

REPORT OF THE

INTERNATIONAL CHURCH COMMITTEE

TO THE

TWENTY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

of the

CHURCH OF THE NAZARENE

June 28-July 3, 2009

Orlando, Florida, USA

International Church Committee

MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Paul G. Cunningham, James H. Diehl, Nina G. Gunter, Jesse C. Middendorf, Jerry D. Porter, J. K. Warrick, Louie Bustle, Tanya Cantarella, D. Ray Cook, Gustavo Crocker, Eugenio Duarte, E. LeBron Fairbanks, Yvette Gill, Loren Gresham (chairperson), Dwight Gunter, Anita Fitzgerald Henck, K. Clair MacMillan, Timothy Mogorosi, Andrew Moime, Tom Nees, Raul Puig, Linda Seaman (secretary), Graeme Sheppard, Jack Stone (2005-April 2007), Philip Weatherill, and David P. Wilson (May 2007-2009).

INTRODUCTION

After nearly four years of discussion, research and deliberation, the International Church Committee (ICC) has concluded from its charge in ICC-2, (2005 General Assembly resolution, which requested a review of *Manual* paragraphs 100-384), that the pressing need is for a fundamental constitutional review and redesign of the Church of the Nazarene's official *Manual*.

Anything less fails to meet the demands of a growing church body and a complex denominational system.

A new and better future for the global church is what we are seeking. In order for this to be achieved, at least in terms of vision, mission, beliefs, and core values, the *Manual* requires re-thinking in terms of its purpose, clarity, and cultural expressions.

At the beginning, Jesse C. Middendorf, jurisdictional general superintendent, sent each member of the ICC a letter outlining the thoughts of the Board of General Superintendents. General Superintendent Middendorf raised three questions to guide the ICC's work:

- How can we improve the effectiveness of local church ministry?
- How do we continue developing as a global church?
- How can we build on our strengths?

All three questions are addressed in the idea of a redesigned *Manual* by:

1. Reducing and simplifying structure
2. Beginning from the premise of an international church
3. Keeping in place the doctrines and tenets which make us "Nazarene" and are transferable across cultures and time

Any attempts to "edit" or "revise" the *Manual* in piecemeal fashion, the way it has been done in the past, would lend itself

to further building on a North American framework from the Church of the Nazarene's first century.

A comprehensive survey of the ICC members and others shows that while there are many similarities around the world inside the current *Manual*, further "editing" would not be as beneficial as a redesign.

The results of an ICC survey conducted among leadership groups could serve as the basis for improvements in content and clarity, and were considered as part of the ICC's final report.

The ICC recognizes the importance of the past. The church would not be where it is today without the dedication and sacrifice of countless numbers who faithfully served Jesus Christ through the Church of the Nazarene.

However, these visionaries and Christlike disciples would want the church to keep moving forward as opposed to being satisfied with the status quo.

A new kind of missional and ecclesiastical infrastructure that builds on the past needs to be put into place if the church is ever to fulfill its original vision of becoming an international community of faith in the Wesleyan-holiness tradition.

As the church enters its second century, the ICC is recommending the denomination take the next quadrennium, 2009-2013, to carefully create a new kind of *Manual*. The central

idea is to strengthen its voice in mission for a global church while at the same time allowing the *Manual* to perform its unique role in governance.

This approach would unite the church around the central tenets of the faith while moving most prescriptive practices of ministry into the local realm.

The over-arching goal is to clarify for a new generation those things essential to being the Church of the Nazarene by simplifying the *Manual* for understanding and use.

HOW DID WE ARRIVE AT THIS CONCLUSION?

The ICC created and followed a plan based on its charge from the 2005 General Assembly (GA):

Charge to ICC

- ICC-2, 2005 GA The purpose of the ICC and Subcommittee is to study the structure of the Church of the Nazarene, namely *MANUAL* paragraphs 100-384.
- SR-750, 2005 GA ("Considered for all" by the Special Resolutions Committee)
 - Being missional in structure.
 - Looking at leadership models for the future:
 - As the ICC began its work, the Board of General Superintendents (BGS) initiated a study of the Headquarters (now Global

Ministry Center) structure. In March 2008, the BGS adopted a single jurisdiction for the Headquarters (now Global Ministry Center) and Nazarene Publishing House. The chairperson for the BGS now provides oversight of these entities on behalf of the Board of General Superintendents. This change reflects the intent of some resolutions to provide singular leadership from within the BGS in certain administrative areas.

