



A BYLAW PROMULGATED TO LEGALLY AND UNITEDLY ADMINISTER THE ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX TEWAHEDO CHURCH IN THE DIASPORA.



THIS BYLAW HAS BEEN ESTABLISHED FOR THE ETHIOPIAN ORTHODOX TEWAHEDO CHURCHES IN THE DIASPORA PURSUANT TO THE AUTHORIZATION GIVEN BY HIS HOLINESS ABUNE MERKORIOS, PATRIARCH OF ETHIOPIA.



His Holiness Abune Merkorios
Fourth Patriarch and Catholicos of Ethiopia

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Part I

Chapter 1

Introduction

The rules, systems, developments, miraculous powers, challenges and sacrifices of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (EOTC) have been witnessed through various means such as *fitha negest*, *kale awadee* (ecclesiastical constitution), church magazines and newspapers. Since its foundation, this blessed ancient church has been worshipping God through *inter alia* the lyrics of Saint Yared, *Mahilet* (cantillation), *Quiddase* (Divine Liturgy), songs and poems.

The clergy and laity of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church have both been consistently united to promote, develop, expand spiritual services, establish schools, spread words of the Bible, propagate morality and social services to maintain and enhance the properties of the church, and have sought cautionary steps in all matters related to the church. Measures were adopted and declared at various times in the *kale awadee* (ecclesiastical constitution) laws and directives since 1965 E.C. to enable worshipers serve and lead their churches. This administrative system is not new but has been implemented and used since the apostolic age up to the present (Acts 6: 2-6).

Moreover, believers who reside outside and far away from Ethiopia have had designed internal regulations in countries where they live in order to safeguard their religion and pass it over to the following generation. This indubitably is done with strict observance of and obedience to church rules, thus without deviating from but rather staying consistent with the *kale awadee* (ecclesiastical constitution).

It is necessary that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo faith but also *inter alia* the identity, customs, languages and literature of Ethiopians living in the Diaspora are maintained; hence, believers are able to establish churches and systematically utilize and benefit from services therefrom. These directives are found in articles 45:1 and 56 of the April 19, 1970 E.C. version of the *kale awadee* (ecclesiastical constitution) which was designed and implemented to state and improve the rights, obligations and authority of the patriarchate's general parish council.

Notwithstanding there are obvious differences of language and culture, Ethiopians need to retain their glorious heritage and pass it onto succeeding generations. This duty has both historically and factually been the responsibility of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church but also of every individual therein, in accordance and fully consistent with St. Paul's testimony stated in his 2nd epistle to Timothy 4:7-8: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day, and not only to me but also to all who have longed for his appearing."

Objectives

1. To enable the promotion, proliferation and enhancement of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Christianity-which was upheld and passed over to followers by the forefathers-among followers who reside in various countries with view to maintain, spread and pass it over to succeeding generations.
2. To assist the church in effective and efficient belief and educational delivery towards its members in accordance and fully consistent with all the regulations and laws of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
3. To give service that bolsters love and unity among the laity; to expand the sense of Ethiopianism and love for their country via rendering cultural and educational services that well argument religious values.
4. To ensure that church rules are strictly observed and respected, Ethiopian culture and identity safeguarded, developed and expanded in countries where Ethiopians live; moreover, to make sure that churches are properly registered, obeying laws of the lands in which they are established while maintaining their rights and retaining their doctrine intact.
5. To ensure that the rights of the clergy and laity are fully respected and to aim for the best interest thereof in consonance with laws of countries where they reside.
6. To guard, protect and monitor ecclesiastical objects and properties of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church around the world.
7. To perform peace making/keeping tasks displaying unrelenting efforts intended for the well being of all Ethiopians in Ethiopia and outside Ethiopia, particularly those who are weakened and in need; to make sure that their basic human rights such as religious freedom are met and respected. Furthermore, to cooperate as necessary with the relevant institutions for the retention of global peace and security.
8. To serve the laity under the leadership of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Patriarch, His Holiness Abuna Merkorios, with collaboration of all churches in view to achieve all the objectives of the present bylaw and give effect to all contents therein.

A Bylaw Promulgated to Administer the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches in the Diaspora

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has been expanding throughout the world mostly since the 20th century. In order to accommodate this rampant and developing trend amidst the web of church rules and religious doctrines, it is necessary that all churches established outside Ethiopia become structurally strengthened in a unified way. In view thereof, their leadership needs to abide by common rules and regulations; the following set of internal rules and regulations will unquestionably allow to reasonably achieve this vision and as such will become and constitute a fully consistent working guideline subsidiary and supplementary to the April 19, 1970 E.C. Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Orthodox Church *kale awadee* (ecclesiastical constitution)—the main reference.

The Need for Amending the Bylaw of the Parish Administrative Council

The main rationale for the establishment of the parish council, as stated in the October 15, 1965 E.C. version of the bylaw, is to bring the clergy and laity into close collaboration in rendering spiritual services; to create schools that expand biblical teachings; to strengthen social services, reinforce and enrich church services and administration. However, an amendment of the bylaw of the Parish Administrative Council was later needed. The October 15, 1965 E.C. version was thereby replaced by the April 19, 1970 E.C. *kale awadee*, and furthermore was improved numerous times.

At present, the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is remarkably expanding worldwide. Churches are widely spread in all continents where Ethiopians live. It is necessary and indispensable that churches follow and proliferate the classical doctrine of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The strengthening of church rules via the preservation and/or amelioration thereof is required to effectively and intactly safeguard and protect *inter alia* beliefs, clergies, churches, monasteries, schools, in sum all properties of the church. Specifically, the rationale for establishing improved rules is the existence of a qualified aspiration to cope with the expansion of the contemporary church in order to facilitate the discharge of all of its duties by helping the clergy and laity maintain the integrity and safety of their churches while giving full service to the public with observance and respect of laws in the land they reside.

Though the parish council's bylaw has objectively been improved in order to strengthen religious activities, its very foundational rationale lies in the first council of the early church convened by the apostles in Jerusalem (Acts 4:32, 5: 1-11, 6:1-6, 15: 1-29; 1st Cor. 6:1-6, 16: 1-11 are *inter alia* sufficient biblical references and proofs).

Article 1: Interpretation

- 1.1 Unless otherwise stated in this bylaw, the ensuing words and phrases are defined as follows.

- 1.2** The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church means the church that follows the teachings, faith and practice of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 1.3** Parish Administrative Council means the Council whose members are elected by a majority vote among the clergy and laity to administer the parish for three (3) years.
- 1.4** Sub-committee means a committee under the Parish Administrative Council chosen from the laity to voluntarily serve the church in various services.
- 1.5** Tithes (*asrat*) means ten percent (10%) of income paid to the church for the glory of God as was commanded by the Holy Scriptures and church orders.
- 1.6** Pledge (*si'let*) means a voluntary gift given to God by believers for the response to their prayers.
- 1.7** The finance of the church means cash, cheque, promissory note, other forms of financial instruments and documents and/or the likes.
- 1.8** Receipt means a written document that has two copies-one for the payer and the other for the church-upon receipt of money or property.
- 1.9** Written document means an affidavit note between the donor and receiver in the absence of receipts from the church administrative parish council.
- 1.10** Free service refers to all services that are rendered by church members or elected church servants and/or the likes without financial or material remuneration.
- 1.11** Parish church administrator refers to the parish clergy's leader, *Gebez*, *Meree-Geta*, or the priest who administers the church.
- 1.12** High priest refers to the chief executive priest of the diocese or the one who administers a church being assigned by the Holy Synod.
- 1.13** Internal rules are bylaws created to organize committees and sub-committees of the Parish Administrative Council which work in the entire structural administrative zones at all levels.
- 1.14** In consonance with article 44:1 members or laity refer to those who fulfill their membership duty and responsibility, strictly abiding by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church laws.

- 1.15** The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches outside Ethiopia means churches established and being established in the Diaspora.

Article 2: Brief Description

This bylaw will guide and strengthen the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo churches that have been established and are yet to be established within the legal framework of the Holy Synod, decreed on April 19, 1970 E.C. to determine the authority and responsibility of the patriarchate's general parish council in *kale awadee* (ecclesiastical constitution) 45:1, consistent with article 59, designed to improve the internal working guidelines as of October 28, 1996 E.C. Thereby, this bylaw can be referred to as an improved bylaw of the parish council which governs the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Churches in the Diaspora.

Article 3: Designation of churches

- 3.1** All churches established or yet to be established under the belief, faith and practice of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church will be given the official name of the church (EOTC) by the legal synod upon their persuasion and obedience of the right Orthodox Christian doctrines.
- 3.2** In every continent, country, province, city and/or the likes they reside, followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church will receive their churches' official denominational name from the Patriarch or an archbishop or by permission of the archbishop after a holy ark (*tabot*) has been consecrated by an archimandrite.
- 3.3** All churches that are established pursuant to the orders and tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and perform proper divine worship accordingly will receive church denomination and identification.
- 3.4** In reference to this bylaw and pursuant to article 3:2 hereabove, any institutions, organizations and/or the likes governed by the rules and regulations of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church will be known as spiritual congress, spiritual association and the likes until receiving the official name of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 3.5** Any monastery or spiritual organization administered by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church will be known at the place of its institution as the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church (*deber*), monastery (*gedam*) or spiritual association.

Article 4: Legal Status of Churches

- 4.1** All churches, monasteries, spiritual councils and any spiritual organizations, and/or the likes outside Ethiopia must fully accept and implement the laws, regulations, and rules of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 4.2** All established churches and parish councils and those that are yet to be established under the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are bound to receive spiritual leadership from the Holy Synod led by the legal Patriarch, **His Holiness Abuna Merkorios**.
- 4.3** The buildings and properties of churches, either provided by the public or otherwise, the safeguarding of churches and their spiritual entity are undertaken by the office of the Holy Synod.

Part II

Chapter 2

Article 5: Structure of Existing as well as New Churches in the Diaspora

All churches, teaching institutions, monasteries, spiritual councils and spiritual associations, and/or the likes that have been established or are in the process of establishment will obtain their legitimate existence, authority and responsibility from the Holy Synod.

