Operating Policy of the St. Lucia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists

Revised 2022

Article I - Name

This organization shall be known as the Saint Lucia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists, hereinafter referred to as the Mission.

Article II – Purpose

The purpose of this Mission is to facilitate the proclamation of the everlasting gospel in the context of the three angels' messages of Revelation 14:6-12 to all peoples within its territory, leading them to accept Jesus as personal Savior and to unite with His Church, and nurturing them in preparation for His soon return.

Article III - Relationships

The Saint Lucia Mission is a member unit of the Caribbean Union and is located in the territory of the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. The purposes, policies, and procedures of this Mission shall be in harmony with the working policies and procedures of the executive committee Inter-American Division or the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. This Mission shall pursue the mission of the Seventh-day Adventist Church in harmony with the Fundamental Beliefs, programs, initiatives and actions adopted and approved by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists at its sessions.

Article IV – Geographic Territory

The territory of this Mission shall consist of the island of Saint Lucia.

Article V – Constituency

Section 1. The constituency of this Mission shall consist of such churches as have been or shall be properly organized in any part of the territory under its jurisdiction and accepted by vote of the delegates assembled at any regular or special mission constituency session.
Section 2. Companies and isolated members of this Mission shall be organized into what will be known as the Mission Church. The business of this church shall be conducted by the mission executive committee. The officers shall be the president and secretary of the mission who shall serve as elder and clerk respectively.

Article VI - Principal Office

The principal office for the transaction of the business of the Mission is fixed and located at Sunny Acres, Castries. The Executive Committee of the Caribbean Union may change the location of the principal office.

Article VII – Constituency Meetings

Section 1. Regular Meetings: This Mission shall hold a regular quadrennial constituency meeting at such time and place as the executive committee of the mission in counsel with the officers of the union conference shall designate. In the event that the mission executive committee fails to call a regular constituency meeting within the quadrennial period, the Caribbean Union Conference Executive Committee may give notice for such a meeting and designate the time and place. In case regional conditions make it imperative to postpone the calling of the constituency meeting, the union conference executive committee, in a regular or special meeting, shall have authority to make such postponement, not to exceed one year, giving notice to all constituent organizations. In the event that the executive committee exercises its authority to postpone a constituency meeting, it shall also have the authority to set the subsequent regular constituency meeting at such time and place as it shall see fit, not to exceed four calendar years from the date of the postponed constituency meeting. Notice of the time and place of the meeting of the delegates representing the members shall be given by:

- **a. A notice printed in the Gleanings at least four weeks before the date of the session, or**
- **b. A method approved by the St. Lucia Mission Executive Committee, provided all churches receive notice with sufficient time to select delegates, or**
- **c. A method approved by the Caribbean Union Executive Committee, in the event of inaction or failure to call a constituency meeting by the St. Lucia Mission Executive Committee.**

Section 2. Special Meeting: a. The executive committee of this mission shall call a special constituency meeting when:

1) It is voted by the executive committee, or

2) It is voted by the delegates at any constituency meeting, or

3) It is requested by seventy-five percent (75%) of the churches through their business meetings or

4) It is voted by the union executive committee, division executive committee, or General Conference Executive Committee.

The date for such a meeting in response to paragraphs 3) and 4) above shall not be more than 90 days from the date when the actions described in paragraphs 3) and 4) above are communicated to the officers/executive committee of the union.

b. In the absence of a timely response by the mission executive committee to paragraphs 2) through 4) in Sec. 2. a. above, the Caribbean Union Executive Committee or the Division Executive Committee may call a special constituency meeting of the Mission and designate the time and place for such a meeting.

c. The agenda for special constituency meetings shall be included in the notice of the meeting.

d. Notice as to the time and place of special constituency meetings shall be given in the same manner as for regularly scheduled constituency meetings.

Section 3. Virtual Attendance at Constituency Meetings: Generally, regular and specially called constituency meetings are to be held in person and onsite. However, delegates when requested by the executive committee, and if permitted by local law, may participate by means of an electronic conference or similar communications by which all persons can hear each other at the same time, and participation by such means shall constitute presence in person and attendance at such a meeting.

Section 4. Chair and Secretary for Constituency Meetings: The president of this Mission shall serve as chair and the secretary of this Mission shall serve as secretary for constituency meetings of this Mission. The president may designate other individuals to assist in chair duties from time to time. In the event that the president's office is vacant or that the president is unavailable to serve as chair, the ranking union officer present shall serve as chair for the meeting.

