretary, treasurer and other officers they think necessary.

More details are in the NMI Constitution.

## Women's Fellowship & Men's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship and Men's Fellowship are not listed in the manual. They should be organized in a similar way to NMI and NYI. It is a good idea if the presidents of the Men's Fellowship and the Women's Fellowship also serve on the church board just like the NYI president and NMI President.

## District Organisation

### District Assembly (200 — 205)

The local Nazarene churches in a geographical area are combined together to form a District. There are three different levels of district organization in the Church of the Nazarene.

#### Phase 1:

When the Church of the Nazarene begins in a new country, or new area, it is a Phase 1 district. The regional director shall recommend to the general superintendent a person whom he thinks would be a suitable district superintendent. The general superintendent will appoint the district superintendent.

#### Phase 2:

A Phase 2 district is one that has at least 10 organized churches, 500 full members and 5 ordained elders. 50% of the finance needed for district administration shall come from within the district.

Phase 2 District	D.S. may be appointed or elected	
Requirements	10 Organized Churches	5 Ordained Elders
	500 Members	50% self supporting

The District Advisory Board may ask to be recognized as a phase 2 district. The field director, the regional director and the general superintendent shall make this recommendation to the Board of General Superintendents. The district superintendent may be ,elected or appointed.

### **Phase 3:**

A Phase 3 district is one that demonstrates mature leadership, financial support, faithfulness to the doctrines of the church, and a vision for the growth of the church world wide.

A Phase 3 district has at least 20 organized churches, 1000 members, 10 ordained elders, and raise 100% of the money for district administration.

The district superintendent will be elected by the district assembly.

### **District Assembly**

The members of the district assembly are:

- All elders.
- All pastors with district licenses.
- District secretary.
- District treasurer.
- District Sunday School ministries director.
- District NYI president.
- District NMI president
- The newly elected Sunday School superintendent of each local church
- The newly elected NYI presidents of each local church.
- The newly elected NMI presidents of each local church.
- The lay people who are members of the District Advisory Board.
- Delegates of each local church.

**Church Membership:**

- 1-50 members
- 51 — 100 members
- 101 — 150 members
- 151 - 200 members

**Delegates:**

- 2 delegates
- 3 delegates
- 4 delegates
- 5 delegates

This means that each local church can send the following people to the district assembly.

1. Pastor, if he/she is licensed or ordained.
2. Sunday School superintendent.
3. NYI president.
4. NMI president.
5. Delegates elected by the church, 2, 3, 4, or 5 delegates, or more, depending upon the size of the church.

**Time of District Assembly**

District assembly is held each year at a time decided by the general superintendent.

**Work of the District Assembly**

The district assembly hears or receives reports from:

1. All elders and those with district licenses.
2. District superintendent.
3. District Treasurer.
4. District Assembly Committee.
5. Theological Education Director.
6. Board of Ministerial Studies.
7. Ministerial Credentials Board.

The district assembly elects the following leaders, boards and committees:

- District superintendent (203.11)
- District Advisory Board (203.14)
- Ministerial Credentials Board(203.15)
- Ministerial Studies Board (203.16, 203.17)
- District Sunday School Ministries Board (203.20, 237)

- District Property Board (203.18)

The district assembly shall also:

- Give licenses to pastors (203.4)
- Approve pastors for ordination (203.6 203.7)
- Approve pastors from other denominations to become pastors in the Church of the Nazarene.
- Review and approve the finance report of the district.

### **The District Superintendent (206-214.1)**

The district superintendent must be an ordained elder. In Phase 1 districts, the district superintendent is appointed by the general superintendent. In Phase 2 districts, the district superintendent may be appointed or elected.

In Phase 3, the district superintendent will be elected. After completing 2 years, the district superintendent may be re-elected. A district superintendent may be re-elected by a yes/no vote. The district superintendent must receive 2/3 votes to remain in office. If re-elected, the district superintendent will serve for 4 years. If a district superintendent resigns or is not re-elected then a new district superintendent must be elected. In Phase 3 districts, the delegates can vote for any elder in the Church of the Nazarene. They will keep voting until one elder receives 2/3 of the votes.