Article 6: Authority and Duty of the Holy Synod

The Holy Synod is the congregation of archbishops, or the highest church congress presided over and led by His Holiness the Patriarch. It is responsible to lead and govern the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church; to safeguard, develop and maintain the security, integrity and safety of the said church.

- 6.1.a** The Holy Synod will examine and approve the authority and responsibility of the patriarchate's general parish council and other laws and regulations enacted by the patriarchate's general parish council consistent with *kale awadee* 45: 1.
- 6.1.b** It introduces and enacts bylaws, rules and guidelines for parish churches; makes, amends, overrules decisions and monitors them. It takes any measure and/or action to protect and safeguard the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

- 6.1.c** The Holy Synod is the final arbiter and ruler in all religious matters and rules, all church administration issues, and all matters alike pertaining to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. It is the ultimate, supreme, absolute and exclusive body that leads and governs the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in its entirety without exception. It has a binding authority; its decision pertaining to any matters of any nature of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is supreme, thus trumps any other decision. Its rulings, decisions, amendments and/or the likes are final, conclusive and binding.
- 6.1.d** The Holy Synod can have a standing council chaired by the Patriarch. It can also have a special assistant and secretary, and archbishops as its members.
- 6.2.a** Churches, monasteries, theological colleges and other spiritual institutions and/or the likes must have a direct relationship with the Holy Synod in order to effectively spread the Ethiopian Orthodoxy throughout the world.
- 6.2.b** The archbishop leads all churches, monasteries and spiritual institutions established in the name of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, or delegates the highest clergies.
- 6.2.c** The office of the Holy Synod is the highest administrative office of all churches that appoints and removes the chief executive officers of the dioceses, and monitors their spiritual activities.
- 6.2.d** Through its office, the Holy Synod makes sure that the rights and best interest of the clergy are maintained and respected.
- 6.3.a** The Holy Synod has two meetings every year; which meetings are held in the presence of His Holiness the Patriarch and at the place where the Patriarch decides to convene them.
- 6.3.b** The first meeting of the Holy Synod is held after the Great Lent and the second following the feast of the Holy Cross. However, the Patriarch can call special and/or emergency meetings and/or the likes as required.
- 6.3.c** The Holy Synod's central leadership can summon clergy members of the parish councils, members of Sunday schools and the laity at large for special and/or emergency meetings if deemed necessary.
- 6.3.d** All general assemblies of churches and churches, monasteries and spiritual institutions in the Diaspora under the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church are exclusively governed and chaired by the Patriarch.

- 6.3.e** The Holy Synod prepares agendas and communiques and the likes, and distributes them as fit to potential bodies and participants via its office.
- 6.4** The Holy Synod has absolute authority to establish institutions, advisory boards, departments and various service delivery sections, and the likes.
- 6.5** The Holy Synod has the following main sections:
- A. Holy Synod office.
 - B. Council of the clergy.
 - C. Patriarchate's general parish council.
 - D. Patriarchate's general administrative parish council.
 - E. Administration of the archdiocese (diocese of the bishopric).
 - F. Office of the parish church.
 - G. Department for Gospel preaching.
 - H. Clergy services section.
 - I. Clergy training institutes.
 - J. Literature and interpretation institute.
 - K. Law and order service.
 - L. Public relations.
 - M. Department for Sunday schools.
 - N. Developmental and charitable section.

Article 7: Duty and Responsibility of Bishops and Archbishops

Although all bishops are responsible for the Holy Synod, they can have the following additional duties and responsibilities in accordance with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church doctrine.

- 7.1** Their graces, the bishops, have authority to establish and bless churches, ordain priests and deacons, and represent the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church wherever.
- 7.2** They confirm the regular and permanent position, and transfer of clergies, monks, and deacons who serve the Church.
- 7.3** They bless churches and ensure the position of the Holy Ark (*tabot*) in a consecrated building, conferring the name: church.
- 7.4** The archbishop, besides his authority to lead churches, has a responsibility to ensure that all churches follow the doctrine of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 7.5** He visits all churches, encourages the laity, blesses them and solves problems. He can also submit issues to the Holy Synod in view to reach a decision.

- 7.6** The archbishop is the figurehead of the diocese who may delegate his authority to the high priest upon his absence.
- 7.7** The archbishop summons the annual meeting of the diocesan parish council. He can also summon special and/or emergency meetings should there be a need.

Article 8: Administration of the Holy Synod's Office (Office of the Patriarch)

- 8.1** The Holy Synod's Office executive officer is the secretary of the Holy Synod.
- 8.2** The Office of the Patriarch will be situated in the city of the Patriarchate or at the place where the office of the Holy Synod is situated.
- 8.3** All churches established in various continents, countries, provinces and cities and/or the likes must have a central administration led by the Holy Synod.
- 8.4** All churches must attend any conference convened by the Holy Synod at least being represented by three delegates: the administrator of the church, representatives of the parish council and Sunday school.
- 8.5** All meeting participants of the Holy Synod have one decision casting vote.
- 8.6** The clergy retain all the rights they deserve when they retire.
- 8.7** The Holy Synod is administered by appropriated gifts from member churches in accordance with the regulation of the Patriarchate's general parish council.
- 8.8** It monitors the implementation of spiritual decrees, declarations and directives of the Holy Synod.
- 8.9** The Holy Synod, representing the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo churches, interacts with the World Council of Churches, and other institutions and governments.
- 8.10** It monitors the actual payment of church fees to the Holy Synod and encourages those who delay payments to act accordingly.
- 8.11** It prepares the annual budget of the Patriarch and the Holy Synod, and submits to the Holy Synod for approval. It also provides financial reports at the end the budget year.

- 8.12 It establishes a museum at a central location and enhances the establishment of libraries in all regions.
- 8.13 It supports churches in overcoming professional and material scarcity and makes every effort to avail these necessities.
- 8.14 The Holy Synod has the authority to hire employees through open competition and/or the likes depending on the nature of the jobs.

Chapter 3

Structure of Spiritual Organizations and Legal Responsibility of the Clergy's Administration

Article 9: Council of the Clergy (*Rikbe Kahinat*)

- 9.1 The annual council of the clergy (*rikbe kahinat*) is led by His Holiness, the Patriarch.
- 9.2 Unless the *Rikbe Kahinat* is not called as an emergency meeting, it will be regularly held twice a year.
- 9.3.a Archbishops, clergies, monks, deacons and other representatives of parish councils attend *Rikbe Kahinat*.
- 9.3.b The council chooses provisional minute takers during its meetings.
- 9.3.c The council discusses all matters pertaining to churches and concludes with a declaration of common purpose.

Article 10: Authority of the Council of the Clergy (*Rikbe Kahinat*)

- 10.1 The general assembly of *rikbe kahinat* evaluates performances of churches; designs long-and short-term strategies, and monitors their implementation via the Holy Synod.
- 10.2 It studies the conditions under which various institutions (training institutions, language schools, hospitals and pension services, and/or the likes) will offer better services.

- 10.3** It evaluates performances of the parish councils and examines reports from churches' administrators and parish councils, and gives directives.

Article 11: Clergy Service Section

- 11.1** The clergy service section ensures rights of the clergy, such as but not limited to rights of those who are sick, tired or retired or have other similar problems, are protected and respected. It aims and fulfills the best interest of the clergy.
- 11.2** By following the doctrine of the Holy Synod, it encourages mutual cooperation between the clergy and laity; it raises ideas and implements them when approved by the Holy Synod.
- 11.3** It works with others in order to ensure the pension rights of the clergy are respected as stated in Article 13 thereafter.
- 11.4** It works under the instruction of the Holy Synod with strict consistency with the laws of the Holy Synod.

Article 12: Payments for the Services of the Clergy

- 12.1** The clergy are paid salary in accordance with the labor law of the land commiserating their responsibility.
- 12.2** The salary increments of the clergy are dependent on the income of the churches and are established pursuant to necessary proper studies.
- 12.3** Legal deductions from salary are made in accordance with the law of the land where the clergy give services. The deductions are sent to the appropriate government offices by the accountants of the parish council.
- 12.4** The clergy also offer other services besides the spiritual ones. Finances are allotted to cover their travel expenses while performing communal services and expenses are subject to revision every two years.
- 12.5** All the expenses of the clergy for travel to participate in the meetings of the Holy Synod, *rikibe kahinat* and other church meetings, and/or the likes are paid by the office of the parish council.

Article 13: Pension Benefits of the Clergy

- 13.1.a** The benefits of the clergy are protected on the basis of *kale awadee* (ecclesiastical constitution) Chapter 7:52b and c; 52:2b, and also on the basis of the present bylaw.

- 13.1.b** The pension benefits of the clergy are protected in the country where they provide services.
- 13.1.c** Whenever the clergy reach a retirement age and get their rights respected, other clergy are assigned to their places so as to give effective service.
- 13.1.d** Upon retirement of the clergy who serve permanently or of other church employees, their pension and severance pay are calculated based on the years of service.
- 13.1.e** Upon their retirement, the clergy and other employees of the church must pay a fee from their severance pay as determined by the parish council of the church.
- 13.2.a** All permanent employees and the administrative parish council will contribute 0.75% to their future severance pay. The other 1.25% will be contributed by churches to all of the 2.5% monthly payment while the permanent employees contribute 0.75% (\$9) and the parish council contributes 1.25% (\$15).
- 13.2.b** All the monies deducted by the parish council from permanent or temporary employees and the clergy will be hoarded at the account opened for this purpose on the basis of Article 13:2a hereabove as directed by the Holy Synod.
- 13.2.c** Any member of the clergy or permanent employee at various positions must pay the money stated in 13:2a hereabove from the day the employee is hired as permanent employee but entitled to the severance pay after working one full year.
- 13.3** The amount of the severance pay of the clergy should be in accordance with the *rikibe kahinat*'s directives.
- 13.4.a** All churches pension centers and matters are governed by the guidelines of the Holy Synod.