Arrangements may be made for a secretary pro tem if the secretary's office is vacant or the secretary is unavailable to serve at the constituency meeting.

Section 5. Regular Constituency Meeting: The business of the regular constituency meeting will include the election/appointment of personnel for various positions (see Section 11. below), the receipt of reports from the president, secretary, treasurer/chief financial officer (report based on audited statements), departmental directors, and the auditor. In addition, the constituency meeting shall review/create plans for moving the Mission toward conference status. It shall also endorse/approve/develop plans for the conduct of the work as are desirable and in harmony with the policies of the Inter-American Division.

Section 6. Annual Session: The Officers of the local mission should hold an annual meeting of representatives of all its churches, to report on the progress of the quadrennial program and finances of the local mission.

Section 7. Quorum: At least sixty-six percent (66%) of the delegates authorized hereinafter under Section. 1. and 2. of Article VIII must be present at the opening of any regular or special constituency meeting to constitute a quorum for the transaction of business. Once the meeting is declared open, the delegates remaining shall constitute a quorum.

Section 8. Proxy Voting: All delegates must be present in person at any constituency meeting in order to be eligible to vote. There shall be no voting by proxy.

Section 9. Voting Rights of the Delegates: Each delegate appointed to act on behalf of the members of this Mission shall be entitled to one vote on each question to be decided by the body. The voting rights of the individual delegates representing the members as hereinafter provided shall be limited to the particular constituency meeting of the mission in which they have been designated to represent a local church, institution, the Union, the Division, or the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Section 10. Voting: The voting on matters of business shall normally be by viva voce. The chair may call for the vote by other means, including a secret ballot, when it is deemed advisable or is requested by the membership. Votes cast remotely shall have the same validity as if the delegates met and voted onsite.

Section 11. Parliamentary Authority: The parliamentary authority for constituency meetings pertaining to all rules and procedures not covered by its bylaws shall be based on those published in the General Conference Rules of Order unless otherwise determined by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the constituency meeting.

Section 12. Elections/Appointments and Term of Office: a. Elections: The presidents, secretaries, and treasurer/chief financial officers of this Mission shall be elected by the union constituency meeting rather than by the session of this Mission. The election of departmental directors, associate departmental directors, associate secretaries, or associate treasurers for this mission, if not determined by the delegates at the mission constituency meeting, shall be referred to the executive committee for appointment. The mission constituency meeting shall also elect the members (other than ex officio) of the Mission committee and, where required by the governance documents of local mission institutions, the chief administrator(s) and board members of such entities.

b. Term of Office: Persons elected at the constituency meeting and those appointed by the executive committee normally serve until the next regular constituency meeting. However, their period of service may be shorter due to resignation, voluntary retirement, retirement in a situation where a mandatory retirement age policy is in effect, or removal from office, for cause, by the executive committee or a special constituency meeting.

The phrase "for cause" when used in connection with removal from an elected or appointed position, or from employment, shall include but not be limited to 1) incompetence; 2) persistent failure to cooperate with duly constituted authority in substantive matters and with relevant employment and denominational policies; 3) actions which may be the subject of discipline under the *Seventh-day Adventist Church Manual*; 4) failure to maintain regular standing as a member of the Seventh-day Adventist Church; 5) theft or embezzlement; or 6) conviction of or guilty plea for a crime.

Article VIII—Representation at Constituency Meetings

Section 1. Regular Delegates: All delegates shall be duly accredited by any one of the organized churches of the mission. Each church shall be entitled to one delegate for the organization and one additional delegate for each 300 members or major fraction thereof and who hold membership in the local church which accredits them. Such delegates shall be chosen by the business meeting of the local church and include males and females.

Section 2. Delegates At-Large: The delegates at large to a constituency meeting of this mission:

a. The current members of the executive committee of this mission.

b. Members of the General Conference, the Inter-American Division, and the Caribbean Union Executive committees who may be present at any ~~session~~ constituency meeting of this Mission. The number of such delegates will not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total delegation.

c. All employees holding credentials or ministerial licenses issued by the Caribbean Union or the mission.

d. The director of the publishing ministry, the auditors and the directors of all recognized departments of this Mission.

e. Administrators of the institutions operated by this Mission.

f. Such other persons as are recommended by the executive committee and accepted by the vote of the delegates in session, the number of delegates thus seated shall not exceed 10 percent of the total number of delegates otherwise provided for.

