

SHEKINAH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH TANZANIA (SPCT)



OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES

Legal and Spiritual Basis

These Guidelines have been drafted and enacted based solely on the Constitution of the Shekinah Presbyterian Church Tanzania (SPCT), and not otherwise. They exist to interpret, operationalize, and implement the Constitution for the orderly governance of the Church.

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CONTENTS

SECTION ONE: PREFACE2

SECTION TWO: INTERPRETATION AND DEFINITIONS2

SECTION THREE: NAME, ADDRESS, JURISDICTION, AND EMBLEM3

SECTION FOUR: OBJECTIVES OF SPCT4

SECTION FIVE: APPLICATION OF STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE5

SECTION SIX: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP9

SECTION SEVEN: ORDINATION PROCEDURES 10

SECTION EIGHT: LEADERSHIP 12

SECTION NINE: PASTORAL RETIREMENT AND SUCCESSION 23

SECTION TEN: SUCCESSION RULES FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP 24

SECTION ELEVEN: COUNCILS 26

SECTION TWELVE: ELECTIONS OF LEADERS 31

SECTION THIRTEEN: DEPARTMENTS OF SPCT 33

SECTION FOURTEEN: CHURCH COMMITTEES 36

SECTION FIFTEEN: CHURCH REVENUE AND PROPERTY 38

SECTION SIXTEEN PASTORAL ALLOWANCES AND WELFARE 40

SECTION SEVENTEEN: BOARD OF TRUSTEES 42

SECTION EIGHTEEN: DISPUTE RESOLUTION OPERATING GUIDELINES 43

SECTION NINETEEN: AMENDMENT PROCEDURES 45

SECTION TWENTY: DISSOLUTION AND DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY 46

SECTION TWENTY ONE: OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SEALS 47

SECTION TWENTY TWO: AMENDMENT OF GUIDELINES 48

SECTION TWENTY THREE: DECLARATION OF ADOPTION 49

APPENDIX 50

 LEADERSHIP APPLICATION FORM 50

 MEMBERSHIP FORM 53

SECTION ONE: PREFACE

These Guidelines have been prepared to provide practical direction for the life and ministry of the Shekinah Presbyterian Church Tanzania (SPCT). While the Constitution establishes the foundational principles and structures of the Church, these Guidelines translate those provisions into practical measures for everyday governance, worship, administration, and service. They are intended to foster order, integrity, and accountability while ensuring that all operations of SPCT remain faithful to Scripture and to the mission of glorifying God through the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Scope and Authority of the Guidelines

These Guidelines apply to all levels of SPCT — National, Diocesan, Presbytery, and Local Church. They cover the operation of leadership, councils, committees, departments, finances, pastoral welfare, discipline, property, and other essential aspects of Church life.

- 1) The Guidelines derive their authority from the **Constitution of SPCT** and shall be read and applied in harmony with it.
- 2) In the event of any conflict, the Constitution shall prevail, and these Guidelines shall serve only as instruments of implementation.
- 3) All leaders, officers, and members of SPCT are required to abide by these Guidelines as binding operational standards for the orderly conduct of the Church's work.

Objectives of the Guidelines

The primary objectives of these Guidelines are:

- 1) To provide a clear and practical framework for governance, administration, and ministry across SPCT.
- 2) To ensure that leaders and members exercise their responsibilities with transparency, accountability, and faithfulness to the Word of God.
- 3) To safeguard unity, discipline, and integrity within the Church.
- 4) To strengthen pastoral care, discipleship, evangelism, and social witness.
- 5) To promote continuity and sustainability of ministry through structured procedures and responsibilities.
- 6) To foster fairness and welfare for pastors, officers, and members.
- 7) To guide decision-making and conflict resolution in line with SPCT's Constitution and values.

SECTION TWO: INTERPRETATION AND DEFINITIONS

1. All words and expressions defined in Article 1 of the Constitution of SPCT shall have the same meaning in these Operating By-laws, unless otherwise specifically provided.