In Phase 2 districts, the district superintendent may be appointed by the general superintendent or may be elected by the district assembly.

In Phase 1 districts the district superintendent will be appointed.

### **The Work of the District Superintendent**

The work of the district superintendent can be divided into two main sections:

#### **I. Work with all the churches inside the district.**

- Organize, strengthen and encourage local churches (208.1)

- Meet with church boards to review the work of the pastor (121, 208.2)
- Meet with church boards and pastors to give guidance and help relating to spiritual, financial and pastoral matters. (208.3)
- Give guidance and direction to mission churches that are not yet organized. (208.6)
- If a pastor is not ordained, then the district superintendent must approve any person who wishes to receive a local preacher's license (208.12)
- The District superintendent can be a pastor of a local church.
- The district superintendent can conduct the annual church meeting of a local church.
- Approves written requests from the pastors and local church boards to employ any paid local assistants such as youth ministers, associate pastors etc.

**2. The District Superintendent is responsible for the following district work:**

- Chairman of the District Advisory Board.
- Conduct the district assembly if the general superintendent is not present.
- Be a member of all district boards and committees.
- If a district leader resigns from a position, the district superintendent may appoint a replacement, for example, district secretary (208.7), district treasurer (208.8).

**District Secretary (216 — 218)**

The district secretary is elected by the District Advisory Board and will serve for 1-3 years and can be re-elected.

The district secretary shall:

1. Record correctly and keep a record of the minutes of the district assembly.
2. Keep an accurate record of the district statistics.



3. Send a copy of the district reports to the field office.
4. Look after all the legal papers that belong to the district.

### **District Treasurer (219 - 220.2)**

The district treasurer is elected by the District Advisory Board. The district treasurer shall:

1. Receive all money that comes into the district and disburse the money according to the direction and policies of the District Advisory Board and district assembly.
2. Keep a careful record of all money received and spent, and give a monthly report to the district superintendent, and an annual report to the district assembly.

### **District Advisory Board (221-225)**

The members of this board are elected each year at district assembly time. The members of this board are:

- the district superintendent
- up to three elders
- up to three laymen.

In phase 1 and phase 2 districts, the field director may appoint a missionary representative to the District Advisory Board. The district superintendent is the chairman of the District Advisory Board. The work of the District Advisory Board is:

1. Set the time for the beginning and end of the district financial year.
2. The Board members consult with the district superintendent concerning the ministers and local churches on the district. They also give advice related to any district board or committee.
3. Elect a district treasurer and district secretary.
4. If a pastor with a district license is working as a pastor, the District Advisory Board shall recommend the renewal of the license.

5. If some person brings charges of misconduct against a minister, the District Advisory Board shall appoint an investigating committee of 3 or more ordained elders to investigate the charges.
6. The District Advisory Board is responsible for oversight of all property and buildings belonging to the district.
7. If a pastor from another denomination desires to join with the Church of the Nazarene, his or her credentials must be examined by the District Advisory Board and if they approve, then the minister may be received into church membership.

### **Ministerial Credentials Board (226-228.10)**

This committee shall have at least 5 elders but no more than 15 elders. The district superintendent is a member of this Board and the members are elected for 4 years at a time. The district superintendent is the chairman unless he asks the board to elect someone else to be the chairman. The board will elect a secretary who will keep a good record of all the decisions of the board.

The work of the board is:

1. They must examine every one who desires to receive a district license or desires to be ordained.
2. They are to look carefully at the person's experience of salvation, experience of heart holiness or being filled with the Holy Spirit, knowledge of the Bible, church doctrines, their acceptance of the General and Special Rules of the church, evidence of spiritual gifts, excellent moral character and general fitness for the ministry.
3. If a person has a local preacher's license and has been serving as a pastor of a local church, then that person must be approved by the Credentials Board to continue serving as a pastor.