- Themes from other resolutions folded into SR-750, 2005 GA:
 - Effectiveness of the system in the coming century throughout the world. (SR-750a, 2005 GA)
 - Simplification of denominational structure so that the church might focus more on mission. (SR-755, 2005 GA)
 - Connection, clarity, flexibility in the district and local church in keeping with the Articles of Faith. (SR-756, 2005 GA)

Then we looked at some basic assumptions:

- The development of an international church is on-going
- Some parts of the denominational structure may need outright change
- Restructure and redesign should not be seen as a panacea for revitalization and growth
- That the resolutions seek to align the denominational structure to meet the stated mission of being an international church
- There are limited financial resources to conduct the ICC work

The ICC expanded its approach by reaching beyond the committee for participation and ideas:

- At the beginning we requested direction from the Board of General Superintendents
- Developed a uniform discussion guide provided to all ICC members and others for the study process
- Conducted interviews with several resolution sponsors to clarify their objectives (sponsors along with some pastors were also included in the ICC survey)
- Designed ICC sub-committee break-out groups for in-depth discussions

- Formed an ICC task force for follow-up in between the three regular meetings
- Worked with the Board of General Superintendents' "Thought Partners" group
- Created an email address for ICC communication (icc@nazarene.org)

THE CASE FOR CHANGE

The resolutions submitted to the 2005 General Assembly share some things in common:

- All are from USA districts
- All are concerned about the lack of clarity inside the denominational system
- All believe there is too much structure inhibiting growth and development of the church
- All see a need to make significant changes for the sake of mission

The ICC took into consideration the resolution sponsors' desire to do something that will make a difference over time.

WHY REDESIGN THE MANUAL?

There are several reasons for considering a redesign:

1. The *Manual* is the basis for shared belief, mission, and being a "connectional church." A redesign would improve its clarity on mission, not just governance.
2. Culturally and especially in terms of language, the *Manual* is still essentially North American bound. A redesign would move it in a different direction.
3. All regions, including the USA and Canada, would have more input for context affecting their respective areas in this proposed process.
4. The right redesign allows the *Manual* to have greater flexibility when it comes to reflecting the global character of the Church of the Nazarene, while retaining shared belief, mission, and responsibility.
5. The timing is right. A new century *Manual* would fit well with the Board of General Superintendents' revisioning of the Global Ministry Center.
6. All structure has a cost. There may be parts of the *Manual* the church can no longer afford. With the denomination impacted by the current global economic crisis, the expense of the entire system needs to be reconsidered.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Principles for *Manual* redesign would:

1. Reaffirm the Articles of Faith, mission, and core values integral to the Church of the Nazarene's history and future. At the same time it would encourage innovation to the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom.
2. Move toward simplification of local, district, regional, and global interests. Emphasizing mutual accountability, transparency, and sustainability as stewardship principles in all areas of church life.
3. Value people and ministry more than programs, when focusing on evangelism and discipleship through local church ministry.
4. Emphasize interdependence and connectedness, using information technology to create and strengthen relationships globally and reduce costs operationally.
5. Make inclusiveness of all Nazarenes a priority in leadership and administration of the global church, while adapting policies and practices regionally to meet the needs of various world areas.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To move *Manual* redesign from idea to reality, the ICC recommends:

1. Creating a global *Manual* including the Foreword, Parts I, II and III as follows:
 - a. Historical Statement (Part I)
 - b. Preamble (Part II)
 - c. Articles of Faith (Part II)
 - d. The Church (including the Covenant of Christian Character) (Part II)
 - e. Articles of Organization and Government (Part II)
2. Adapting or creating sections in a Global *Manual* including:
 - a. Vision.

"To be a disciple-making church, an international community of faith, in the Wesleyan-holiness tradition"
 - b. Mission.

"To make Christlike disciples in the nations"
 - c. Core Values.
 - "A Christian church"
 - "A holiness church"
 - "A missional church"
 - d. Global sections 100, 200, and 300 edited and streamlined, retaining universally appropriate polity and principles.

- o Criteria for content to be kept in 100, 200, and 300 in order to create a global *Manual*:
 - i. Whatever deals directly with Nazarene theology, mission, and identity
 - ii. Those things that cross cultures, economies, and geographical boundaries
 - iii. That which speaks to structure, systems, and accountability, without focusing on a particular area of the world or its language
 - iv. What remains would apply, with editing, re-writing, and ICC survey results, to the international Church of the Nazarene.
- 3. Establish local, district, and regional accountability to the larger denomination, while defining programs and structures that are contextually appropriate.
- 4. Holistically redesign the entire *Manual* for clarity, simplification, elimination of redundancy, and size.
- 5. Charge regional leadership from all world areas to bring back to the 2013 General Assembly suggested changes for a proposed "regional *Manual* policy handbook" such as the International Course of Study Advisory Committee (ICOSAC) has done for ministerial

education. This could include the development of a "Covenant of Christian Conduct" in a contextualized regional handbook. All subject to centralized review and approval.