2. The definitions set forth in the Constitution shall be binding in the interpretation and application of all official documents of SPCT, including subsidiary by-laws, departmental regulations, contracts, and agreements.
3. In the event of ambiguity or deficiency in interpretation, the General Assembly of SPCT shall have the ultimate authority to render the official interpretation, in consultation with the Board of Trustees and subject to the laws of the United Republic of Tanzania.
4. All levels of SPCT governance (Local Church, Presbytery, Diocese, and National) shall apply the constitutional definitions uniformly, without alteration or replacement by local customs, informal terms, or regional practices.
5. The constitutional terms shall be used in both English and Kiswahili with equal force. In case of conflict between the two languages, the version formally adopted and approved by the General Assembly shall prevail.

SECTION THREE: NAME, ADDRESS, JURISDICTION, AND EMBLEM

1. The official name **“Shekinah Presbyterian Church Tanzania (SPCT)”** shall be used in all legal, financial, and administrative documents. No abbreviation, translation, or alternative name shall be employed for official purposes unless expressly authorized by the General Assembly.
2. All correspondence, contracts, memoranda of understanding, financial accounts, and public communications must bear the full official name of SPCT, together with the registered address of the Headquarters as stated in the Constitution.
3. Any proposed change of the Headquarters or official address must:
 - a) be submitted in writing to the General Assembly at least ninety (90) days prior to the proposed relocation;
 - b) include justifiable reasons and logistical arrangements;
 - c) be formally approved by a resolution of the General Assembly before implementation; and
 - d) be notified to the relevant Government authorities in accordance with the law.
4. The jurisdiction of SPCT, as provided by the Constitution, extends throughout the United Republic of Tanzania. For practical purposes, no Local Church, Presbytery, or Diocese may operate outside its legally recognized geographical area without written authorization from the General Assembly.
5. The establishment of branches or congregations outside Tanzania shall be subject to:
 - a) a formal application submitted through the Diocesan Council to the General Assembly;
 - b) verification of doctrinal compatibility, governance structure, and financial sustainability; and

- c) the signing of a memorandum of understanding to safeguard the doctrinal and administrative integrity of SPCT.
6. All international partnerships, collaborations, and affiliations must:
 - a) be consistent with the Reformed theological heritage of SPCT;
 - b) respect the internal authority and autonomy of SPCT; and
 - c) be ratified by the General Assembly prior to their execution.
7. The official emblem/logo of SPCT shall consist solely of the elements prescribed by the Constitution, namely: the Bible, the Cross, and the letters "SPCT." No modification, addition, or alteration of the emblem shall be permitted unless formally approved by the General Assembly.
8. The emblem shall appear on all official documents, seals, letterheads, publications, and digital platforms of SPCT. Its unauthorized use, reproduction, or distortion by any individual, group, or external body shall constitute a disciplinary and legal offence, subject to action by the General Assembly and the laws of the United Republic of Tanzania.

SECTION FOUR: OBJECTIVES OF SPCT

1. All Local Churches shall organize regular preaching, teaching, and evangelistic meetings, ensuring that every program is consistent with the doctrine of SPCT and subject to Session oversight.
2. Prayer and intercession programs shall be scheduled at the Local Church, Presbytery, and Diocesan levels at least once each quarter, with reports submitted to the General Assembly.
3. Any evangelistic or revival meeting involving external speakers or ministries must be authorized in writing by the Presbytery to which the Local Church belongs.
4. The establishment of theological schools, seminaries, or training centers shall be subject to prior approval of the General Assembly, including submission of curriculum outlines, governance structures, and compliance with national educational regulations.
5. Nursery, primary, secondary, and higher learning institutions established under SPCT shall be registered in accordance with the laws of the United Republic of Tanzania and must maintain a governing board answerable to the Church through the relevant Diocesan Council.
6. Christian education seminars, conferences, and workshops must be conducted in line with the Constitution and may be hosted at Local, Presbytery, or Diocesan levels, with prior notification to the General Assembly.
7. Youth talent identification programs (e.g., music, sports, arts, leadership) shall be integrated into Church ministries, and each Diocese shall establish an annual plan to ensure skills are nurtured for the service of both the Church and the nation.