### **District Ministerial Studies Board (229-231.4)**

There shall be 5 or more elders on the Ministerial Studies **Board**. They are elected by the district assembly and will serve for 4 years.

The board will elect a chairman and a secretary. The work of the board is to watch over the study program of those who want to be ordained. They are to encourage, guide and assist in training those who are in the study program.

### **District Church Properties Board (233-234.5)**

The District Church Properties Board will consist of the district superintendent 2 elders and 2 laymen. The members may be elected for 4 years. The District Advisory Board may serve as the church properties board. The work of the Church Properties Board is to give advice to the district superintendent and local churches regarding land matters, building plans and church building programs. Any church building plan for a local church, must be approved by the district superintendent and Church Properties Board before any construction takes place.

### **District Sunday School Ministries Board (237-238.3)**

This Board is composed of the following members:

- District superintendent
- District NMI president
- District NYI president
- District Sunday School Board Chairman and 3 other elected members.

Immediately after the district assembly, they shall meet and elect the following:

- Secretary
- Treasurer

-District Director-adult ministries

-District Director-children ministries

-These will become members of the District Sunday School Ministries Board. The board is to give supervision to all the work of the Sunday School on the district.

# General Assembly

The General Assembly is the most important meeting of the Church of the Nazarene. It has authority to formulate doctrine and make laws governing the church world - wide. The General Superintendents are the chairmen of the General Assembly.

The members of the General Assembly are (301):

1. The delegates elected by the regular districts (Phase 3), half, will be laymen and half will be elders.

Membership	Elders	Laymen
1 - 2000	1 (DS)	1
2001 - 5500	DS + 1	2
5501 — 9000	DS + 2	3

- 2 A Phase 2 district may send the district superintendent and one layman to the General Assembly.
3. A Phase 1 district may send the district superintendent to General Assembly but the district superintendent will not have a vote.
4. All general superintendents.
5. The general secretary.
6. The general treasurer.
7. The editor of Holiness Today.
8. General NYI president,
9. General NMI president.
10. Regional directors.

## Time of Meeting (302)

The General Assembly will be held in June every four years, for example, 2009, 2013, 2017 etc.

## The Work of the General Assembly (305)

1. Elect 6 general superintendents by a 2/3 vote.
2. Elect the members of the General Board.

Districts may send in resolutions concerning changes they want made to the Manual or constitution. These resolutions will be sent to committees of the General Assembly for discussion. These committees will then make recommendations either for or against which will be sent to the General Assembly, which will then discuss it further and then vote on it. This is the way in which the Manual of the church can be changed or modified.

### **The General Superintendents (306-307.14)**

The 6 general superintendents must be elders. They must be over 35 years old and less than 68 years. They are elected by the General Assembly. Their work is as follows:

1. To clearly articulate the vision of the Church of the Nazarene
2. They chair the business sessions of the General Assembly.
3. They work to help the districts:  
They chair the district assembly or appoint someone else to do so.

Ordain those who have been elected by the district assembly to become elders or they may appoint someone else to conduct the ordination service.

They can appoint a person to become district superintendent if there is a vacancy between district assemblies. They do this after consultation **with** the District Advisory Board and presidents of NMI, NYI and district Sunday School board chairman, the district secretary and district treasurer. (See 207).

### **Board of General Superintendents (315 — 324)**

The Board of General Superintendents meets every three months.

1. Provide supervision to the worldwide work of the church.  
The church is divided into 6 international regions and a general superintendent is assigned to each region.
2. Give oversight to all the Boards and Departments of the general church.
3. The general superintendents and General Board will decide how the World Evangelism Fund should be spent.

4. The Board of General Superintendents shall have authority to interpret the law and doctrines of the Church of the Nazarene.
5. If a person has been divorced and wants to become ordained, he/she must be approved by the Board of General Superintendents.
6. They are able to do anything else they feel necessary to help the work of the church provided it is in harmony with the laws of the Church of the Nazarene.

### **General Secretary (325-328.1)**

The general secretary is elected by the General Board. The general secretary is accountable to the Board of General Superintendents and the General Board.

