

**REPORT OF THE RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE
TO THE
73RD INTERNATIONAL GENERAL COUNCIL**

Resolutions Committee

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**73rd International General Assembly of the Church of God
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RESOLUTION 1: Church of God as a Movement

WHEREAS God providentially birthed the Church of God as a community of believers to assist in fulfilling the Great Commission; and,

WHEREAS, we now face great and complex challenges that demand that we not attempt to survive with an attitude of business as usual; and,

WHEREAS God has blessed us to become one of the leading Pentecostal denominations in the world and part of the divine work of the Spirit in these last days; and,

WHEREAS we are not immune from the difficulties faced by other denominations, some of which are experiencing noticeable decline in membership and financial support; and,

WHEREAS the dangers of institutionalism and bureaucratic inefficiency are ever present, and if left unchecked will restrict our resources and limit our efforts for evangelism;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT we reaffirm that the Church of God is committed to remaining a movement that promotes policies and ministries that reflect an open, sincere effort to remain relevant to each generation; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT we acknowledge God's calling upon us to do our part to fulfill the Great Commission and to bring spiritual renewal through the power of the Holy Spirit to a world desperate for truth and significance; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED THAT we steadfastly resist those institutional trends and behaviors that would inhibit our creativity, stifle our anointing, limit our vision, or reduce our effectiveness in fulfilling the mission God has given us as a movement.

RESOLUTION 2: 125th Anniversary of the Church of God

WHEREAS, on August 19, 2011, the 125th anniversary of the birth of the Church of God will be observed; and,

WHEREAS, from the eight individuals who responded to Richard G. Spurling's invitation “. . . to take the New Testament . . . for your only rule of faith and practice . . . and to sit together as the Church of God . . .” has increased to 6,748,354 members around the world with 34,848 churches; and,

WHEREAS, this historical occasion provides an opportunity for the entire Church of God family to **remember** the past, **rejoice** in the present, and to **renew** our commitment to the future; therefore,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that we **remember** our Pentecostal heritage, the faithful men and women who sacrificed and served to shape our biblical values, and the flow of divine grace and gifts that formed the Church of God into a worldwide evangelistic force; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we **rejoice** for the guiding hand of our Lord on the Church of God, for establishing us as His blessed people, and for providing unlimited heavenly resources through prayer; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we renew our commitment to worship God in spirit and truth, to fulfill the missional mandate of the Great Commission, and to reflect a spirit of trust in every aspect of ministry; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that we come together in a spirit of celebration and commitment on this 125th anniversary, that states and local churches outline events to **remember**, **rejoice**, and **renew** and reflect honor and glory to the Lord and that inspire new avenues to support the mission and vision of the Church of God.

RESOLUTION 3: Centennial of Church of God World Missions

WHEREAS the Church of God is committed to obeying the Great Commission of Christ to make disciples of all nations; and,

WHEREAS the international ministry of the Church of God began with the return of Edmund S. and Rebecca Barr to their native Bahama Islands in November 1909; and,

WHEREAS the first Church of God American missionaries, R.M. and Ida Evans and Carl Padgett departed from the United States of America on December 31, 1909, and arrived in the Bahama Islands on January 4, 1910; and,

WHEREAS from this incipient ministry the Church of God now ministers in 181 countries and geographical entities; and,

WHEREAS every six hours a new Church of God is planted somewhere in the world; and,

WHEREAS the membership outside the United States and Canada is approaching six million baptized adult members with a constituency of twelve million when you include youth and children; and,

WHEREAS this international ministry is the result of the labors of missionaries and nationals, supported by the prayers and finances of members of the Church of God throughout the world; and,

WHEREAS the Church of God celebrated the World Missions Centennial with special services in January 2010 in the Bahamas, and at this General Assembly;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED that every Church of God office, agency, publication, and congregation use this centennial celebration as an occasion to tell the story of our missionary enterprise; and,

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Church of God enter its second hundred years of world missions ministry looking with a renewed vision and full commitment to complete the work of the Great Commission by sharing Christ with 70 designated unreached people groups.