Sec. 3. Church Membership Requirement: All delegates appointed to represent the members of this mission at any constituency meeting shall be members in regular standing of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

Article IX—Constituency Meeting Committees

(Note: Division executive committees may authorize a process whereby the session organizing and nominating committees may be selected and empowered to perform their tasks in advance of the session. The process to select such committees for a session shall involve constituency representation rather than being accomplished by the executive committee alone. Unless a division executive committee has approved other arrangements as

described above, the following provisions shall apply for the appointment and functioning of session committees.)

Prior to each mission constituency the executive committee shall provide for such temporary committees as may be necessary to conduct the preliminary work for the session.

To facilitate the business of the session, constituency meeting committees may convene by means of an electronic conference or similar communications by which all persons participating can hear each other at the same time. These committees include:

Section 1. Organizing Committee—the membership of the organizing committee shall be composed of a number equal to 33% of the organized churches, plus 10% of such number from the delegates at large, and shall be made up as follows:

a. The regular delegates of the organizing committee will be distributed among the areas/zones of the Mission according to membership. To establish the ratio, the Mission membership will be divided by a number equal to 33% of organized churches. This ratio will be applied to the membership of each area in order to determine its representatives from among the pastoral districts to the organizing committee.

b. The delegates at large meeting as a group and under the direction of the union president, or the person designated by him, shall choose a number equal to ten percent of the number of the regular delegates for the organizing committee as their representatives.

c. Members of the organizing committee shall be chosen at or prior to the constituency meeting.

d. If the organizing committee is to meet prior to the constituency meeting, the time and place of the meeting shall be given in the official notice of the meeting.

e. The chair of the organizing committee shall be the president of the union or his designee.

f. The organizing committee shall nominate and the constituency shall elect:

1. A nominating committee;
2. The chair and secretary of the plans and recommendations committee;
3. Other committees as may be necessary.

g. The General Conference, division and union representatives who may be present shall be invited to sit with the committee as counselors.

Section 2. Nominating Committee—The nominating committee shall consist of 13 members, including the president of the Caribbean Union, or his designee, who shall serve as chair, and who will have the right to vote, and will include up to 45 percent laypersons. The ranking General Conference, Division and Union representatives who may be present shall be invited to sit with the committee as counselors.

a. Those chosen as members of the Nominating Committee must be duly appointed delegates in attendance at the constituency meeting.

b. Persons holding elective office, as outlined in Article VII, Sec. 12. in the current term shall not be eligible to serve on the Nominating Committee.

c. The Nominating Committee shall limit its nominations to those positions for which persons are to be elected at the constituency meeting and for which budgetary provisions have been made.

d. The Nominating Committee shall also nominate members for the Mission-executive committee and for the boards of mission institutions whose bylaws indicate that board members for the entity are elected at a mission constituency meeting.

Section 3. The committee on plans and recommendations shall be composed of all delegates to the constituency meeting and shall have a chairman and secretary.

Article X—Executive Committee

Section 1. Membership of the Executive Committee: The Executive Committee of the St Lucia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists shall be elected in regular Session and shall include the president, secretary and treasurer of the Mission, full-time departmental directors, Mission publishing ministries director, one administrator of the Mission institutions on an annual rotating basis, and one other non-office employee. Additionally, 25% of the number mentioned above shall be district pastors. In addition, 55% of the total number mentioned above shall be non-denominationally employed persons. The Mission president shall be the chairman of the Executive Committee; the Secretary of the Mission shall be the secretary of the Executive Committee. The officers of the Caribbean Union, the Inter-American Division, and the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists are members ex officio of the mission executive committee; however, their membership shall be in addition to the number detailed above. Any such officers exercising their voting rights at anyone meeting shall not make up more than ten percent of the committee membership present.

Section 2. Delegated Authority: The executive committee of this mission, unless replaced at a special constituency meeting, is delegated the authority to act on behalf of the constituents between constituency meetings, including the authority to remove, for cause (see definition of "for cause" in Article VII, Sec. 12. above), persons who have been elected at a mission constituency meeting including directors of departments/services, chief administrators of institutions, and members of boards and committee whose election or appointment is a result of a constituency meeting or executive committee meeting action; and to fill, for the remaining portion of the term, any vacancies thus created. (The offices of mission president, secretary, and treasurer are always filled by action of the union executive committee.) The removal of those named under Article VII, Sec. 11. shall require the affirmative vote of two-thirds (2/3) of those voting at a mission executive committee meeting where a majority of members is present.