8. Local Churches shall establish a Social Welfare Committee responsible for assisting orphans, widows, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups. Reports of such activities shall be submitted annually to the Presbytery.
9. In matters of public health, environment, and disaster response, SPCT shall collaborate with government authorities and reputable organizations, provided that such collaboration does not compromise the faith and independence of the Church.
10. Any care centers for children, families, or special needs established under SPCT must be duly registered and licensed in accordance with Tanzanian law, and shall operate under the oversight of the Diocesan Council.
11. Development projects (schools, hospitals, agriculture, construction, etc.) initiated by SPCT shall be planned with a feasibility study, approved budgets, and implementation monitored by the Planning and Finance Committee at the relevant level.
12. Members shall be encouraged and trained to engage in self-reliant economic activities. Training modules in entrepreneurship, cooperative savings, and microfinance shall be designed at the Presbytery level.
13. Biblical teaching on economics, stewardship, and integrity in business shall be incorporated into annual teaching calendars at Local Church and Presbytery levels.
14. All missionaries, whether short-term or long-term, must be officially invited by SPCT through the General Assembly or relevant Diocesan Council.
15. Before beginning ministry, each missionary shall:
 - a) Register with SPCT and provide necessary legal documentation (visa, permits, etc.);
 - b) Complete orientation in SPCT's doctrine, governance, and cultural practices;
 - c) Submit to the authority of SPCT leadership at the level of assignment.
14. No missionary shall be permitted to engage in activities inconsistent with the evangelical mission of SPCT. Any violation shall be reported immediately to the General Assembly, which reserves the right to revoke their cooperation.

SECTION FIVE: APPLICATION OF STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICE

1. Doctrinal Standard

SPCT affirms the Apostles' Creed, the Westminster Confession of Faith, and its Catechisms as subordinate standards, with the Holy Scriptures being the supreme and final authority in all matters of faith and life.

2. Sacraments

- a) **Baptism** shall be administered only by ordained Ministers or duly authorized Elders of SPCT. The mode of baptism may be by immersion or sprinkling, and SPCT recognizes both practices as valid within the covenant of grace.
- b) **The Lord's Supper** shall be celebrated in every Local Church once every month under the oversight of the Session and officiated only by an ordained Pastor.
- c) In the celebration of the Lord's Supper, non-alcoholic juice and wafer bread (or biscuits) shall be used, accompanied by white cloths on the Table.
- d) The Lord's Table is holy and must be approached with reverence. During administration, the officiating Pastor shall wear a clerical gown, and ordained Elders assisting shall also wear clerical gowns.
- e) Participation in the Lord's Supper shall be limited to professing believers in good standing with the Church.

3. Worship

a) **Principle of Worship**

All worship in SPCT shall be directed to the Triune God alone. It shall be conducted in reverence, dignity, and order, with the aim of glorifying God and edifying His people. No element shall be introduced into worship except that which is commanded in Holy Scripture or in accord with sound Reformed tradition.

b) **The Lord's Day Service**

- 1) The principal day of corporate worship shall be the Lord's Day (Sunday).
- 2) Every Local Church of SPCT shall hold at least one **principal** service of worship on the Lord's Day.

c) **Essential Elements of Sunday Worship**

Unless hindered by lawful and extraordinary circumstances, every Lord's Day service shall include the following:

- 1) **Singing of Psalms, Hymns, and Spiritual Songs** – led by the congregation or choir, giving glory to God through music that is scripturally sound.
- 2) **Confession of Faith** – recitation of the Apostles' Creed, affirming the catholic and Reformed heritage of the Church.
- 3) **Public Prayer** – including adoration, confession of sins, thanksgiving, and intercession for the Church and the world.
- 4) **Reading and Preaching of the Word** – the Holy Scriptures shall be publicly read and the sermon faithfully expounded by an ordained Minister.
- 5) **Offering** – the giving of tithes, offerings, and other contributions as acts of worship, to be received and administered in accordance with SPCT's financial regulations.
- 6) **The Sacraments** – Baptism and the Lord's Supper shall be observed as appropriate, with the Lord's Supper ordinarily administered monthly.
- 7) **Benediction** – the service shall be concluded with the apostolic blessing pronounced by the Pastor or Minister duly ordained.

d) Conduct of Worship

- 1) Worship shall be conducted with reverence and godly fear, avoiding disorder, worldliness, or entertainment-oriented practices.
- 2) The focus of worship shall be God alone; no human leader, personality, or tradition shall displace the centrality of Christ.
- 3) All music, prayers, and preaching shall conform to the doctrine and faith of SPCT.
- 4) Excessive decorations with many colors that may disturb the atmosphere of reverence within the church shall be removed. Numerous symbols inside the building, such as multiple crosses, candles, and the like, shall be minimized so that worshippers may concentrate on God alone. The church building may bear a cross as a symbol on the outside, and also within, but not in every place.