RESOLUTION 4: Multi-Cultural Ministry

WHEREAS God has called us to be a mosaic of God's creation that enables us to embrace racial, cultural, and linguistic differences; and,

WHEREAS Scripture explicitly states that there is no distinction between Greek and Jew, circumcised and uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave, and freeman, but Christ is all, and in all (Colossians 3:11); and,

WHEREAS God's people are ultimately not citizens of any one nation or country but of a king-- Jesus and a kingdom—the Kingdom of God; and,

WHEREAS the word of God embraces and encourages racial reconciliation and the healing and forgiveness of past sins and hurts; and,

WHEREAS the promise of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit was to all flesh, all races, and all ages; and,

WHEREAS the Pentecostal experience introduced possibilities for the formation of a new community that was to be multi-racial, multi-cultural, and multi-lingual; and,

WHEREAS every part of the body of Christ is just as important as the other parts and are ordained by God to have a place at the table, a voice in the conversation, and a hand in the action; and,

WHEREAS the Church of God has experienced phenomenal growth in other nations and among other cultures both inside and outside of the United;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT we commit ourselves globally to continue to intentionally build cross-cultural relationships and continue to seek and embrace inter-racial inclusiveness; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT we manifest multi-cultural awareness and unity in concrete policies and behaviors that seek to provide ecclesiastical structures that reflect multi-cultural leadership and provide multi-cultural, multi-language resources, so that the body of Christ can participate in and be enriched by the contributions of each cultural and ministry group.

RESOLUTION 5: Deity of Christ

WHEREAS in our times there is an attempt to redefine all that Jesus taught and did in a manner that other faiths are not offended or excluded and are thereby encouraged to feel welcomed to participate in our worship; and,

WHEREAS the call to be inclusive of other faiths and the removal of doctrinal propositions so as to be non-offensive deliberately ignores the goals of preserving orthodox Christianity and orthodox Christian doctrine; and,

WHEREAS Christian doctrine is being marginalized and its predominance cheapened by this diversion from absolute truth; and,

WHEREAS there are those seeking to create Christian communities in post-modern cultures, not based on historical Christian beliefs but rather on new dogmas, philosophies, ideologies, and radical relativism which are all diametrically opposed to the substantive teachings of the Holy Scriptures; and,

WHEREAS we have historically practiced “believing” and then “belonging,” and there are those who now advocate and practice “belonging” and then “believing” based on radical relativism, ecclesiastical paradigm shifts, and an evident disregard for sound hermeneutical and exegetical principles of interpretation that historically have guided in the declaration of biblical doctrines and beliefs; and,

WHEREAS at the core of these salient assaults on our beliefs and doctrines at this time is the attempt to divest Christ of His deity by identifying Him as a mere historical figure, devaluing Him to just a moral individual to be emulated, and in some circles discrediting Him by falsely labeling Him an amoral person, so as to erroneously expect and anticipate avoidance of accountability for sins and the judgment of God;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT in light of the biblically explicit teaching on the deity of Jesus Christ, we hereby affirm that the historical, doctrinal position of the Church of God remains irreversibly that Jesus Christ is indeed God; and,

BE IT THEREFORE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT because our position is corroborated by Jesus’ preexistence (John 1:1), His sharing in divine purposes and activity (John 1:3), and His possession of divine attributes and prerogatives (Revelation 1:8), we unequivocally reaffirm our position that Jesus is God incarnate (Titus 2:13, 14); the Son of God (Ephesians 1:3); the Second Person of the Trinity (Matthew 28:19); Savior of the World; Redeemer; Sanctifier; Healer; Holy Ghost Baptizer; and Soon Coming King.

BE IT THEREFORE FINALLY RESOLVED THAT our ministers and lay constituents make it a matter of urgency to reiterate, reaffirm, and proactively engage and transcend the culture by the systematic preaching and teaching this core belief of the deity of Christ, as clearly stated in our Declaration of Faith.

RESOLUTION 6: Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative

WHEREAS the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative, sponsored by the Pentecostal Theological Seminary's Center for Pentecostal Leadership and Care, has made a significant, positive impact on hundreds of Church of God pastors; and,

WHEREAS the excellent program of care, support, and development available to Church of God pastors through the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative has been described by Lilly Endowment officers as "the shining star" of its similar grant-supported projects; and,

WHEREAS the pivotal point of the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative is to honor and develop the pastor by providing ongoing supportive relationships in a group context that empowers the pastor to be open and supportive of other pastors by sharing his or her own experience rather than always looking to "experts;" and,

WHEREAS research funded by Lilly Endowment concluded Church of God pastors involved in the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative lead congregations that are more missional, more active in their communities, more participatory in nature, have more vital youth ministries, and report 61% growth over the last five years; and,

WHEREAS Church of God pastors identified the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative in the recent "Listening Tour" forums as one of "the most positive programs in the denomination;" and,

WHEREAS the Church of God has demonstrated denominational support for the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative by investing in the psychological health, emotional well-being, spiritual renewal, and continued growth of Church of God pastors and their spouses; and,

WHEREAS the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative is in its eighth year of implementation, making it one of the longest-running Lilly Endowment-funded projects of its kind; and,

WHEREAS approximately 1,000 U.S. Church of God pastors are currently meeting monthly in Pastoral Covenant Groups; and,

WHEREAS the first sixteen Pastoral Covenant Group Facilitators have been trained for eight South American countries this past year;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT we applaud the visionary leadership and creative program development of the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative, and offer continuing support for the Center for Pentecostal Leadership and Care staff of the Pentecostal Theological Seminary; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Pastoral Covenant Group Initiative be continued and expanded to provide value for pastors, congregations, state leadership, and the mission of the Church of God, and positive efforts made to sustain this ministry for the present and future welfare of the church.