Part III

Chapter 4

Duty and Responsibility of the Patriarchate's General Parish Council

Article 14: Establishment of the Parish Council

The Parish Council is organized in accordance with Chapter 2 Article 3 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. The tiered Parish Administrative Council shall implement and execute the objectives and duties listed in Articles 6 and 7 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church; and in Article 14 Sections 1 and 2 of the present bylaw.

Article 14:1: Objectives of the Parish Council

The objectives of the parish council shall be to:

- 14.1.a** Preserve and protect the church.
- 14.1.b** Facilitate, promote and ensure the delivery of services rendered by the church in accordance with the law and the traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 14.1.c** Protect the rights of the clergy.
- 14.1.d** Strive to enhance the number of followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

Article 14:2: Duty of the Parish Council

- 14.2.a** In consultation with the church administrator, the parish council shall put forward an action plan to facilitate the achievement and excellence of the spiritual mission of the church.
- 14.2.b** Organize, facilitate and establish spiritual seminary;
- 14.2.c** Organize, facilitate, establish and strengthen spiritual youth association;
- 14.2.d** Ensure the proper practice of and adherence to the church's traditions and canons;

- 14.2.e** Protect and safeguard the properties, treasures and wealth of the parish church; propose, plan and implement, as deemed necessary, steps to ensure the assets of the parish church are well preserved and protected;
- 14.2.f** Endeavor, care for the advancement of the clergy, through further education in theological or vocational disciplines and/or the likes;
- 14.2.g** Implement, act upon and execute all the different levels of bylaws, principles, policies, planning, decisions, deliberations and/or the likes set and passed by the Holy Synod;
- 14.2.h** The parish council shall strive to promote and bring about harmony and unity among other parish councils;
- 14.2.i** Establish, guide and support philanthropic organizations, and monitor their activities.

Article 14:3: Organization of the Patriarchate’s Parish Council

The parish councils organized under the office of the Holy Synod shall have the following hierarchies:

- (1) The Patriarchate’s General Parish Council.
- (2) The Patriarchate’s Parish Administrative Council.
- (3) The Diocesan General Parish Council.
- (4) The Diocesan Parish Administrative Council.
- (5) Parish Church Spiritual Council of the Laity (Parish Council).
- (6) Parish Church Administrative Council (Executive Committee).

Article 15: The Patriarchate’s General Parish Council

15.1 In this section, “Patriarchate General Parish Council” means, in conformity with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 1 Article 2 (e), Article (43) (a) and in conformity with this bylaw, those:

- a. Members who faithfully profess the teachings of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church; and as such those;
- b. Incumbents who represent the Diocesan Parish Administrative Council and;
- c. Who assemble with members of the Holy Synod in the Patriarchate and;
- d. Who form the Patriarchate’s Parish Administrative Council.

15.2 The Patriarchate’s General Parish Council shall meet annually under the presiding Patriarch to assess and discuss activities, progresses and the

status of the Mother Church, resolve conflicts and disputes if any, layout plans and policies for protecting the Church, and discuss other church matters.

- 15.3 In accordance with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Article 45 stating the authority of the Patriarchate's General Parish Council, it shall draft bylaws, policies and/or the likes, and when the Holy Synod adopts such drafts, it shall take responsibility for implementation.

Article 16: The Patriarchate's General Administrative Parish Council

- 16.1 In accordance with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 1 Article 1 (e), Article (43) Section 1 (c) and in conformity with the present bylaw, the Patriarchate's Administrative Parish Council shall be elected from representatives of the diocesan administrative parish council.
- 16.2 The office and official address of the Patriarchate's Administrative Parish Council shall be located in the same place as the Office of the Holy Synod.
- 16.3 The Patriarchate's Administrative Parish Council shall, in collaboration with the office of the Holy Synod, monitor the implementation of objectives and execution of duties set forth in the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 2 Articles 5 and 6; Chapter 6 Article 45; and Article 14 Sections 1 and 2 of the present bylaw.
- 16.4 The Patriarchate's Administrative Parish Council shall have administrative members; no less than five (5), and no more than seven (7).
- 16.5 The Patriarchate's Administrative Parish Council shall be accountable to the Office of the Holy Synod; and the term for the members shall be three (3) years.
- 16.6 With the exception of those who are employed and receive incentives, remunerations, salaries and wages for their services, all the members of the tiered Parish Administrative Council shall render their services for free.
- 16.7 Members of the Patriarchate's Administrative Parish Council are as follows:

a. Council Chairman

The Council shall be presided over by His Holiness, the Patriarch. Whereas the Patriarch is not physically present, the archbishop, nominated by the Patriarch, shall preside over the Council.

b. Council Members

The Council members shall comprise those from the Patriarchate's General Parish Council who are voted for or appointed—all in favor—and may be clerical order, lay order, and Sunday school representatives.

c. In accordance with the order of voting, the Chairman of the Patriarchate's Administrative Parish Council (Executive Committee) shall *inter alia* appoint the secretary, financial officer and public relations officer.

Chapter 5

Authority and Duty of the Archdiocesan Administration and its Parish Council

Article 17: Administration of the Archdiocese.

- 17.1** Each parish church shall have a centralized archdiocese to which they belong.
- 17.2** The Office of the Archdiocese shall guide and lead the administration of churches and their parish councils.
- 17.3** The archdiocese's clerical administrative body shall be accountable to the office of the Holy Synod.
- 17.4** The archdiocesan administrative office shall be within the place where the archbishop or his designate archpriest resides.
- 17.5** The archbishop or his representative or appointee archpriest shall be in charge of the administrative office of the diocese and have authority over the clergy, administrative parish councils and Sunday schools *inter alia* to call for a meeting.
- 17.6** For the continuation of regular church services, the administrative office of the diocese shall appoint priests and deacons temporarily or permanently.

- 17.7** The office shall act as the electoral body for the appointments of five (5) to seven (7) members that form the diocesan administrative parish council, such members being representatives of parish churches in their jurisdiction.
- 17.8** Subject to the need for additional full-time staff for the jurisdiction of the diocese, the administrative office shall have the rights and authority to employ such people with the right credentials.
- 17.9** Unless an appeal is made to the Office of the Holy Synod or to the Holy Synod, the decisions made and adopted by the Office of the Archdiocese shall be final, and take direct and immediate effect in that diocese.
- 17.10.a** The office of the diocese, in consultation and collaboration with the diocesan administrative parish council, shall prepare the agenda for the general meeting of the parish council.
- 17.10.b** The office of the diocese shall distribute the agenda of the parish council's general meeting to the parish churches' administrative council at least thirty (30) days in advance. If the parish churches' administrative council has different agendas for the general meeting, it shall include them appropriately.
- 17.10.c** The diocesan administrative office shall call an annual general meeting of the parish council.
- 17.11** The budget for the diocesan administrative office is from appropriation payments of parish churches, the amounts of which are determined by the diocesan parish council.

Article 18: The Diocesan General Parish Council

- 18.1** In this section – “The Diocesan General Parish Council” means in conformity with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 1 Article 2 (d), and in conformity with the present bylaw, a countrywide council formed by churches of different provinces (or states and/or the likes) which faithfully profess the teachings of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church. Individuals from different parish churches' ecclesiastical administrative council, when entrusted to represent their jurisdiction shall form the Diocesan General Parish Council.
- 18.2** The Diocesan General Parish Council shall make administrative and related decisions for the churches present in the jurisdiction.

- 18.3 The Diocesan General Parish Council led by the archbishop or his coadjutor shall elect members of the Diocesan Administrative Parish Council.
- 18.4 Individual members of the Diocesan Administrative Parish Council shall have a single vote.
- 18.5 The Diocesan General Parish Council shall hold annual meetings.

Article 19: The Diocesan General Administrative Parish Council

- 19.1 The Diocesan General Administrative Parish Council is formed from those representatives of the parish churches' administrative council delegated to form the Archdiocese General Ecclesiastical Council. When such individuals are voted or elected to serve as members in the Diocesan General Administrative Parish Council (Executive Committee), they shall constitute the Council members of the Diocesan General Administrative Parish Council (Executive Committee).
- 19.2 The Diocesan Administrative Parish Council shall report to the Diocesan Administrative Office and shall have a three (3)-year term.
- 19.3 The office of the Diocesan Administrative Parish Council shall remain in the same place as the Office of Diocesan Administrative Office.
- 19.4 The Diocesan Administrative Parish Council shall choose five (5) to seven (7) individuals from the representatives of the parish churches' administrative councils to be its future members.
- 19.5.a The archbishop or his coadjutor shall preside over the Diocesan Administrative Parish Council.
- 19.5.b The Diocesan Administrative Parish Council shall elect, pursuant to a popular vote, a Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and Account Officer. Additional responsibilities may be assigned in an *ad hoc* basis.
- 19.6 The Diocesan Administrative Parish Council shall monitor the implementation of policies, planning and pronouncements made by the archdiocese administrative body. In the event of any dispute, it shall settle/resolve such disputes in consultation with the Diocesan Administrative Office.
- 19.7 The Diocesan Administrative Parish Council shall meet biannually or as may deemed necessary by the Diocesan Office in a place determined by the archbishop.

Chapter 6

Duty and Responsibility of the Administration of Parish Churches

Article 20: Office of the Parish Church

- 20.1** The Office of the Parish Church shall be within the Church dwelling. In the event the Parish does not have its own building, it shall be in the residence of the church administrator.
- 20.2** The church administrator shall be a clergyman who is appointed by the Office of the Holy Synod, archbishop or archpriest.
- 20.3** The church administrator shall report to the Office of the Archdiocese.
- 20.4.a** Appointments for administrators for parish churches, monastery or related institutions shall be managed through the office of the Holy Synod, or through the Diocesan Office which shall be accountable to the Holy Synod.
- 20.4.b** If there arises a need for additional clergy needed for a parish church, such request shall be made in writing to the Diocesan Office.
- 20.4.c** When the clergy of parish churches intend to make a permanent relocation to another jurisdiction, they shall clearly inform the Diocesan Office of their intent; and their relocation shall only be valid once ratified by the Holy Synod or the Office of the Archdiocese.
- 20.5.a** The parish church administration has the authority on canonical creeds and has the authority and responsibility to command and supervise the clergy, and to organize and delegate the celebration of feasts.
- 20.5.b** The church administrator shall have the sole right to entrust a person for the registering, recording, inspecting and safekeeping of sacred objects.
- 20.5.c** The church administrator shall work closely in consultation and harmony with the Parish Church Administrative Council concerning the growth and expansion of the church, the Orthodox Tewahedo faith, and outreaching parishioners.