e) Other Services and Spiritual practices

- 1) Mid-week services, prayer meetings, and other gatherings may be held for the spiritual growth of believers, but such services shall not contradict the order and dignity required of the Lord's Day worship.
- 2) Every Local Church shall establish regular prayer days throughout the year to sustain the spiritual fire and nurture the life of the congregation.
- 3) SPCT shall conduct two national prayer seasons annually, formally designated as *Danielic Prayer*. Each prayer season shall consist of twenty-one (21) consecutive days of united prayer across the Church. The Evangelism Committee shall coordinate the planning, mobilization, and supervision of these prayer seasons in cooperation with diocesan and presbytery leadership.

f) Marriage And Family

1) Eligibility for Marriage in SPCT

- a) Only members in good standing of SPCT, or baptized believers of like faith and practice, may be eligible to have their marriage solemnized by the Church.
- b) At least one party must be an active member of SPCT for a minimum of twelve (12) months prior to marriage, unless otherwise approved by the Session.
- c) Both parties must be of legal age 18 as required by the laws of the United Republic of Tanzania.

2) Premarital Counseling

- a) Every couple seeking marriage in SPCT shall undergo not less than twelve (12) weeks of premarital counseling under the supervision of the Pastor and Elders.
- b) Counseling shall cover biblical teaching on marriage, family responsibilities, financial stewardship, conflict resolution, and Christian sexual ethics.

3) Bride Price (Dowry) and Cultural Practices

- a) SPCT recognizes dowry/bride price as a cultural custom but shall not allow it to overshadow the spiritual covenant of marriage.
- b) Sessions shall guide families to ensure dowry negotiations do not become burdensome, exploitative, or contrary to biblical teaching.
- c) No marriage in SPCT shall be refused solely on the ground of non-payment of excessive dowry.

4) Solemnization and Blessing of Marriage

- a) All marriages shall be solemnized by an ordained Pastor of SPCT, in accordance with the Marriage Act of Tanzania.
- b) The wedding service shall be conducted in the Church sanctuary, unless otherwise approved by the Session.
- c) Civil marriages conducted at Government offices may subsequently be blessed in the Church, provided the couple meets the membership and counseling requirements.
- d) All customary marriages should be blessed in the Church.

5) Mixed Marriages

- a) SPCT strongly exhorts believers to marry “in the Lord.”
- b) Where one party is not a believer, the Pastor shall counsel the member on the biblical implications and the risks to faith.
- c) The Session reserves the right to withhold solemnization if the union is judged to be contrary to the Word of God.

6) Divorce and Remarriage

- a) Divorce shall not be encouraged except in cases of adultery, abandonment, or grievous abuse, and only after exhaustive pastoral mediation.
- b) Any member seeking divorce shall first bring the matter to the Session for spiritual guidance and pastoral intervention.
- c) Remarriage after divorce shall only be permitted where biblical grounds exist and after approval by the Session and Presbytery.
- d) Widows and widowers may remarry in the Lord after a reasonable period of mourning, subject to pastoral counseling.

7) Family Responsibilities

- a) Christian parents are the first teachers of their children in faith, and are required to ensure that their children are catechized, and instructed in the Word of God and baptized.
- b) Husbands are commanded to love their wives sacrificially, and wives to respect their husbands, in line with Ephesians 5:22–33.
- c) The Session shall ensure regular family seminars, workshops, and retreats to strengthen marriages and family life.

8) Pastoral Oversight and Discipline

- a) The Session shall keep a Marriage Register of all marriages solemnized in the Church.
- b) Any member contracting marriage outside the laws of the country or contrary to biblical teaching shall be subject to pastoral discipline.
- c) Couples living together without lawful marriage shall not be admitted to the Lord's Supper until they regularize their union in accordance with the Church's and national requirements.

SECTION SIX: CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

1. Admission into Communicant Membership

- a) Every applicant must complete a course of catechism classes of not less than six (6) months, covering basic doctrines of SPCT, sacraments, worship practices, Christian ethics, and responsibilities of members.
- b) Applicants must undergo a membership interview with the Session of the Local Church, where their testimony of salvation and understanding of SPCT doctrine will be examined.
- c) Upon successful evaluation, the applicant shall be publicly received in a worship service, where they will affirm their faith before the congregation.
- d) A Membership Register shall be maintained at each Local Church, signed by the member and the Session Clerk.