RESOLUTION 7: Ministerial Care by the Local Church

WHEREAS the word “church” (*ekklesia*), by definition, primarily refers to the local congregation of “called-out” believers; and,

WHEREAS one of the great gifts of Christ to the church is the pastor—the shepherd of the sheep who compose the local congregation of believers; and,

WHEREAS Jesus warned that Satan, as a “ravening wolf” disguised in “sheep’s clothing” (Matthew 7:15), will intentionally strive to destroy the work of the shepherd by coming as a thief “to steal, and to kill, and to destroy” (John 10:10); and,

WHEREAS Jesus told His disciples, “A new commandment I give unto you, That you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another” (John 13:34); and,

WHEREAS the New Testament in several other passages specifically instructs the members of the body of Christ, His church, to “love one another;”

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT we reaffirm our commitment to the challenge of being a church that genuinely cares for one another and to our priority statement that, “The Church of God recognizes the local church as the foundation of all ministry activities and will renew efforts to acknowledge, affirm, strengthen, and support the central importance of the ministry of the local church;” and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT leadership at all levels of the church encourage and teach local congregations how to provide quality support and care for their pastor and his/her family by providing comfortable housing, adequate compensation, periods of rest and relaxation, and retirement security.

RESOLUTION 8: PRAYER

WHEREAS, prayer was a foundational pillar in the very beginning of the Church of God and has undergirded our mission and message throughout the years; and

WHEREAS, our churches have been characterized as houses of prayer for all nations and all peoples to experience the fullness of God's divine favor and his protective oversight and leadership; and

WHEREAS, through prayer we are issued the sustaining resources to be effective in fulfilling the Great Commission, making disciples, and worshipping in spirit and truth; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we make prayer the central focus in maintaining unity and harmony in the body of Christ to fulfill God's perfect will for His people; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we continue to emphasize that prayer is the power of the Church for the advancement of the kingdom of God with compassion and authority; prayer equips believers to live God-honoring lives, to model the virtues of Christ-likeness, and to give effective witness to the saving grace of Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit.

RESOLUTION 9: THE GREAT COMMISSION

WHEREAS, the parting charge of Jesus Christ to the Church embodies going into all the world, sharing the redemptive message of God's love, baptizing converts, and guiding believers in biblical maturity; and

WHEREAS, visionary, obedient involvement in the Great Commission represents the lifeline of the church, the flow of supernatural manifestations, and the enriching, transforming fruit of the Holy Spirit; and

WHEREAS, every local Church of God has the capacity to influence the life of the community, touch the unchurched with the love of Christ, and minister with tenderness to the helpless and hopeless; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that the entire Church of God family reaffirm our total, unreserved commitment to understanding the scope of the Great Commission and the essential structure necessary for superior evangelism performance; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that every local church embrace a comprehensive plan to guide adults and youth in personal soulwinning, to sponsor life-related outreach events to impact unchurched families, and to form a love-circle to mentor believers in following in the steps of Jesus Christ, our Savior and sustainer.

RESOLUTION 10: THE QUEST FOR TRUST

WHEREAS, the biblical injunction, “Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not lean on your own understanding. In all your ways acknowledge him, and he will make straight your paths” (Proverbs 3:4 ESV), is a lifestyle pattern to please God and to conform to His will and purposes; and

WHEREAS, the quality of pastoral and congregational trust can be expanded through understanding biblical roles, open dialogue about Christ-exalting ministry, and a commitment of scriptural loyalty to each other; and

WHEREAS, a renewed emphasis on creating a stronger degree of trust in the community toward the Church can be achieved through love-based service, social projects, and life-enriching activities and projects; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we come together in a covenant of trust that will shape our faith and form a foundation for new experiences in serving God, serving each other, and serving the community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we make a united commitment to the formula of **Prayer**—the heartbeat of the Church, the **Great Commission**—the solution, and the **Quest for Trust**—the anchor for the future, to guide us in fulfilling our mission and vision.