Article 21: Duty and Responsibility of the Clergy

Pursuant to the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 4 Article 16, the clergy shall have the responsibility of performing sanctified and sacramental tasks.

- 21.1.a** The clergy shall coordinate and supervise the proper practice of the chants of St. Yared and celebration of the divine liturgy (*quiddase*) in accordance with the canons and traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 21.1.b** In collaboration with the education section, the clergy shall protect the faithful from apostasy and heresy: from habits, behavior or characters that could endanger or weaken their spiritual life; and shall guide them towards repentance and the life of purity, in accordance with the canonical creeds of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 21.1.c** Priests, deacons, choir members and other people charged with spiritual duties, and/or the likes are expected to be on their duty timely, and discharge their responsibilities and services without any delays or cancellations. The church administrator shall supervise the performance of such services.
- 21.1.d** In accordance with the orders and traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, the clergy are responsible for the appropriate performance of spiritual services.
- 21.1.e** The church administrator shall endeavor to settle/resolve any conflicts, disputes and disagreements between the church and parishioners pertaining to the mission and duties of the clergy. Whereas such disputes are beyond the capacity of the church administrator, he shall refer the matter to higher authorities of the church.
- 21.2** The clergy, above and beyond those listed in Article 21:1 (a) – (e) hereabove, shall take additional responsibilities to perform duties in accordance with the order and rules of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 21.3** The church administrator means a clergyman who is an assigned master of monastery, head of an established church or a priest in charge.

Article 22: Duty and Responsibility of the Evangelical Services Section

In accordance with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 4 Article 14, the Evangelical Services Section shall have the following duties.

- 22.1** It shall prepare a working framework and endeavor for the preaching and teaching of the gospel during the regular Sunday service, other daily services and during the celebration of feasts.
- 22.2** Subject to the availability of time and space, it shall organize Sunday schools of the Youth for the dissemination of Bible study.
- 22.3** It shall ensure the continuity of preaching after the divine liturgy (*quiddase*).
- 22.4** It shall strive to maximize and strengthen members of the parish church; hence also protect them from any heretical teachings.
- 22.5** The parish church evangelical services section shall report to the church administrator.

Article 23: Duty and Responsibility of the Spiritual Education Section

Pursuant to the Ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 4 Article 15 Sections 1-4, the Spiritual Education Section shall undertake the following duties.

- 23.1** In consultation with the church administrator, the spiritual education section shall invite elite Ethiopian Orthodox Church educators for seminars and short courses.
- 23.2** The spiritual education section shall report to the church administrator or someone to whom the church administrator may direct.

Article 24: Duty and Responsibility of the Sunday School Section

- 24.1** Sunday School is the school in which Christians and particularly the youth are organized under the parish church to learn *inter alia* and mainly the Holy Bible, spiritual songs and the chants of St. Yared.

- 24.2** The Sunday School section shall strive so that the youth be knowledgeable in the teachings of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and the native official language of Ethiopians-Amharic.
- 24.3** The Sunday School section shall report to the Parish Church Administrative Council.
- 24.4** The church administrator shall assign the head of the Sunday school.

Article 25: Duty and responsibility of the Church Administrator

- 25.1** The church administrator is the supreme head of the parish church and shall preside over the Parish Church Administrative Council.
- 25.2** The church administrator shall lead the parish church; consistent with Articles 20 and 21 hereabove.
- 25.3** The church administrator may execute additional tasks-administrative or otherwise-that may be assigned to him by the Offices of the Holy Synod and /or the Diocese, and/or the likes.
- 25.4** The church administrator shall delegate the clergy and other administrative staff.
- 25.5** The church administrator has the responsibility to guide, support and assess educational, evangelical, charitable, and other social or community services to ensure the services adhere to the guidelines, principles, traditions and canons of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 25.6** He shall examine, evaluate and oversee services intended for and provided to parishioners are proper and satisfactory.
- 25.7** He shall instruct and supervise all the necessary procedures and guidelines for the successful celebrations of major feasts.
- 25.8** When the specified term for the elected members of the Parish Administrative Council expires, the church administrator plays a lead role in the nomination committee and the whole election process of new members.
- 25.9** In consultation with parishioners, he shall moderate for the selection of the nomination committee whose number shall not exceed five (5).
- 25.10** Once the nomination committee members are selected, the church administrator supervises the activities of the nomination committee.

- 25.11** When the new members of the Parish Administrative Council are elected, the church administrator shall advise such members to discharge their responsibilities in humility, meekness and patience.
- 25.12** The church administrator has the right to call parishioners to a meeting and in collaboration with the Parish Administrative Council to coordinate such meeting for the fulfillment of the objectives which it is called for.
- 25.13** The church administrator is the official representative for all religious and social matters of the church, thus shall participate in these matters either by means of meetings, exchanging letters or experiences with other Churches and/or the likes.

Chapter 7

Authority, Mission and Responsibility of the Parish Church's Administrative Council

Article 26: The General Parish Council

- 26.1** Subject to the provisions of this bylaw "Parishioners" mean those individuals (clergy and laity) who profess the teachings of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and who are registered members and participants of the parish church's activities.
- 26.2** Pursuant to the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 1 Article 2 Section 1 (i), parishioners shall elect the Parish Church Administrative Council and serve the Church either monetarily or otherwise.

Article 27: The Parish Church Administrative Council

- 27.1** Pursuant to the second amendments (1970 E.C.) of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church Chapter 3 Article 7 Section, Parish Church Administrative Council means a legitimate council comprised by both the clergy and laity, and elected by the parishioners.
- 27.2** The Parish Church Administrative Council shall have duties, objectives and responsibilities in accordance with Article 14 of the present bylaw.

- 27.3** For the fulfillment of its objectives, the Parish Church Administrative Council may establish subcommittees and charitable associations. It may also terminate such committees whenever deemed necessary.
- 27.4** The Parish Church Administrative Council shall have the mandate to draft guideline policies for the subcommittees and charitable associations and evaluate the implementation of such policies.
- 27.5** The Parish Church Administrative Council, in consultation with parishioners, the archdiocese and subject to the provisions of the applicable laws in the country, state, province, city and/or the likes shall have the right to purchase and sell capital-intensive properties such as land and building.
- 27.6** The Parish Church Administrative Council has the rights and responsibilities for the establishment and supervision of spiritual (pre)schools.
- 27.7** The administrative council shall be responsible for the supply of stationeries and consumables, paying salaries of employees and utility bills.
- 27.8** It shall take responsibility for renting both movable and immovable properties of the church.
- 27.9** It shall provide the means for organizing seminars and panel discussions for the clergy.
- 27.10** It shall strictly abide by the principles, policies and deliberations of the Holy Synod and the Diocese.

Article 28: Issuance of Service and Recognition Certificates

- 28.1** The Parish Church Administrative Council shall have the duty to issue certificates to individuals and groups of people in recognition for their services and donations provided to the church. Such well-deserved individuals will receive their certificates from the church administrator.
- 28.2** The Parish Church Administrative Council shall also issue certificates of appreciation, material incentives, bonuses and/or the likes to members of the clergy and staff who excel in their service.
- 28.3** The Parish Church Administrative Council shall endeavor to invite archbishops, (arch)priests, monks and ministers from Ethiopia or other countries for blessing the parishioners; hence also undertake to host during their stay and pay their expenses.

28.4 The Parish Church may pay contributions or send gifts to other churches for missions of spiritual nature. Such contributions may be donations to needy churches, appropriations to the Holy Synod and the World Council of Churches.

28.5 For all income and expenditures, the Parish Church Administrative Council shall abide in accordance with chapter 10, articles 39 and 40 of the present bylaw.

Article 29: Organization of the Parish Church Administrative Council

29.1 Pursuant to the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 3 Article 7 Section 1, and Article 9 Section 2, the Parish Church Administrative Council shall be founded by parishioners (clergy and laity).

- a. Pursuant to the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 3 Article 9 Section 2(a), a maximum of two (2) persons shall be selected from the clergy;
- b. The church administrator shall preside over the Parish Church Administrative Council;
- c. Pursuant to the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 3 Article 9 section 2(b) and the present bylaw, a maximum number of six (6) shall be elected from the laity;

29.2 The newly elected members of the Parish Church Administrative Council shall vote a vice chair for the duration of their term.

Article 30: Members of the Parish Church Administrative Council

- (a) The Church Administrator who presides over the Council
- (b) Vice Chairman
- (c) Secretary
- (d) Assistant secretary
- (e) Treasurer
- (f) Assistant Treasurer
- (g) Accounting Officer
- (h) Public Relations Officer

- 30.1** Pursuant to the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 2 Articles 5 and 6, the Parish Church Administrative Council shall have biweekly regular meetings for properly discharging its duties and responsibilities, as stipulated in Article 14 Sections 1 and 2 of the present bylaw.
- 30.2** If the need arises to have an administrative council meeting in urgency, the church administrator or vice chairman shall call the meeting.
- 30.3** In conformity with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Chapter 3 Article 7 Section 1, the Parish Church Administrative Council shall have members, with a head count between seven (7) and nine (9).