Section 3. Administrative Authority: The executive committee shall have full administrative authority:

a. To fill for the current term of office any vacancies that may occur by death, resignation, or otherwise, in its boards, committees, departments, or in offices which have been filled by mission constituency meeting election.

b. To appoint committees, such as an administrative committee, with their terms of reference.

c. To employ such personnel as may be necessary to execute its work effectively.

d. To grant and withdraw credentials and licenses. The withdrawal of credentials shall require the consent of two thirds (2/3) of those voting at a mission executive committee meeting where a majority of members is present.

b.To appoint area coordinators upon the recommendation of the conference administration to facilitate the work in the mission. These shall be appointed at the first plenary meeting of the executive committee after the session

Section 4. Meetings of the executive committee may be called at any time or place by the president, or in his absence by the secretary upon the written request of any three members, or twenty-five percent (whichever is more), of the executive committee.

Section 5. Attendance at Meetings: Where allowed by local law, executive committee members may participate in meetings by means of an electronic conference or similar communications by which all persons participating can hear each other at the same time, and participation by such means shall constitute presence in person at such a meeting.

Section 6. Notice of Meetings: Notice as to time and place, and any other requirements under this operating policy, shall be provided to all members in a reasonable manner at least 48 hours prior to the meeting if the meeting is to take place by electronic conference or similar communications, or at least 96 hours if the meeting is to take place in person.

Section 7. Quorum: Unless otherwise required in the Operating Policy, 5 members, including the president, of the mission executive committee, shall constitute a quorum.

Article XI—Officers and Their Duties

Section 1. Executive Officers: The executive officers of this Mission shall be a president, a secretary, and a treasurer/chief financial officer. The secretary and treasurer/chief financial officer may be one individual known as the secretary-treasurer. It is the duty of these officers, in consultation with one another, to carry forward the work according to plans, policies, and programs voted by the union executive committee, the constituency in session, and/or the mission executive Committee. These plans, policies, and programs shall be in harmony with the Fundamental Beliefs and actions adopted and approved by the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists in its quinquennial sessions.

The mission executive officers shall be appointed by the union at the time of its sessions, or by the union executive committee between union sessions and shall hold office for the period of five (5) years or until their successors are appointed and enter upon their duties. Vacancies in such offices shall be filled by action of the union executive committee.

a. President: The president, who shall be an ordained minister of experience, is the first officer and shall report to the mission executive committee of the mission in consultation with the secretary and the treasurer/chief financial officer. He shall act as chair of constituency meetings and of the mission executive committee and serve in the general interests of the mission as the constituency and the executive committee shall determine. In his leadership he shall adhere to the policies of the Caribbean Union, the Inter-American Division and of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, work in harmony with the union executive committee, and in close counsel with the union officers. When a local mission president is to be absent from the mission for prolonged periods of time, the mission committee shall be authorized, in counsel with the union officers, to appoint an individual to act as chair during such absence.

b. Secretary: The secretary, associated with the president as an executive officer, shall serve under the direction of the executive committee and shall act as vice-chair of the executive committee. The secretary shall report to the executive committee of the mission after consultation with the president. It shall be the duty of the secretary to keep the minutes of the constituency meetings and of the executive committee and to furnish copies of such to all members of the executive committee and to the union officers. The secretary shall also be responsible for providing information as may be requested by the president or the mission union, or division committees, and shall perform such other duties as pertain to the office.

c. Treasurer/Chief Financial Officer: The treasurer, associated with the president as an executive officer, shall serve under the direction of the executive committee. The treasurer/chief financial officer shall report to the executive committee of the mission after consultation with the president. The treasurer/chief financial officer shall be responsible for providing financial leadership to the organization which will include, but shall not be limited to, receiving, safeguarding, and disbursing all funds in harmony with the actions of the executive committee, for remitting all required funds to the union/division/General Conference in harmony with the Inter-American Division policy, and for providing financial information to the president and to the executive committee. The treasurer/chief financial officer shall also be responsible for furnishing copies of the financial statements to the union officers.