RESOLUTION 11: ON GLOBAL POVERTY

Whereas, global poverty has reached alarming proportions, with 1.2 billion people living on less than US \$1.25 a day with little or no access to the basic services of nutrition, health, and education; and,

Whereas, in 2000 the leaders of the governments of the world made promises to halve extreme poverty by 2015; and,

Whereas, Holy Scripture is comprehensive and compelling in its mandate to “do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with God” (Micah 6:8); and,

Whereas, a partnership of Evangelical and Pentecostal churches has set the goal of uniting 100 million Christians in prayer and action on global poverty;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED:

That we reaffirm our intention to follow the supreme example of Jesus, Lord of the Church, who proclaimed, “The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor...to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight to the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of God’s favor” (Luke 4:18-29); and,

Be It Further Resolved That, we call upon the governments of the nations represented by the international constituents of the Church of God to honor their promise to halve extreme global poverty by 2015, holding them accountable to act with integrity and justice on behalf of the poor.

RESOLUTION 12: Appreciation to International General Assembly Leadership and the City of Orlando, Florida

WHEREAS the delegates to the 73rd International General Assembly, meeting in Orlando, Florida, have enjoyed a time of worship, encouragement, and fellowship; and,

WHEREAS preparations for the 73rd International General Assembly required extensive effort through the sacrificial involvement of many dedicated volunteers; and,

WHEREAS the Church of God Presiding Bishop and General Overseer, Dr. Raymond F. Culpepper, and Executive Committee Members Dr. Timothy Hill, Dr. Mark Williams, Dr. David Griffis, and Dr. Wallace Sibley have demonstrated extraordinary commitment, extensive labor, and excellent leadership; and,

WHEREAS Raymond F. Culpepper and Timothy M. Hill (International Executive Committee Liaisons) and T. Scot Carter, Julian B. Robinson, Kenneth R. Bell, Thomas A. Madden, Anthony T. Pelt, Kevin D. Brooks, Samuel Santana and Eliezer Bonilla (General Assembly Cabinet) were primarily responsible for the administrative planning that ensured that all sessions, functions, and activities of the General Assembly operated smoothly, efficiently, and with professional excellence; and,

WHEREAS our local Church of God congregations, state office staff and all General Assembly committees and volunteers worked diligently to make our stay a pleasant and productive one; and,

WHEREAS the Spirit has anointed all of our speakers, musicians, and other stage personnel to lead us in Pentecostal worship; and,

WHEREAS the housing bureau, the convention and visitors bureau, hotel personnel, and businesses in the city of Orlando, have extended every courtesy to make our visit pleasurable and our Assembly successful;

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT we commend the members of the International Executive Committee, the General Assembly Cabinet, secretaries, and committees for their gracious spirit, untiring labor of love, and excellent performance of duties; and,

BE IT THEREFORE FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the delegates of the 73rd General Assembly acknowledge God's providence for all of these blessings and express our profound gratitude to the Lord and to all those involved in producing a meeting characterized by transparency, worship, encouragement, and evangelism.

RESOLUTION 13: Church Planting

WHEREAS there is a critical need to plant churches within the Church of God because it honors God and spreads His fame among the nations; and

WHEREAS one of the urgent needs of today within the Church of God is to reach the harvest and our periods of greatest numerical growth have corresponded with direct efforts in church planting; and

WHEREAS church planting translates God's love into the heart language of people groups all over the world and we must rise to the challenge and establish new, vibrant congregations among all cultural groups; and

WHEREAS new churches are essential to God's strategy to reach unreached people who have no near-neighbor to tell them the story of Jesus' love; and

WHEREAS the goal of church planting is to extend the Kingdom of God into territory previously occupied by the enemy; and

WHEREAS in order for a new church to survive and flourish it is essential that the church planter receives supervision, support, and accountability.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED:

THAT the Church of God focus its efforts on the task of planting new churches. Our commission has never been clearer, more urgent, or more hopeful.

RESOLUTION 14: APPRECIATION FOR WOMEN OF THE CHURCH OF GOD

WHEREAS, the women of the Church of God have been a major influence on the stability and growth of the church worldwide; and

WHEREAS, today women are a mighty force in fulfilling the Great Commission through prayer, teaching, making disciples, and setting a godly example for the youth of the church; and

WHEREAS, the role women in the ministry of the Kingdom of God, the local church, and the General Assembly has been discolored by the remarks of some speakers during general council sessions; therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we reaffirm the value and the historical contribution of women in the life of the Church of God; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that more leadership opportunities be offered for women in leadership in light of their spiritual gifts and to establish a foundation for the future involvement, training and recognition of young women growing up in the church; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we commend them for their crucial involvement in the total scope of the ministry in the Church of God today; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that we set in motion methods to highlight their dedication and to honor them for their loyalty, leadership, and love for the Lord and the Church of God.