Duty and Responsibility of Members of the Parish Church Administrative Council

Article 31: Duty and Responsibility of the Chairperson of the Parish Council

- 31.1** In addition to the duties and responsibilities listed in articles 20, 21 and 25 of the present bylaw, the church administrator shall have the following duties and responsibilities.
- 31.2** The church administrator shall sign on all expenditure documents and chequebooks. He also supervises the fiscal discipline of the church and reports details thereof to the administrative council.
- 31.3** When a meeting with parishioners is required, the church administrator jointly with the administrative council members sets and lays the agenda, presides over the meeting and facilitates for the outcome of the meeting.
- 31.4** In consultation with elected members of the Parish Church Administrative Council, he can establish different *ad hoc* committees and advise members of the latter; admonish for wrongdoing, and if and when such admonishment is not adhered to by any member of the *ad hoc* committee, he shall terminate their services.
- 31.5** Quorum is attained when two thirds (2/3) of the Parish Church Administrative Council members are present.
- 31.6** Any decision in a meeting is made by vote of the attending members. If the vote ties, the side with the presiding chair shall have precedence.

- 31.7** The church administrator is responsible for the implementation of decisions made by the Parish Church Administrative Council.

Article 32: Duties and Responsibilities of the Vice Chairperson

- 32.1** When the church administrator (the Chairman) is not in attendance, the vice chairperson shall represent him, and preside over the council meeting.
- 32.2** When the church administrator is absent, the vice chairperson shall sign on approved disbursements.
- 32.3** The vice chairperson shall preside over and supervise the activities of sub-committees.
- 32.4** He/She shall study, plan, propose and motivate innovative ideas to the Parish Church Administrative Council meeting for decisions. When a decision is made, he oversees the implementation.
- 32.5** He/She shall take the necessary steps to implement and supervise the annual and recurring plans laid by the Parish Church Administrative Council.
- 32.6** He/She is responsible for the safekeeping of books, journals, scriptures, video productions and archives, audiocassettes in the library, and/or the likes. It is also his/her responsibility to ensure that the contents of the library are in accordance with the traditions and canons of the Church.
- 32.7** In consultation and collaboration with the treasurer and account officer, the vice chairperson shall take the lead role to ensure that appropriations and budgeting are tabled for the Parish Church Administrative Council discussion.
- 32.8** In consultation with the Parish Church Administrative Council, he/she shall deliver the annual report to parishioners.
- 32.9** With the exception of sacramental matters, he/she shall plan and carry out case studies to improve administrative efficiency, expand spiritual education etc.; bring forward decisions and supervise, in consultation with the church administrator, the execution process.
- 32.10** In consultation with the Parish Church Administrative Council, he/she shall plan and implement educational, cultural and social programs on an *ad hoc* basis.

- 32.11** He/she assists the church administrator and represents him to participate in various meetings.

Article 33: Duty and Responsibility of the Secretary

- 33.1** The secretary reports to the church administrator and shall have the following duties and responsibilities.
- 33.2** He/She shall take and monitor all the minutes of the Parish Church Administrative Council meeting. He/ She distributes the agendas.
- 33.3** He/She shall keep all records of the Parish Church Administrative Council, prepare and assign reference numbers, and document letters of correspondences.
- 33.4** He/She drafts letters of correspondence, brings them to the attention of the church administrator and/or the vice chairperson for signature. If neither the church administrator nor the vice chairperson is available, he/she will sign and send the letters.
- 33.5** He/ She keeps the office documents (stationery, membership cards, certificates of services, membership list and/or the likes) in good order which is easy for quick referencing.
- 33.6** He/She inspects the forms and documents prepared by various *ad hoc* and sub committees, or prepares such documents and facilitates their printing.
- 33.7** He/She records and files the various documents prepared by *ad hoc* and sub committees, or tables them if necessary to the Parish Church Administrative Council meeting.
- 33.8** When both the chairman and the vice chairman are not present, he/she shall be their representative to carry out the duties and responsibilities of the Parish Church Administrative Council.
- 33.9** He/She shall lease properties of the church that are rentable. He/she obtains the relevant permits for renting, communicates rental conditions to renters and ensures that renters use the property or item rented for the purpose which it is intended for, and iterates that renters are responsible for any damages during the rental period; and moreover that they must vacate on time.
- 33.10** The secretary may also undertake additional tasks assigned to him/her either by the church administrator or the Parish Church Administrative Council or both.

- 33.11** He/ She shall take and monitor the minutes of meetings. At the beginning of each meeting, he/she shall read the minutes of the preceding meeting, and seek the approval of the committee members by means of signature.

Article 34: Duty and Responsibility of the Assistant Secretary

- 34.1** When the secretary is not in attendance, he/she shall be a substitute thereof.
- 34.2** He/She shall discharge duties and responsibilities given by the Parish Church Administrative Council.
- 34.3** He/She shall consolidate, act upon and bring to the attention of the Parish Church Administrative Council comments and opinions expressed by parishioners via suggestion boxes.
- 34.4** He/She shall update and record personal details (address, telephone number, list of family members) of new members of the parish church and persistently encourage others to be registered.
- 34.5** The assistant secretary shall carry out additional tasks as assigned to him/her either by the church administrator or the Parish Church Administrative Council or both.

Article 35: Duty and Responsibility of the Treasurer

- 35.1** The treasurer shall report to the chairman of the Parish Church Administrative Council (the church administrator) and shall have the following duties and responsibilities.
- 35.2** Supervise, coordinate and delegate all income-generating sources of the parish church.
- 35.3** He/She shall keep the petty cash allotted by the Parish Church Administrative Council as operating cash; whereas necessary he/she shall disburse and keep the receipts to be reimbursed.
- 35.4** He/She shall record in a properly serial numbered register all income statements from monthly contributions, offerings, tithes, box collections, rentals received from church properties, gifts, baptismal fees, and all the likes, and maintain all the records thereof.
- 35.5** In conformity with Article 40 Section 1 and annexed Sample I of the present bylaw, all income requiring receipts must be recorded in a standard receipt register bearing the name, address and logo of the parish church.

- 35.6** He/She shall ensure that the income tax payable by employees of the parish church to relevant authorities is duly processed.
- 35.7** He/She shall effect cheque payments for the service provided by contractors or subcontractors of government or private origin as per the business agreement or contract reached before the commencement of the particular job.
- 35.8** The treasurer shall deposit any hard currency, either in cash or cheque into the parish church's bank account. If the collection of the monies took place outside the normal business hours of the bank, he shall deposit it into the night deposit box.
- 35.9** When legitimate payment requisition is received, he/she shall record it in register and effect the payment.
- 35.10** He shall co-sign on payment cheques and the likes together with the chairman or vice chairman.
- 35.11** The treasurer shall keep all finance related documents in his/her possession in a responsible and proper manner.
- 35.12** A qualified auditor shall do the annual auditing of the parish church's financial statements. The treasurer shall present the audit report to parishioners and relevant government agencies at least once annually.
- 35.13** He/She shall work closely with the auditor and accounting officer.
- 35.14** Pursuant to Article 40 Section 8 of the present bylaw pertaining to annual reports of financial status, the treasurer shall disclose the audit report to parishioners.

Article 36: Duty and Responsibility of the Assistant Treasurer

- 36.1** He/She assists the treasurer in general ledger and collecting funds from all sources.
- 36.2** When the treasurer is not in attendance, he/she shall be a surrogate to him.
- 36.3** Together with the assigned people, he/she shall count the cash from collection boxes, gifts and offerings, and/or the likes. In conformity with Article 40 of the present bylaw, he also takes responsibility for recording the amount in a ledger and hand it to the treasurer.

- 36.4 Together with the assigned people, he/she shall count the cash from all sources and hand it to the treasurer.
- 36.5 The assistant treasurer may carry out additional tasks given to him either by the church administrator or the Parish Church Administrative Council or both.

Article 37: Duty and Responsibility of the Accountant

- 37.1 He/She shall prepare and record all the income and expenditures of the parish church.
- 37.2 In collaboration with the treasurer, he/she shall ensure that all receipts, registers, income statements and payments are properly managed.
- 37.3 At the end of every calendar month, he/she shall summarize and prepare the income and expenses of the parish church in a spreadsheet, and report to the Parish Church Administrative Council.
- 37.4 He/She shall supervise to ensure the annual budget is balanced with the annual income. He/She shall not allow the church to operate in a deficit.
- 37.5 During the budget plan, he/she shall comment on the ability of the parish church to support such budget.
- 37.6 The accounting officer shall report to the church administrator and work in close collaboration with the treasurer and the auditor.

Article 38: Organization of Subcommittees under the Parish Administrative Council

- 38.1 Pursuant to Article 27 Section 3 of the present bylaw, the Parish Administrative Council, in its three (3)-year term, may organize subcommittees under the following guidelines.
- 38.2 Each subcommittee shall have its own chairperson who shall be either a member of the Parish Administrative Council or elected member of the subcommittee.
- 38.3 Each subcommittee shall have a chairperson and secretary. It may have additional personnel for additional tasks.
- 38.4 In accordance with guidelines provided by the Parish Administrative Council, each subcommittee shall draft its own short and long term action plan. When the draft is approved by the Parish Administrative Council, it

shall be put into action. A biannual activity report must be submitted to the Parish Administrative Council.

- 38.5** If the plans and/or activities of a subcommittee are deemed necessary to be presented to parishioners, the Parish Administrative Council shall first evaluate such presentations. Upon approval, the chairman of the Parish Administrative Council may invite the subcommittee to present its report.

Chapter 8

Bylaw Pertaining to the Accounting and Auditing of the Properties of the Parish Churches

Article 39: Managing Finances of the Parish Churches

In conformity with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) Chapter 7 Article 50 with regards to the collection and managing of finances and pursuant to the present bylaw, the Parish Administrative Council shall discharge its responsibilities and duties as follows.

- 39.1** The Parish Administrative Council shall deposit and keep the parish church's monies in an exclusive bank account opened for the parish church and manage all expenditures and expenses appropriately for the intended purpose.
- 39.2** If it is agreed that the monies could earn interest, such amount shall be invested in banks, money markets or financial institutes as interest or dividend bearing account in the form of secured investments.
- 39.3** Pursuant to the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) Chapter 7 Article 50 Section 8, the properties of the parish church, whether movable or immovable, and all the monies shall be subject to exchange, sale, tradeoff, investment, expense or otherwise alike only when the relevant documents or cheques are signed by any two of the chairman, vice chairman, or the treasurer.