Article XII—Directors of Departments/Associations/Services

Section 1. Advisory Role: The directors of departments/associations/services of this mission shall work under the direction of the executive committee and the president and shall serve in an advisory relationship to the mission.

Section 2. Departments/Associations/Services Structure: Mission departments, associations, and services shall be organized in harmony with the department/association/service

structure of the General Conference but shall not necessarily duplicate the departments/ associations/services at the division or the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Article XIII—Finance

Section 1. Tithes and Offerings: The church funds managed by this mission shall be:

a. Such portion of tithe as it shall be assigned by policy and as received from all churches and isolated members in the Mission

b. Appropriations from the Caribbean Union or the Inter-American Division

c. Special donations and funds, legacies, gifts, devises, and bequests made to it.

Section 2. Policies: The portion of tithe which is reserved for this mission, as specified by policy, and all other funds shall be used in harmony with the policies of the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists; and in the case of donations, their use shall be in harmony with the specifications of donors and in compliance with government regulations. Tithe is shared with the union and division on fixed percentages as set by the division executive committee and with the General Conference on fixed percentages as set by the Annual Council of the General Conference Executive Committee. This mission shall pass on monthly to the Caribbean Union Conference the specified tithe percentage, all mission offerings, and such other funds as may be called for by the policies of the union and division organizations.

Section 3. Bank Accounts: The funds of this mission shall be safeguarded in harmony with the financial policies of the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists. Moneys shall be deposited in the name of the St. Lucia Mission of Seventh-day Adventists in regular or special accounts in such banks or savings institutions as the mission committee shall designate, and shall be withdrawn only by persons authorized by resolution of the mission committee.

Section 4. Financial Statements: The St. Lucia Mission shall regularly prepare statements of income and fund balances and shall be responsible for the filing of copies of the annual financial statement with the Caribbean Union Conference and the Division and, to the extent required by law, with any branch of local or national government.

Article XIV—Budget, Employee Compensation Review, and Financial Audit

Section 1. Budget: The St. Lucia Mission shall prepare an annual budget in harmony with the policies of the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists.

Section 2. Employee Compensation and Expense Review: The executive committee shall appoint an employee compensation and expense review committee, including a union officer or one or more representatives appointed by the union committee. The tasks of this committee are outlined in General Conference Working Policy.

Section 3. Independent Audit: The financial statements of this mission shall be audited at least annually by an auditor chosen in harmony with General Conference Working Policy; and the records of this mission or any of its subsidiaries, agencies, or institutions shall at all times be open to said auditor.

Article XIII—Dissolution XV—Dissolution and Disposition of Assets

This mission may be dissolved only by action of the union executive committee. In the event of the dissolution of this mission, all assets remaining after all claims have been satisfied shall be transferred to a legal entity authorized by the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists

Article XVI—Indemnification

Section 1. To the extent permitted by law, this mission shall indemnify any person who was or is a party or is threatened to be made a party to any threatened, pending, or completed action, suit, or proceeding, whether civil, criminal, administrative, or investigative, because he/she is or was a member of the mission executive committee or an officer, employee, or agent of the mission against expenses (including legal fees), judgments, fines, and amounts paid in settlement actually and reasonably incurred by him/her in connection with such action, suit, or proceeding if he/she acted in good faith and in a manner he/she reasonably believed to be in or not opposed to the best interest of the mission, and, with respect to any criminal action or proceeding, had no reasonable cause to believe his/her conduct was unlawful.

Section 2. This right of indemnification shall be in addition to, and not exclusive of, all other rights to which such member of the executive committee, officer, or department director may be entitled.

(Note: This right of indemnification may be expanded or contracted as allowed under local law and as adopted by the constituents.)

Article XVII—Amendments

At any annual meeting of the Caribbean Union Conference Executive Committee, this operating policy may be amended by a majority (unless local law requires a higher majority) provided that such amendments shall not be inconsistent with the Constitution and Bylaws of the General Conference and the working policy of the Inter-American Division of the General Conference of Seventh-day Adventists, and with the spirit of the Local Mission Model Operating Policy. However, those portions of this operating policy which are essential to the unity of the Church worldwide and are designated in bold print shall only be amended or revised from time to time by the Inter-American Division Executive Committee by a simple majority vote (unless local law requires a higher majority) in order to comply with changes to the Local Mission Model Operating Policy as voted by the General Conference Executive Committee in its annual meetings.