2. Membership Roll and Records

- a) Each Local Church shall maintain an up-to-date membership roll with categories (communicant, pastoral, associate).
- b) The roll shall be reviewed annually by the Session, and inactive members shall be counseled, disciplined, or removed according to procedure.

3. Rights of Communicant Members

- a) Voting rights shall only be exercised after at least twelve (12) months of active membership.
- b) Only those in good standing (faithful in worship attendance, giving, and conduct) may be nominated for church offices.
- c) Members in open sin or under discipline shall not exercise voting or leadership rights until restored.

4. Duties of Members

- a) Every member must tithe regularly; Sessions shall keep financial records (confidential) to ensure accountability.
- b) Members who neglect worship, sacraments, or financial support for six (6) consecutive months without valid reason shall be visited by elders and counseled.
- c) Persistent neglect shall lead to suspension of rights and possible removal from the roll.

5. Pastoral Membership

- a) Ordained Pastors must hold a recognized theological qualification approved by the General Assembly, undergo background checks for moral integrity, and take an ordination vow affirming loyalty to SPCT's doctrine, discipline, and worship.
- b) Unordained Pastors must be recommended by the Session and approved by the Presbytery before appointment.
- c) Unordained Pastors shall serve under the supervision of an Ordained Pastor and may not administer sacraments.
- d) Eligibility for ordination requires at least three (3) years of faithful service, theological training, and moral approval.

6. Discipline and Termination

- a) Allegations of misconduct shall be submitted in writing to the Session (for members) or the Presbytery/General Assembly (for pastors).
- b) A disciplinary hearing shall be conducted where the accused is granted full right of defense.
- c) Suspension of membership may precede removal, to allow time for repentance and restoration.
- d) Removal shall be communicated in writing, and the member has the right to appeal step by step, without skipping any level.

7. Restoration of Members

- a) Members who repent after removal may apply for reinstatement.
- b) Restoration shall involve counseling, public confession if necessary, and re-registration into the membership roll.
- c) A restored member regains all rights and privileges after Session approval.

8. Associate Membership

- a) Associate Membership shall be available to Christians who temporarily reside within an SPCT locality, such as students, missionaries, workers on transfer, or visitors from partner churches.
- b) Associate Members shall enjoy fellowship, pastoral care, and participation in worship, but they shall not have the right to vote or to hold elective office in SPCT.
- c) Associate Members shall be encouraged to continue tithing and giving offerings in their home church, but may also contribute to SPCT voluntarily.
- d) Associate Membership shall be valid for the period of stay and must be renewed annually through the Session.
- e) Upon request, the Session shall issue a certificate of participation to Associate Members to affirm their fellowship and service during their time at SPCT.

SECTION SEVEN: ORDINATION PROCEDURES

1. Eligibility for Ordination

- a) A candidate must have completed a minimum of three (3) consecutive years of theological training in an SPCT-recognized institution.

- b) Must demonstrate sound doctrine, moral integrity, and evidence of pastoral calling and gifting.
- c) Must have completed supervised field ministry (internship/practical training) as assigned by the seminary or Church.
- d) Must be a full communicant member of SPCT.

2. Examination and Assessment

- a) Candidates shall undergo an **Ordination Examination**, prepared and administered by the Education & Theology Committee in cooperation with the Presbytery.
- b) The exam shall cover:
 1. Biblical and Systematic Theology;
 2. Practical Ministry (Preaching, Pastoral Care, Evangelism, Administration);
 3. Church Doctrine and Polity (SPCT Constitution, Discipline, Worship practices).
- c) Oral and written tests shall be required to evaluate spiritual maturity, clarity of calling, and readiness for pastoral leadership.
- d) A report from the candidate's training institution and internship supervisor shall form part of the evaluation.

3. Approval Process

- a) Results of the examination shall be submitted to the Presbytery Council for vetting.
- b) The Presbytery shall forward approved names to the Diocesan Council, which shall recommend candidates to the General Assembly.
- c) Final approval for ordination shall rest with the General Assembly.

4. Ordination Service

- a) The ordination shall be conducted in a solemn worship service, led by the General Moderator (or his representative), assisted by Presbytery and Diocesan leaders.
- b) Laying on of hands shall be done by ordained **pastors** and **elders**, accompanied by prayer, scripture reading, and charge to ministry.
- c) The service shall emphasize the holiness of the office, unity of the Church, and commitment to serve faithfully.