Article 40: Receipts and Cash Registers

- 40.1** Cash collected from assorted sources such as box collections, in-kind vows etc., and the likes shall be handled pursuant to the church's ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) Chapter 7 Article 50 Section 3. Such handling shall be registered in duplicate, properly serial numbered receipt book bearing the parish church's official logo or seal. The first

copy shall be given to the donor while the second copy shall remain with the treasurer.

- 40.2** In the event of clerical error on cash receipts and any other official registers during registration or account reconciliation, such error must be crossed once and the correct wording or amount should be written adjacent to the one which is crossed as shown by the annexed sample 2. Any overwriting, erasure, deletion or alteration of error is strictly prohibited.
- 40.3** In the event that error occurs on cash receipts and any other official registers (as shown by the annexed sample 1), and such error is deemed to be beyond rectification per Article 40 Section 2 hereabove, it must be crossed; and bear the words “null and void”; and moreover, it must be initialed by the individual who nullified the register as per the annexed Sample 3. In such circumstances, both copies shall remain in the main register.
- 40.4** It is understood that sources of income for the Church mean those sources listed in the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) Chapter 7 Article 50 Section 1 (a) and (b) as follows.
 - 40.4.a** Income from monthly contributions and/or tithes collected from parishioners;
 - 40.4.b** Income from box collections, in-kind donations, offerings and gifts, and the likes;
 - 40.4.c** Income from proceeds of itemized gifts, books of theological, spiritual and canonical nature, seasonal postcards, art works, gospel music and the likes; rentals received from Church properties such as convention halls, furniture of general use, and the likes;
 - 40.4.d** Proceeds from after-service meals on Sundays;
 - 40.4.e** Income generated from sacramental services such as baptism, matrimony, and the likes;
 - 40.4.f** Income from activities pertaining to feasts;
 - 40.4.g** Donation received or admission fees collected from visitors.
- 40.5** All income obtained either in cash or otherwise shall, in accordance with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) Chapter 7 Article 50 Section 2, be endorsed and submitted to the church by the treasurer of the Parish Administrative Council.

- 40.6** There shall be an annual report to be presented to parishioners by the accounting officer of the parish council on the state of the cash flow and accounting practices of the Church. Such report shall be presented after formal auditing is completed.
- 40.7** The financial year of the parish church begins on January 1st and ends on December 31st of the same year.
- 40.8** In no more than 2 calendar months after the end of the financial year, annual reports shall be prepared and presented to parishioners and relevant government agencies in the country, state, province, city and/or the likes in which the parish church is located.
- 40.9** Pursuant to the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) Chapter 7 Article 50 Sections 6 and 7, and Article 51; and, Article 28 Sections (2), (3), (4) and Article 40 Section 10 of the present bylaw, the parish council has expenses and expenditures in the main following forms:
- 40.9.a** Salaries and benefits of employees of the parish church;
- 40.9.b** Running costs of the church such as items purchased for sacramental services, vestments, Holy Scriptures, icons; administrative costs such as stationeries, utilities (hydro, heating, water, telephone) bill; per diem, transportation, aid donation and/or the likes as may have been deemed necessary.
- 40.9.c** Expenses for the celebration of feasts;
- 40.9.d** Expenses and expenditures such as donation or aid in order to support newly established churches as to promote unity in accordance with the tradition of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church;
- 40.9.e** Money contributed to the Holy Synod and diocese as per appropriations;
- 40.9.f** Expenses related to hosting guest clergy;
- 40.9.g** Expenses related to ecumenical meetings and other social services.

Article 41: Property Management Committee

Pursuant to Chapter 7 Article 51 Section 4 (b) of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) pertaining to the non-sacramental services rendered by volunteer laity and under the authority of the administrative council, the property management committee shall have the sole purpose of managing and documenting both moveable and immovable properties; it shall also have the following responsibilities.

Article 41:1 Ecclesiastical Objects

Pursuant to Chapter 4 Article 21 Subsection 1 (d) of the ecclesiastical Constitution (*kale awadee*) and in accordance to the laws and traditions of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, all consecrated valuables of the Church, movable or immovable, including but not limited to the replica of the Ark of the Covenant (*tabot*), vestments, vessels (chalice, paten, ciborium, cruets, etc.), scriptures shall be safeguarded and documented by a custodian who may be a deacon or any member of the clergy as may be directed by the church administrator.

Article 41:2 Properties Excluding Ecclesiastical Objects

41.2.a Apart from Article 41 Sections 1 and 2 (c) of the present bylaw, the property management committee shall discharge its duty of recording, documenting and updating the list of movable and immovable properties, and communicate, notify and inform the administrative council of such list.

41.2.b Items that have worn out and tear, and are unusable, or are damaged beyond restoration should be registered and reported to the administrative council. The property management committee shall take the appropriate action to dispose, exchange, tradeoff, or otherwise alike as the administrative council may decide.

41.2.c The property management committee is not responsible, partly or solely, for cash; such cash is handled, transacted and administered by the treasurer, accounting officer and licensed auditor in conformity with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) Chapter 7 Article 50 Sections 2, 3, 4, and 5.

41.2.d The property management committee shall report to the administrative council, and with the exception of those who are employed and receive incentives, remunerations, wages and salaries for their services, all committee members shall freely render their services for the duration of their term.

Article 42: Authority to Audit and Inspect Properties of the Church

42.1 The office of the parish church shall have authority to audit and inspect the entire property of the parish church.

42.2 Parishioners have the rights and privileges to inquire or bring about auditing and inspection of parish properties except the consecrated items.

- 42.3** The Parish Administrative Council has the rights and privileges to audit and inspect all properties of the parish church.
- 42.4** All levels of administrative committees are accountable to parishioners. If a well founded complaint or an appeal is lodged by parishioners due to the lack of transparency or accountability and/or misconduct in discharging responsibilities, the Holy Synod being the highest canonical authority in the church has the right to order full auditing and inspection.

Part IV

Chapter 9

Rights and Obligations

Article 43: Rights and Obligations of the Parish Administrative Council

Article 43:1 Rights of the Parish Administrative Council

- 43.1.a** Find new ways of increasing the services of the Church and implementing them.
- 43.1.b** Conduct spiritual meetings, invite instructors, carry out social activities in order to strengthen the spiritual life of the congregation.
- 43.1.c** Develop and approve the annual budget of the Church based on the evaluation of revenues and expenditures.
- 43.1.d** Increase or decrease the administration revenue sources of the Church listed under Subsection 40:4 or under Chapter 7 Article 50 Subsection 5b of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) after getting approval from the parish assembly as needed.
- 43.1.e** In accordance with Chapter 7 Article 51 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) exempting the clergy, to establish the criteria for selecting candidates for employment, and hire and fire all employees including entering into contractual agreements with any service provider or worker.
- 43.1.f** Organize standing and *ad hoc* committees deemed necessary for the growth of the church under its supervision and decide when such committees would cease to exist.

- 43.1.g** In accordance with Chapter 7 Article 54 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) pertaining to decisions made regarding individuals and committees that contravene the order and governance of the Church, to terminate committee membership of such individuals found to be an obstacle to the order, growth and strengthening of the church and replace them swiftly with others.
- 43.1.h** To call meetings, as deemed necessary, of committees and the parish assembly.
- 43.1.i** To deny services or rental of church facilities to any individual or organization that is deemed dangerous, to destabilize the church's very existence and desecrate its faith and canonical laws.

Article 43:2 Duty of the Parish Administrative Council

- 43.2.a** To ensure that full rights and privileges of the clergy and laity in the service of church are observed in accordance with the regulations and employment standard acts of the land where the church is located.
- 43.2.b** In accordance with Chapter 7 Article 52 (a & b) of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and Article 40:10a of the Parish Administrative Council, and subject to the financial capacity of the Church, to provide all persons employed in the service of the church with benefits such as health, life and disability insurance.
- 43.2.c** To listen and settle/resolve grievances of persons employed in the service of the Church when presented to the Parish Administrative Council.
- 43.2.d** To ensure that rights of volunteers in the service of the Church are respected.
- 43.2.e** To observe the rights of members of the congregation and provide all required services to them in accordance with internal guidelines.
- 43.2.f** In accordance with election regulations of the parish, to submit all documentation and property of the Church in a legal and an open manner to the newly elected Parish Administrative Council.
- 43.2.g** In accordance with Article 48, when the tenure of the existing Parish Administrative Council ends, to appoint members of the election committee in order to facilitate the new election.
- 43.2.h** Upon the completion of its tenure, to conduct the election of new members of the Parish Administrative Council in accordance with election regulations.

- 43.2.i** To present, at least, one report every year.
- 43.2.j** To protect the church from all illegality, such as illegal systems, heresies and dangers.
- 43.2.k** When confronted with matters beyond its control, to bring these to the attention of the Office of the Diocese and members of the parish council.
- 43.2.l** To ensure that the church is open and available to the congregation at all times depending on the safety of the vicinity.
- 43.2.m** To ensure the safety of the congregation, by protection from fire and other accidents, by observing the laws and bylaws of the country, province, city and/or the likes where the church is located.
- 43.2.n** Except as set out in the relevant subsections in Article 43:1, to provide all church services and rent church properties without discrimination because of gender or any other reason.
- 43.2.o** To accept that elected members of the Parish Administrative Council and subcommittee members under it serve the church in good conscience, good faith and without any remuneration.

Article 44: Rights and Obligations of the Laity

Article 44:1: Rights of the Laity

- 44.1.a** In accordance with Chapter 7 Article 53:1 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and under the provisions of parish regulations, the rights of the laity, organized as parishioners, shall fully be respected.
- 44.1.b** Registered and card carrying members of the congregation who reside in the vicinity of the parish and fulfill established church regulations are entitled to receive all church services.
- 44.1.c** Registered laity are entitled to substantially lower Church hall and property rentals compared to the charges levied from non members.
- 44.1.d** Congregation members or the laity who have fulfilled the requirements set out in Article 44:1b hereabove will benefit from the prayer of absolution which shall be conducted free of charge when they are deceased or their family member is deceased or a guest of their family is deceased. Free hall space shall also be available and provided to the attending procession following the burial services.