The general secretary's work is:

1. Write minutes of all the meetings of the General Assembly.
2. Keep careful statistics of the membership of the church.
3. Preserve carefully all legal documents and important papers of the church.

### **General Treasurer (329-330.7)**

The general treasurer is elected by the General Board. The general treasurer is accountable to the Board of General Superintendents and the General Board.

The work of the general treasurer is:

1. To look after all money received by the general church.
2. To disburse that money as directed by the General Board,
3. To present to the General Board a careful annual report of all the funds belonging to the church.

### **General Board (331-336)**

The General Board is elected by the general assembly. The general treasurer and the general secretary belong to this board. There are about 40 members on the board and the board meets once each year.

The various districts of the churches belong to geographical regions. Each region may nominate some lay members and elders to the General Board. They are then elected by the delegates to the General Assembly from the region.

Members of the General Board.

<b>Region size</b>	<b>Laymen</b>	<b>Elders</b>
up to 100,000	1	1
100,001 — 200,000	2	2
over 200,000	3	3

Global representatives

General NYI	1 member	
General NMI	1 member	
Nazarene Colleges	1	1

### **The Work of the General Board**

The General Board cares for the total work of the church worldwide. It helps each department to work in harmony with the other departments.

The General Board decides how the World Evangelism Fund will be spent. It allocates money to the various departments and institutions of the church. The General Board hears reports from all the departments of the church.

## **The Minister in the Church of the Nazarene**

There are three levels of ministers in the Church of the Nazarene. They are:

1. Local minister who is approved by the local church board.
2. District licensed minister who is approved by the District Assembly.
3. Ordained elder or deacon who is approved by the District Assembly and ordained by the general superintendent and the other ordained elders.

## **The Local Minister (428)**

1. The local minister must be a member of the Church of the Nazarene. The local minister is licensed by the local church board and works under the pastor's direction. This gives the local minister opportunity to use and develop ministerial gifts. The minister has entered into a process of lifelong learning.
2. If the pastor of the local church is an elder then the local church board may issue the license, which is signed by the church secretary and pastor.
3. If the pastor of the local church is not ordained then the recommendation of the pastor and church board must be approved by the District Advisory Board on the recommendation of the district superintendent.
4. The candidate must be examined as to his or her experience of salvation, knowledge of the doctrines of the Bible, and the church Manual. Candidates must demonstrate that they have the necessary spiritual gifts and spiritual maturity.
5. The license is for one year.
6. The local minister shall pursue the course of study for ministers. If after two years the minister has not completed two courses the license will not be renewed.
7. The license may be renewed by the church board, upon the recommendation of the pastor. If the pastor is not ordained, then the pastor and church board must recommend the renewal, and the district superintendent must also give his approval.
8. The local minister is not eligible to administer the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper, and shall not officiate at marriages.



## **The District Licensed Minister (429)**

1. Applicants must be members of the Church of the Nazarene and must have a clear call to lifetime ministry.
2. The applicant must have held a local minister's license for one year.
3. The applicant must receive the approval of his or her local church board where he or she is a member. If the applicant is pastoring a church, then the applicant must be approved by the District Advisory Board.
4. The applicant must have completed one full year of Bible college or completed at least 8 courses of the ministerial studies program.
5. The applicant must carefully fill out an application for a minister's license and submit it to the Ministerial Credentials Board.
6. The applicant must attend the ministerial classes offered by the district or Bible college.
7. If pastoring a church, the pastor must submit regular monthly reports to the district superintendent.
8. The applicant will be interviewed by the Ministerial Credentials Board to determine whether or not the person is spiritually, intellectually and otherwise fit for the work of minister.
9. The candidate must receive a favourable vote by the district assembly.
10. The license expires at the end of each year.

11. Licensed ministers who are acting as pastors, and provided they pass the required courses of study, will have authority to preach and administer the sacraments to their own congregations.
12. Licensed ministers from other evangelical denominations must present their credentials, and provided they have pursued a course of study equivalent to that of the Church of the Nazarene, and meet all the other requirements listed above may be given a district license.