5. Required Commitments from Candidate

Before ordination, each candidate shall sign a Declaration of Commitment:

- a) To uphold the Word of God and the doctrine of SPCT;

- b) To serve faithfully and without greed;
- c) To maintain integrity in life, marriage, and ministry;
- d) To accept accountability to SPCT leadership at all levels.

6. Items to be Presented at Ordination

Upon ordination, the candidate shall be presented with:

- a) A **Certificate of Ordination**, signed and sealed by SPCT authorities;
- b) A **Bible** as the symbol of preaching and teaching authority;
- c) A **pastoral robe** (stole/gown) as a sign of office;
- d) White communion **cloths** for administering the Lord's Supper;
- e) The **Constitution** and Regulation of SPCT;
- f) A charge of ministry read publicly by the General Moderator.

7. Records and Custody

- a) All ordained pastors shall be recorded in the **National Register of Ministers** maintained at the General Secretary's office.
- b) Each pastor shall also be entered into the roll of ordained ministers at Presbytery and Diocesan levels.
- c) Certificates remain the property of SPCT and may be withdrawn in cases of suspension, discipline, or removal from office.

SECTION EIGHT: LEADERSHIP

1. Election of National Leaders

- a) Elections for all national offices shall be conducted during the General Assembly under the supervision of an independent Electoral Committee appointed by the Assembly.
- b) Nominations shall be submitted in writing at least three (3) months before the election date.
- c) Voting shall be by secret ballot, and winners declared by simple majority, except where the Constitution requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority.
- d) No candidate shall preside over or supervise the election in which he/she is contesting.

2. Induction and Handover

- a) Newly elected leaders shall undergo an induction program organized by the General Secretary's office within thirty (30) days of election.
- b) Outgoing leaders must prepare written handover reports and transfer all documents, property, and official seals to successors in the presence of a handover committee.

- c) Refusal to hand over shall be treated as misconduct and subject to disciplinary action.

3. Code of Conduct for Leaders

- a) Leaders at all levels shall maintain exemplary Christian character in public and private life.
- b) Leaders shall avoid favoritism, corruption, or misuse of office for personal gain.
- c) Leaders shall dress modestly and appropriately when representing the Church, especially in worship, meetings, and public functions.
- d) Any leader found guilty of gross misconduct shall be suspended pending investigation and may be removed by due process.

4. Accountability and Performance

- a) Each leader shall present quarterly reports of activities, achievements, and challenges to the council or assembly to which he/she is accountable.
- b) Leaders shall be evaluated every two (2) years by their respective assemblies, using performance criteria set by the General Assembly.
- c) Leaders who consistently neglect their duties without valid reasons may be subjected to recall elections.

5. Financial Integrity of Leaders

- a) Leaders responsible for finances (Treasurers, Secretaries, Moderators) must ensure transparency by submitting monthly and annual reports.
- b) All financial transactions must be supported by receipts, vouchers, or verifiable electronic records.
- c) Leaders shall declare any conflict of interest before engaging in financial or contractual dealings involving the Church.

6. Diocesan and Presbytery Leadership

- a) Dioceses and Presbyteries shall follow the same election and accountability procedures as the National level, adjusted to their scope.
- b) Records of elections, handovers, and financial statements at Diocesan and Presbytery levels shall be copied to the National Secretariat within sixty (60) days.
- c) Diocesan Moderators shall ensure all subordinate Presbyteries and Local Churches comply with national policies.

7. Local Church Leadership

- a) Each Local Church shall maintain a Session (Pastor and Elders) responsible for governance and discipline.
- b) Elections of Elders and Deacons shall be conducted in congregational meetings chaired by the Pastor, following prescribed eligibility criteria.
- c) Elders and Deacons shall take an oath of service before the congregation, pledging faithfulness to Christ and loyalty to SPCT.
- d) A Local Church must submit names of all elected officers to the Presbytery for registration and recognition.

8. Term of Office and Renewal

- a) The term of office for all leaders shall be five (5) years at National, Diocesan, and Presbytery levels, and two (2) years for Deacons at the Local level.
- b) Leaders may seek re-election, provided they remain in good standing and have no pending disciplinary cases.
- c) Early resignation must be submitted in writing with a three (3) month notice, unless waived by the responsible council.