44.1.e Congregation members who are over 25 years of age and have fulfilled the requirements set out in Article 44:1b hereabove and Chapter 7 Article 53:4b of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) are entitled to elect or be elected for any position except for sacramental church service areas.

44.1.f Congregation members aged 18-24 years, although not eligible for election for positions in the Parish Administrative Council, have the right to vote and serve in subcommittees.

44.1.g Congregation members who are in good standing are entitled to services in other parishes provided they carry valid identity cards or a letter of reference from the Parish Administrative Council of their previous parish.

Article 44: 2 Duty of the Laity

44.2.a The laity have the duty to carry out the provisions of Chapter 7 Article 53:2 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and of these regulations.

44.2.b Congregation members or the laity have the Christian duty to contribute to fundraising, education, development, administrative and other activities of the parish, and/or the likes.

44.2.c Congregation members shall, in accordance with these regulations, register and carry identity cards, and register their family members.

44.2.d Congregation members and their family members have the religious duty to attend Sunday school and instruct their children to learn the faith and practice of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

44.2.e As stipulated in Chapter 7 Article 50:1a of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and these regulations, congregation members shall make various financial contributions and/or pay tithes (*asrat*) to their parish churches.

44.2.f Congregation members must desist from activities that desecrate the faith and practice of the church. They shall be guided by the Holy Scriptures and canonical laws of the church, and remain steadfast in their faith.

44.2.g Newly registered congregation members are entitled to vote provided that they have met the requirements of Article 44:1b hereabove and done so continuously for six months since their registration. To be eligible for election, members shall meet the requirements of Article 44:1b and, at least, be a registered member for one continuous year.

44.2.h Congregation members elected for any position to serve the parish have the duty to seriously and honestly undertake their responsibilities.

44.2.i In accordance with Article 43:2m, congregation members must opt for the safety of the congregation from fire and other accidents by observing the laws and the bylaws of the country, province or city where the Church is located.

Article 45: Duration of Service

Duration of Service of the Parish Administrative Council is as follows.

45.1 The duration of service of the Parish Administrative Council shall be three (3) years.

45.1.a If the parish assembly determines that members of the existing Parish Administrative Council are unfit to serve for the balance of their tenure or are found to be inimical to the existence of the Church and if three-fourth ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the laity who meet the requirements of Article 4:1b petition that the Parish Administrative Council be dissolved, the matter will be investigated by the Office of the Diocese, and if necessary a new election will be ordered and conducted before the expiry of the tenure of the existing Parish Administrative Council.

45.2 The duration of service of members of subcommittees appointed by the Parish Administrative Council shall be up to three (3) years, as decided.

45.3 Any elected member of the Parish Administrative Council shall be eligible for election for a second term of three (3) years. He or she is not eligible for a third (3rd) term. Therefore, the duration of continuous service of an elected Parish Administrative Council shall strictly be six (6) years.

45.4 Duration of service of election committee is as follows: After having completed the election of the Parish Administrative Council and communicated the result to the parish assembly, in accordance with the provisions of these regulations, the duration of service of this committee will come to an end.

Article 46: Quorum of the Parish Council

46.1 A quorum of the parish assembly is attained when three-fourth ($\frac{3}{4}$) of registered parishioners are present.

46.2 If the number of registered parishioners attending a parish assembly does not constitute a quorum as defined in Article 46:1 hereabove, the assembly shall be conducted as stipulated hereunder.

- 46.2.a** A second meeting of the Parish Administrative Council shall be called within three (3) weeks.
- 46.2.b** If the number of registered parishioners who attend the second assembly is more than 51% of the total registered parishioners, this shall constitute a quorum.
- 46.2.c** If the number of registered parishioners who attend the second assembly is less than 51% of the total registered parishioners, the Parish Administrative Council shall take note of the recommendation of those present and resolve the matter in consultation with the Office of the Archdiocese.
- 46.3** Prior notice of 2 weeks and agenda shall be given to the parishioners before convocating a parish assembly.
- 46.4** A quorum of subcommittee is attained when three-fourth ($\frac{3}{4}$) of members are present.
- 46.5** In any administrative meetings, decisions made are not binding unless three-fourth ($\frac{3}{4}$) of the members have not participated.
- 46.6** The parish assembly of the laity shall be called by the Parish Administrative Council.

Article 47: Disciplinary Measures

- 47.1** Any member of the parish, church association, Parish Administrative Council, subcommittee acting contrary to and/or not meeting his/her obligation in accordance with Article 53:2 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and Article 43:2 and Article 44:2 of these regulations shall be disciplined as stipulated in Article 54:4 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and Article 55:1 as follows depending on the degree of misconduct.
- 47.1.a** With advice, warning or financial penalty. Efforts will also be made that the person is absolved through repentance.
- 47.1.b** If the disciplinary measures do not improve the conduct of the person in question he/she may lose membership status.
- 47.1.c** The church administration approves the cancellation of the membership status of such a person.

- 47.2** Any member of the parish as described in Article 47:1 who desecrates and contravenes the faith and practice of the church shall be excommunicated. Such measure shall be approved by the archbishop of the diocese. The person in question has the right of appeal.
- 47.3** Any parishioner who loses his/her membership status as described in Articles 47:1c and 47:2 also loses all the rights of a registered parishioner.
- 47.4** Any excommunicated parishioner willing to regret and correct his/her misconduct can only be reinstated as a member if he/she undergoes a period of repentance and fasting in accordance with the provisions of Article 54:5 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*).
- 47.5** Any member of the clergy who abrogates his spiritual responsibility and changes places without the approval of the archbishop or the delegated high priest shall be disciplined in accordance with the canonical laws of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and decision of the Holy Synod or the diocesan office.
- 47.6** Any person who establishes a church or closes an established church without proper authorization shall be disciplined in accordance with the canonical laws of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and decision of the Holy Synod.

Chapter 10

Elections: Criteria and Duration of Service of the Parish Administrative Council's Electoral Committee

Article 48: Criteria for the Membership of the Electoral Committee

- 48.1** Candidates for the Electoral Committee must meet the following criteria:
- 48.1.a** Must be registered parishioners, at least for one year, meeting the requirements of Article 44:1b of these regulations.
- 48.1.b** Must be parishioners who have not lost their rights in accordance with article 45:2 of these regulations.

- 48.1.c** Must have regular church services attendance record and be engaged in voluntary activities of the parish.
- 48.1.d** Must be able to get along with others.
- 48.1.e** Must be able to mobilize and lead parishioners.
- 48.1.f** Must have no criminal records or outstanding charges.
- 48.1.g** Must be free from drug abuse and immoral habits.
- 48.1.h** Must be dependable to carry out his/her assigned duties.
- 48.1.i** Must be willing to provide multiple volunteer services.
- 48.2** Any parishioner who becomes a member of the electoral committee is not eligible to be a candidate for the Parish Administrative Council.
- 48.3** The electoral committee shall be appointed by the Parish Administrative Council.
- 48.4** The duration of service of the electoral committee shall be in accordance with Article 45:4 of these regulations.
- 48.5** Election of the Parish Administrative Council shall be conducted every three (3) years on Sundays during the first week of November (*Hidar*) and the last week of December (*Tahisas*) by the electoral committee.

Election of the Parish Administrative Council

Article 49: Procedure of Election of the Laity as Members of the Parish Administrative Council

- 49.1.a** The election shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 3 Article 9:2b of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*).
- 49.1.b** Candidates for election shall be nominated without any gender discrimination.
- 49.1.c** Candidates must strictly be residents in the parish vicinity and meet their membership duties.
- 49.1.d** Candidates must be known for their faithful life, morality and intellect.

- 49.1.e** Candidates and their family members must be faithful followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church faith and practice.
- 49.1.f** Candidates must comply with the canonical laws of the Church.
- 49.2** Parishioners over 25 years old can be elected provided they and members of their family are faithful followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and obtain winning votes from parishioners.
- 49.3** Members of subcommittees appointed by the Parish Administrative Council, besides being 18 years or over, shall meet all the criteria required from candidates for the Parish Administrative Council.
- 49.4** The administrator of the Parish Administrative Council shall be a priest appointed by procedures established for the appointment of the clergy in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 1 Article 2:4, Chapter 3 Article 7:2a and b and Chapter 3 Article 9:1a of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*). The administrator of the parish council shall preside over the electoral committee.
- 49.5** The election of Parish Administrative Council members is valid only if they are elected according to the election procedures set out for the electoral committee and obtain winning votes from parishioners.
- 49.6** Candidates nominated for election to the Parish Administrative Council have the right to decline their nomination for any reason and shall not be forced to be elected.
- 49.7** Implementation of the election procedures shall be in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 3 Article 9:2b of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*).

Article 50: Procedure of Election of the Clergy to Become Members of the Parish Administrative Council

- 50.1** Election of the clergy to become members of the Parish Administrative Council shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 3 Article 9:2 and winning votes of the clergy council.
- 50.2** Except for the parish administrator, the duration of service for the clergy as members of the Parish Administrative Council shall be three (3) years unless elected for a second term.

Article 51: Announcing the Election Results and Implementation Procedure

- 51.1** The chairperson of the outgoing Parish Administrative Council shall notify the parishioners of the result of the election before the newly elected council members start their tenure.
- 51.2** The parish administrator shall give guidance to the newly elected council members and forward their names to the archdiocese within one month after the election.
- 51.3** When the numbers of votes obtained by candidates for the Parish Administrative Council become equal, the Parish Administrator shall break the tie by casting a vote in favor of one of the candidates.
- 51.4** A parishioner can file his/her objection in writing with regard to either the election procedure or the elected members. If such an objection is supported by not less than 4 other parishioners, the matter will be forwarded to the office of the archdiocese for investigation and final decision.
- 51.5** The casting of votes in the election shall be conducted by ballot box, show of hands or any similar mechanism.