Once a license has been given the pastor must meet the following requirements in order to have the license renewed.

1. The pastor must complete an application for renewal each year.
2. The pastor must be approved by the District Advisory Board.
3. The pastor must have completed at least two more courses in the course of study.
4. If pastoring, the pastor must submit regular monthly reports to the district superintendent.
5. The pastor must demonstrate that he or she has grace, gifts, and usefulness for the work.
6. The pastor must be approved by the Ministerial Credentials Board and the district assembly.
7. The pastor must have the goal to be ordained as an elder or deacon in the Church of the Nazarene. The licensed minister cannot obtain a renewal of his or her license after ten years unless under special circumstances.

### **The Deacon (430)**

The deacon is a person who feels called to full time Christian service, but not a call to preach. Some deacons serve as full time children's workers, some work as hospital chaplains, some do full time visitation work in a large church or are involved full time in compassionate ministries.

The deacon is given authority to administer sacraments, and on occasion to conduct worship and preach.

The steps to become an ordained deacon are the same as those to become an ordained elder except that there are some differences in the required studies.

### **The Ordained Elder (431)**

The position of ordained elder is for those who have a clear call of God to preach his Word. The candidate must have completed a recognized course of study to prepare him or her for ministry. The candidate must have demonstrated spiritual maturity, gifts and fruitfulness in his or her ministry. It is expected that ordained ministers shall give their full energy to a lifetime of Christian service. This is a permanent position and the ordination is not renewed on a year by year basis.

A licensed minister must complete the following requirements in order to be ordained.

1. Completed the full recognized course of study for ordained elders.
2. Served as a full time licensed minister for two consecutive years, or spent three years as an associate pastor.
3. The candidate must be recommended for renewal of minister's license by the Church Board or District Advisory Board.
4. The candidate must be carefully considered and approved by the Ministerial Credentials Board for ordination.
5. If a candidate has been divorced, the Board of General Superintendents shall decide whether or not that person may be ordained.

6. The candidate is elected to the office of elder by a 2/3 vote of the district assembly.
7. The ordination service is a special service conducted by the general superintendent at the time of district assembly. The general superintendent along with the other elders present will lay hands on the minister and ordain he or she as an elder in the Church of the Nazarene.

### **Recognition of Credentials (432)**

Ordained ministers from other evangelical denominations who desire to unite with the Church of the Nazarene must complete the following steps.

1. Pass an exam on the Manual and the history of the Church of the Nazarene.
2. Complete the Questionnaire for Candidates for Ordination and Elders Requesting Recognition of Credentials.
3. Meet all the other requirements listed above.

The general superintendent will issue a certificate of recognition.

### **Resignation or Removal from the Ministry**

The office of elder is permanent in that it does not have to be renewed each year, but the elder is required to give an annual report to the district assembly. The ordination certificate is like a contract between the minister and the denomination. It is only valid as long as the minister's life and teaching are in accordance with the doctrines and practices of the church.

Ordained ministers shall not regularly conduct independent church activities that are not under the direction of the Church of the Nazarene without the annual written approval of the District Advisory Board. If an elder or a deacon unites with another denomination then they will cease to be an elder or deacon of the Church of the Nazarene. (433.10)

A minister may resign from the ministry and return his/her credentials to the district who will send it to the general secretary for safekeeping. (435.10)

A minister who remains unassigned for a period of more than four years may be placed in the "resigned" category by the district assembly. (436.2)

The procedure for dealing with a minister who is charged with wrong conduct is outlined in the Manual 505-507.2

### **God's Word for Pastors and Church Leaders**

**The Apostle Paul said** to the church leaders at Ephesus, "Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood" Acts 20:28 (NW).

The Apostle Peter said, "Be shepherds of God's flock that is under your care, serving as overseers not because you must, but because you are willing, as God wants you to be; not greedy for money, but eager to serve; not lording it over those entrusted to you but being examples to the flock. And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that will never fade away" (1 Peter 5:3-4 NW)