6. That there be a continuation of a global commission, balancing lay and clergy voting members, appointed by the Board of General Superintendents and that it be:

Voting Members

- One person from each of the six world mission areas
- One person from Canada
- Two persons from the United States
- Two persons at-large

Non-voting members

- A general superintendent, the general secretary, and two additional representatives from the Global Ministry Center

Note: Limiting the size of the group makes it easier to schedule meetings and reduces the cost of the commission.

7. In addition to the appointment of a new commission and as a next step in the internationalization process, the ICC recommends establishing a *Global Manual*

Advisory Council (GMAC) to coordinate the work required among the Global Ministry Center, regions, districts, churches, educational institutions, and others in regards to *Manual* contextualization and redesign.

A part- or full-time project manager should be considered to coordinate this task under the auspices of the next commission, general secretary and Board of General Superintendents.

SUMMARY

In the original ICC-2 (2005 General Assembly resolution), there are two reasons given for a study of the structure of the Church of the Nazarene—*Manual* paragraphs 100-384:

- The government sections of the *Manual* should be rewritten from a global perspective with mission rather than institutional valuations
- The government sections should facilitate the local church, eliminating structure that unduly restricts flexibility, promoting an acceptable structure for large, medium, and small congregations

It is our belief that the work of the ICC in this quadrennium (2005-2009) fulfills the spirit and letter of these suggested guidelines.

Our thanks to:

- Members of the ICC for their time and effort;
- Jurisdictional General Superintendent Jesse C. Middendorf;
- The Board of General Superintendents for attending the meetings and giving invaluable feedback along the way.

Special appreciation to:

- The ICC task force made up of Yvette Gill, Anita Henck, and E. LeBron Fairbanks. These individuals spent many hours working with the chair and secretary in between annual meetings to process the findings and serve as an editorial advisory group.

We wish to acknowledge:

- General Secretary David P. Wilson for making it possible to have additional personnel to guide the process. Those contributing in administration include Diane Miller, Esther Okerson, Shirley Marvin, Jolyn Stark, and Judy Veigl. Historical understandings were provided by Stan Ingersol, manager of Nazarene Archives at the Global Ministry Center.

You cannot be an international committee without interpretation/translation services. Our thanks to those involved with these essential services.

**RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE REQUIRING RESOLUTIONS TO THE
2009 GENERAL ASSEMBLY FOR MANUAL CHANGES**

The International Church Committee (ICC) recommends the following, which require changes to the *Manual of the Church of the Nazarene*, and are presented as individual resolutions to the 2009 General Assembly, through the legislative committees:

NOTE: LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES ARE LISTED IN BOLD TYPE BESIDE EACH RECOMMENDATION AND ARE REFERRED TO THE RESPECTIVE COMMITTEES.

ICC RECOMMENDATION #1

1. Creation of a Global Manual (**ICC-1-General Administration Committee**)

Resolved that in order to move the *Manual* redesign from idea to reality, the following be implemented:

Create a global *Manual* including the Foreword, Parts I, II and III of the 2005-2009 *Manual* as follows:

Historical Statement (Part I)

Preamble (Part II)

Articles of Faith (Part II)

The Church (including the Covenant of Christian Character) (Part II)

Articles of Organization and Government
(Part II)

(For proposed action on Covenant of
Christian Conduct see Resolution ICC-3.)

Be it further resolved that *Manual* paragraph 38
(Christian Stewardship) be strengthened to
include a statement on denominational financial
accountability in all areas.

REASONS:

1. In the original ICC-2 (2005 General Assembly) are two reasons given for a study of the structure of the Church of the Nazarene—*Manual* paragraphs 100-384:
 - a. The government sections of the *Manual* should be rewritten from a global perspective with mission rather than institutional valuations.
 - b. The government sections should facilitate the local church, eliminating structure that unduly restricts flexibility, promoting an acceptable structure for large, medium, and small congregations.
2. The *Manual* is the basis for shared belief, mission, and being a "connectional church." A redesign would improve its clarity on mission, not just governance.

3. The right redesign allows the *Manual* to have greater flexibility when it comes to reflecting the global character of the Church of the Nazarene, while retaining shared beliefs, mission, and responsibility.
4. A new century *Manual* would fit well with the Board of General Superintendents' revisioning of the Global Ministry Center.
5. While affirming the essentials of our faith and life, a redesigned *Manual* would encourage innovation to the glory of God and the advancement of His kingdom.
6. Emphasizes financial accountability, transparency, and sustainability as stewardship principles in all areas of church life.