Article 52: Succeeding Members of the Parish Administrative Council

- 52.1** When council members are unable to continue their services in the parish due to death, relocation and/or the likes, and other reasons, replacements shall be made.
- 52.2** Replacements shall be made when council members are removed from their positions due to failure to meet the requirements stipulated in Chapter 3 Article 9:2a and b of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) or Article 49:1 of these regulations.
- 52.3** Replacements of council members described above shall be conducted as follows:
 - 52.3.a** Those candidates who obtained the next highest number of votes during the last election shall serve instead of the replaced ones.
 - 52.3.b** If there are no candidates as described in 52:3a hereabove, the Parish Administrative Council shall elect additional members who would serve for the remainder of the tenure of the replaced members.

Part V
Chapter 11
Public Relations Department

Article 53: Relations of the Parish Administrative Council with Various Communities and Organizations

One of the main reasons for the establishment of a Parish Administrative Council in each parish of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is to entice and enable parishioners to make various contributions for the growth of their parish, enrich their spiritual life and provide them with valuable services.

Parishioners can make tremendous contributions and receive valuable services when leadership is provided by the Holy Synod and administration is delegated to each parish council.

The faith and practice of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is established upon the dedicated Christian life of Ethiopian Holy Fathers who were inspired by true faith, teachings of the prophets in the Old Testament and redemption through Christ's Holy Flesh and Blood in the New Testament.

The laws and mysteries of the church are dictated and guided by the Holy Spirit, unlike earthly laws, and so are the deriving administration, social life, education, health and professional services within the church.

Any questions that come from parishioners or from various societies and organizations, and or the likes as well as requests for service collaborations shall be accommodated in accordance with the provisions set out in Article 5:1 and Article 51: 4 part B of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*).

The Holy Church fulfills its social services without contradicting the Holy Bible and the orders of the Church. This is critical and necessary to maintain its independence and protect her from any potential danger.

- 53.1** Any messages to the parishioners, notices within the church compound and/or on church notice boards must first be approved by the Parish Administrative Council for their suitability before they are released and communicated to the parishioners.

53.2 The Parish Administrative Council can only meet the social and spiritual needs of parishioners in accordance with the faith and practice of the church.

53.3 The following measures will be taken against any individual or organization and/or the like that disseminates unauthorized information, as described in 53:1 hereabove, in the church or church compound.

53.3.a If the person who disseminates unauthorized information is a parishioner or a society under the church, disciplinary measures shall be taken in accordance with the provisions of Article 54:4, Article 55:1 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and Article 47 of these regulations.

53.3.b If the individual or organization is not a member of the church, steps shall be taken in accordance with the laws of the country, province, city and/or the likes.

Article 54: Responsibility of the Information and External Relations Department

The Department of Information and External Relations of each parish shall function under the Parish Administrative Council and under the guidance of the Office of the Holy Synod, and shall carry out its responsibilities as follows.

54:1 Message delivery to Parishioners in the Church

Communicates periodic decisions, posts notices and communicates any sort of information to parishioners in accordance with the directives given by the Parish Administrative Council.

54:2 External Relations

External relations shall be conducted in accordance with the policy of the Parish Administrative Council. Guests invited to various church programs/festivals will be escorted as well as invited media such as TV, radio, newspapers and/or the likes. News releases and other information shall be provided in accordance with the direction of the Parish Administrative Council.

Article 55: Publication of Newspapers

55.1 The publication of newspapers and newsletters shall have one department under the Office of the Holy Synod.

- 55.2** The Office of the Holy Synod shall have a newsletter of the Church published quarterly.
- 55.3** The department for publication of newspapers finds ways and means of effective distribution of published books, pamphlets and/or other publications to the various parishes and community at large which shall be made in accordance with the directive of the Holy Synod.
- 55.4** The department shall preside over the preparation of various pamphlets and publications undertaken by each parish.
- 55.5** The main objective of all publications shall be to popularize the faith, practice and history of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church among parishioners and to find ways and means of delivering social services including education and culture.
- 55.6** The department also documents pictorial records and proceedings of meetings of the Holy Synod; it prepares educational seminars and finds ways of distributing the messages to the Church community.

Chapter 12

Miscellaneous Regulations

Article 56: Training Institute for the Clergy

- 56.1** The Training Institute for the Clergy shall prepare action plans to strengthen the Institute in accordance with the directives given by the Holy Synod as provided in Chapter 4 Article 15:4 of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*).
- 56.2** The Institute shall find ways to centrally organize intellectuals among the clergy specializing in various disciplines such as translation of books (*metshaf*), poems (*quine*) and the chants of Saint Yared.
- 56.3.a** The Institute shall provide theological training in a comprehensive and profound manner.
- 56.3.b** The Institute shall facilitate that the trained clergy who graduate in various disciplines are able to provide services in various geographic areas.
- 56.4** The Institute shall create conducive conditions in geographic areas where the trained clergy reside so that poems (*quine*), cantillation (*mahilet*), translation of books as well as liturgical services are easily provided.

- 56.5 The Institute shall communicate with various theological colleges and implement ways of securing scholarships for higher education of the clergy.
- 56.6 The Institute shall closely consult with the literary and translation works department of the church, and find ways of strengthening it.
- 56.7 The Institute is accountable to the Office of the Holy Synod.

Article 57: Legal and Disciplinary Services Section

- 57.1 This section shall be made up of nominees from members of the clergy and laity, having various professional and intellectual qualifications.
- 57.2 The primary duty of this section is, following the provisions of the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*), to consult the clergy, legal experts and other professionals and draft various guidelines and action plans that strengthen the church. It shall also counsel the Office of the Holy Synod and the Parish Administration Council so that all guidelines that are promulgated are in harmony with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and canonical laws of the Church.
- 57.3 This section ensures that all rules, regulations, guidelines and programs that are issued by it do not contradict the laws of the country and shall, after having made research, counsel the Holy Synod and recommend amendments in this regard.
- 57.4 This section is accountable to the Office of the Holy Synod. All and any of its plans are valid only after the approval of the Holy Synod.

Article 58: Literary and Translation Works Department

- 58.1 This department shall carry out study and research on any topics that are related to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 58.2 In view of the fact that the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has had a flourishing historical, literary and linguistic heritage, and that this treasure needs be passed over to the next generation, this Institute shall carry out the following:
 - 58.2.a Find ways and means of translating various books written in Ge'ez to the Amharic language.
 - 58.2.b Find ways and means of recording in writing or in voice various poems (*quine*), readings, translations of the chants of St. Yared and other

presentations made by qualified intellectuals of the clergy, and bequeath these to the next generation.

- 58.2.c** Study the possibility of recording in tape or video and/or the likes the intellectual works of the clergy of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church residing both in Ethiopia and in the Diaspora and make these available for instructional purposes.
- 58.3** Record in tape, video, books and pamphlets English translations of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo faith so that dissemination of the faith is made throughout the world.
- 58.4** Find ways and means of contacting professional clergy, authors, artists and professionals of the church's various chants so that their works can be put to use.
- 58.5** Develop and prepare an appropriate curriculum for children of the Ethiopian Diaspora consisting of the alphabet, language and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo faith.
- 58.6** Based on additional guidelines provided by the Office of the Holy Synod, this Institute shall prepare short and long term plans and conduct its activities accordingly.
- 58.7** The Literary and Translation Works Institute is accountable to the Office of the Holy Synod.

Article 59: Developmental and Charitable Department

- 59.1** The Development and Assistance Department shall establish communication with national and international charitable organizations to strengthen the participation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.
- 59.2** The department shall device ways of safeguarding the resources and property of the Church and utilize them for development and assistance purposes.
- 59.3** In accordance with the guidelines given by the Holy Synod, the department shall prepare short and long term plans and solicit assistance in the form of skills, finance and material from the congregation members and other organizations.
- 59.4** As many ancient and historical structures such as monasteries in Ethiopia are dilapidated to a dangerous level due to old age and thus must be renovated so that they can be passed over onto the next generation, the

department shall seek assistance from international aid organizations for the renovation of such structures.

- 59.5** The department shall make readily available all ecclesiastical articles, books, vestments and other necessary materials so that development and skills are strengthened in the surrounding of churches.
- 59.6** The department shall encourage the clergy and laity, so that they become actively engaged in income generating activities during their spare time.

Article 60: Authority to Amend, Repeal or Change this Bylaw.

- 60.1** The Holy Synod led by His Holiness Abune Merkorios, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, has the exclusive authority to amend, repeal or change any of the provisions of this bylaw.
- 60.2** The Holy Synod has the exclusive authority to approve, amend or repeal all internal bylaws and guidelines of any Parish Administration Council and various committees under it in accordance with the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) and *inter alia* the authority of the Holy Synod described and clearly stated in Chapter 2 Article 6 of the present bylaw.
- 60.3** In the event the English version of the present or other relevant bylaws creates difficulties and/or problems of any sort with regards to implementation and/or interpretations and/or the likes, the Amharic version shall trump the English version and take precedence.

Article 61: Taking an Oath to Abide by the Bylaw

61.1 Swearing (Taking an Oath) is performed as follows.

Any elected member of the Parish Administration Council shall be sworn in before the priest prior to assuming his/her duties and responsibilities as follows:

Full Name: _____

Baptismal Name: _____

I, whose name is written hereabove, cognizant of the responsibility bestowed upon me by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, swear and declare in the name of God that I will honor and defend the faith, practice and canonical laws of our Holy Church and work diligently and unrelentingly to uphold the values hereto during the tenure of my elected position. Amen.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

61.2 Any elected member of the Parish Administrative Council who does not swear consistently with Article 61:1 hereabove or fulfill his/her responsibilities after being sworn consistently with Article 61:1 hereabove, shall be given an opportunity for explanation and if found irresponsible shall immediately be replaced by another member in his/her position.

Article 62: Duration of the Bylaw

This bylaw has been established founded on the ecclesiastical constitution (*kale awadee*) of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church and further extensive deliberations. The Holy Synod led by His Holiness Abune Merkorios, Patriarch of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church has authorized the effective implementation of these bylaws as of October (*Tikimt*) 28, 1996 E.C. by all Parish Administration Councils of existing churches as well as new churches in the Diaspora.

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