

APPENDIX I: CONFERENCE DECISIONS, 1970–1996

These decisions are placed at the end of the Constitution because they concern matters that may be changed more readily according to changing times and circumstances. The Doctrine, Constitution and Laws are, by contrast, subject to more demanding amendment procedures.

1. Conference Stewards

Conference shall provide a grant of \$50 when a Conference Steward dies while serving in a Circuit or work area.

2. Stationing Ministers to Circuits and Departments

(a) A Minister appointed for the first time to a Circuit or work area shall receive \$70 for necessary equipment, paid by Conference.

(e) Ministers who have completed their period of service shall receive \$30.

(f) Where a Minister serves in a Department or educational institution, that Department or institution shall provide the \$30 equipment allowance.

(h) After five years from receiving an equipment allowance, a further \$5 shall be provided towards replacement of worn or damaged equipment.

3. President of the Church

(a) The President may immediately appoint a replacement when a Minister dies rather than requiring an active or Retired Minister to act temporarily.

(e) When a Minister or Conference Steward is transferred, Conference shall meet the cost of the transfer.

(f) The President of the Church and the President of Education shall consult one another concerning the transfer of Ministers who are also teachers.

(h) Where a Minister-Teacher is transferred through the Conference stationing process, that person shall continue teaching until the end of the current school year and shall then transfer. The President shall make the necessary arrangements.

4. Tohi Fanongonongo

(a) Trustees may, if they agree, pay debts associated with the *Tohi Fanongonongo*.

(e) A Sunday offering shall be held for the *Tohi Fanongonongo*, and no further financial assistance shall be provided from Conference. The offering Sunday shall be placed in the latter part of the year.

5. Ministers' Meeting

(a) Conference shall provide \$1,000 assistance when a Minister dies while serving in a Circuit or Department.

(e) If a Minister retires or withdraws from work on medical advice, the Region in which the Minister served shall continue the Minister's allowance for three months, after which further provision shall be considered.

6. General Regional Meeting

(a) Regional Minutes must reach the General Secretary not later than two weeks before the opening of Conference.

(e) Annual reports of educational institutions and Departments of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga shall not introduce new motions directly; proposals must proceed through the appropriate Church meetings.

7. Conference

The Conference Committee shall invite Fraternal Delegates to each Annual Conference. They may participate in meetings but shall not vote. The delegates, or the Regions and organisations they represent, shall be asked to meet the cost of travel to and from Conference.

8. Publications

(a) The President and Publications Committee shall consider a process for producing a history of the work of the Church in Tonga through its successive periods.

(e) Historic Church records shall be photographed or otherwise reproduced and classified. Material considered unsuitable for public release shall be identified, and the General Secretary shall communicate with overseas bodies concerning relevant legal matters.

9. Tongan Congregations Overseas

(a) Tongans of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga living overseas are advised to join the Methodist Church in the country where they reside, or another Christian Church where no Methodist Church is available.

(e) Conference is also willing to respond to a request for a Minister from Tonga, provided that the Minister transfers to the Conference of the receiving country and observes all the regulations of that Conference while serving there.

(f) Tongan Church members from overseas who wish to travel to Conference in Tonga may attend as Fraternal Delegates.

(h) Tongan congregations overseas shall be clearly informed that, where they desire a relationship with Tonga or seek recognition as a Region, they are received on a fraternal basis unless Conference has formally accepted that country as a Region linked to Tonga. They shall continue to own and administer their own money, land, property, buildings and related assets.

(i) Proposals from Tongan congregations overseas shall not proceed directly to Conference but shall be submitted through the Overseas Mission Board, except in countries already recognised by Conference as Regions linked to Tonga.

10. Christian Education Committee

(a) The Director of the Department of Christian Education and the Conference Committee shall have authority to advise the Church in Tonga concerning religious organisations with which cooperation may be appropriate.

(e) Ministers are asked to exercise greater care in selecting May preachers. Selection is to be made from the two senior classes and from Sunday School teachers before names are forwarded to the Director of Christian Education.

11. Building Committee

(a) When a Department or Circuit wishes to construct a building, the Minister, Principal or Departmental Director shall submit an application to the Building Committee together with plans and an estimate of cost.

(e) Any residence to be built for a Minister or Conference Steward shall be designed entirely for the use of that Minister or Steward and the family.

(f) Trustees may assist with residences for Ministers or Stewards. Each Region shall determine the arrangements for construction and for full transfer of the completed building to the Church.

12. Educational Institutions

(a) Annual reports of Church schools and Departments shall not introduce motions directly but shall proceed through the proper Church meetings.

(e) On Education Sunday, both Church schools and Government schools shall be included in the preaching emphasis.

(f) Assistance shall be considered for the education of children of Ministers, Conference Stewards and Church Teachers who die while in service. School leaders shall identify such children and forward their names to the Conference Committee, and funding shall be sought to support their education.

(h) The Alumni of Queen Sālote College and the College itself shall consult concerning the use of new College buildings on the property known as “Manly”.

(i) The following minimum conditions shall apply before a closed Intermediate School may be reopened:

1. enrolment shall reach at least twenty-five students;
2. a teacher appropriately trained for intermediate education shall be available;
3. the salaries of the teacher or teachers must be financially sustainable, with an additional fifty per cent beyond salary costs available for other school expenses.

(k) Preparatory Schools whose Trustees can no longer meet their financial obligations shall be handed over to the Government for administration.

(l) Conference may assist Trustees facing serious difficulty where Conference considers that it has sufficient financial capacity to do so.

13. Theological College

(a) Persons who have not passed the senior leaving examination may still be admitted to Sia‘atoutai, subject to consideration by the Sia‘atoutai Committee.

14. Church Finance

(a) Annual budgets for all Departments and Colleges of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga shall be completed by 31 October each year and submitted to the Finance Committee and Conference Committee for approval and authorisation for use from January of the following year.

(e) All financial books shall close on 31 December each year, and financial statements shall be submitted to the Church Office before 31 March.

(f) Mission apportionments shall be calculated according to the membership figures of the Regions and the population of each town.

(h) Fundraising or building programmes in educational institutions shall be referred to the Advisory Committees of Ha'apai and Vava'u and to the Conference Committee in Tongatapu.

(i) The following shall be fully reported to each Annual Conference:

1. financial statements of separately held designated funds;
2. funds invested in businesses, farms, livestock or other commercial activities;
3. funds raised through overseas fundraising trips or collected within Tonga;
4. fundraising proceeds or gifts received in the name of the Church;
5. the same requirements shall apply to all Departments and Colleges, whose financial books and reports to Conference shall be audited.

15. Offices to be Established

(a) **Business Manager.** The Church shall have a Business Manager responsible for:

1. assessing proposed new activities or enterprises;
2. oversight of financial matters;
3. preparing and training staff.

(e) **Director of Music.** The Church shall have a Director of Music responsible for the musical ministry of the Church.