ICC RECOMMENDATION #2

2. Global *Manual-Statements on Vision, Mission, and Core Values. (ICC-2-General Administration Committee)*

Resolved that the global *Manual* include in the Foreword, the statements of vision, mission, and core values of the Church of the Nazarene.

Vision: To be a disciple-making church, an international community of faith, in the Wesleyan-holiness tradition.

Mission: To make Christlike disciples in the nations.

Core Values:

A Christian church

A holiness church

A missional church

REASON:

1. The denominational statements of vision, mission, and core values are not presently included in the *Manual*.

ICC RECOMMENDATION #3

3. Global *Manual*-Content/Paragraphs to be Included from 2005-2009 *Manual* (**ICC-3-General Administration Committee**)

Resolved that the global *Manual* include the paragraphs in the 2005-2009 *Manual* sections 100, 200, and 300 that are global in scope, retaining the universally appropriate polity and principles.

Criteria for content to be kept in the 100, 200, and 300 sections in order to create a global *Manual*:

- Whatever deals directly with Nazarene theology, mission, and identity
- Those things that cross cultures, economics, and geographical boundaries

- That which speaks to structure, systems, and accountability without focusing on a particular area of the world or its language

Be it further resolved that the remaining paragraphs in the 2005-2009 *Manual* sections 100, 200, and 300 be referred to regional leadership from all world areas to bring to the 2013 General Assembly suggested changes for a proposed "regional *Manual* policy handbook" such as the International Course of Study Advisory Committee (ICOSAC) has done for ministerial education. This should include the further development of a "Covenant of Christian Conduct" in a contextualized regional handbook. (See 2005-2009 *Manual* Part III) The regional *Manual* policy handbook is subject to centralized review and approval.

Be it further resolved that local, district, and regional accountability be established to the General Board and General Assembly, while defining programs and structures that are contextually appropriate.

REASONS:

1. Culturally and linguistically, the *Manual* is still essentially North American bound. A redesign would move it in a different direction.

2. All regions, including the USA and Canada, would have more input for context affecting their respective areas in this proposed process.
3. A new century *Manual* would fit well with the Board of General Superintendents' revisioning of the Global Ministry Center.
4. Values people and ministry more than programs, when focusing on evangelism and discipleship through local church ministry.
5. Makes inclusiveness of all Nazarenes a priority in leadership and administration of the global church, while adopting policies and practices regionally for meeting the needs of the various world areas.

ICC RECOMMENDATION #4

4. Global *Manual* Redesign (**ICC-4-General Administration Committee**)

Resolved that the entire global *Manual* be redesigned holistically for clarity, simplification, elimination of redundancy, and size.

REASONS:

1. To move toward simplification of local, district, regional, and global interests.

2. Emphasize interdependence and connectedness, using information technology to create and strengthen relationships globally and reduce costs operationally.

RECOMMENDATIONS NOT REQUIRING MANUAL CHANGES

NOTE: LEGISLATIVE REFERENCES ARE LISTED IN BOLD TYPE BESIDE EACH RECOMMENDATION AND ARE REFERRED TO THE RESPECTIVE COMMITTEES.

ICC RECOMMENDATION #5

1. Global Church Commission to continue the work of International Church Committee (**ICC-5-Special Resolutions Committee**)

Resolved that a **commission** be appointed by the Board of General Superintendents to continue the work of the International Church Committee and report to the 2013 General Assembly.

Be it further resolved that the commission members include the following:

- One person from each of the six world mission areas
- One person from Canada
- Two persons from the United States
- Two persons at large

- A general superintendent, the general secretary, and two additional representatives from the Global Ministry Center to serve as non-voting members

REASON:

1. A large group is too difficult to schedule and manage, as well as being too costly.

ICC RECOMMENDATION #6

2. Global *Manual* Advisory Council (**ICC-6-General Administration Committee**)

Resolved that a Global *Manual* Advisory Council (GMAC) be established to coordinate the work required by the Global Ministry Center, regions, districts, churches, educational institutions, and others in regard to *Manual* contextualization and redesign.

REASON:

1. The GMAC is the next step in the internationalization process, and will require a part- or full-time program manager to conduct this task under a global commission appointed by the Board of General Superintendents, and under the auspices of the general secretary.

Respectfully submitted,

INTERNATIONAL CHURCH COMMITTEE

Loren Gresham, Chairperson

Linda Seaman, Secretary