9. Removal and Suspension from Office

- a) Grounds for removal include moral failure, heresy, financial misconduct, negligence, or insubordination.
- b) A leader under investigation shall be suspended with limited powers until the matter is resolved.
- c) Final removal shall only be effected by the authority of the General Assembly (for National Leaders), Diocesan Council (for Diocesan Leaders), Presbytery Council (for Presbytery Leaders), or Session (for Local Leaders).

10. Training and Development

- a) All leaders shall undergo continuous training in theology, administration, and leadership as organized by SPCT.
- b) Failure to attend mandatory leadership seminars without valid excuse may affect eligibility for re-election.
- c) Records of training and development shall be maintained at all levels for accountability.

11. Practical Rules for Elders

a) Pastoral Visitation

- 1) Elders shall organize a visitation schedule ensuring that every household in the Local Church is visited at least once every quarter.
- 2) Reports from visitations shall be submitted in writing to the Session, highlighting spiritual needs, social challenges, and recommendations for pastoral care.

b) Prayer and Teaching

- 1) Elders shall lead midweek fellowships, prayer meetings, and Bible study groups as assigned by the Session.
- 2) Each Elder shall take responsibility for at least one small fellowship group for consistent teaching and discipleship.

c) Baptism and Lord's Supper Preparation

- 1) Elders shall prepare candidates for baptism through catechism classes, ensuring understanding of Christian doctrine.
- 2) For the Lord's Supper, Elders shall assist the Pastor in preparing the table, serving elements, and maintaining the sanctity of the service.

d) Discipline and Reconciliation

- 1) Elders shall participate in church discipline processes by investigating complaints, encouraging repentance, and guiding reconciliation.
- 2) Confidentiality shall be maintained, and no Elder shall preside over a case where he is personally involved.

e) Meetings and Accountability

- 1) Elders must attend all Session meetings unless excused for valid reasons.
- 2) Absence from three (3) consecutive meetings without notice shall be grounds for review of service.

12. Practical Rules for Deacons

a) Charitable Ministry

- 1) Deacons shall maintain a register of members in need (widows, orphans, sick, elderly, disabled) and ensure regular assistance through food, visits, and financial support as available.
- 2) Emergency aid (for disasters, funerals, or crises) shall be coordinated by Deacons with approval of the Session.

b) Church Premises and Property

- 1) Deacons shall inspect church buildings weekly, ensuring cleanliness, maintenance, and safety.
- 2) They shall oversee ushers, cleaners, and security personnel as part of their duty of care.

c) Worship Support

- 1) Deacons shall prepare the sanctuary before services (arranging seats, sound equipment, communion elements, and liturgical materials).
- 2) They shall assist in maintaining order during services, including collection of offerings, guiding congregants, and supporting special events.

d) Financial Handling

- 1) Deacons shall count offerings immediately after services in teams of not less than two (2), recording amounts in the financial register before depositing to the bank.
- 2) No Deacon shall keep church money in personal custody beyond twenty-four (24) hours.

e) Term and Review

- 1) Deacons shall serve for two (2) years, subject to performance review by the Session and renewal by congregational vote.

- 2) Deacons may be rotated in specific responsibilities (charity, property, finances, worship) to ensure balanced service and growth.

13. Joint Duties of Elders and Deacons

a) Collaboration with the Pastor

- 1) Elders and Deacons shall work as one body under the leadership of the Pastor, ensuring unity in service.
- 2) Disagreements must be resolved in the Session before public ministry.

b) Training and Spiritual Growth

- 1) Elders and Deacons shall attend leadership training organized by the Presbytery or Diocese at least once per year.
- 2) Failure to attend two consecutive mandatory trainings without valid excuse may disqualify a leader from re-election.

c) Conduct and Example

- 1) Elders and Deacons shall model Christian life by demonstrating integrity, humility, hospitality, and faithfulness in family and work.
- 2) They shall avoid scandalous behavior (drunkenness, immorality, dishonesty) and report any challenge to the Session for pastoral support.

14. Operational Procedures for the Pastor's Office

a) Preaching and Teaching

- 1) The Pastor shall prepare and deliver at least one expository sermon every Sunday service, ensuring sermons are biblically sound, contextually relevant, and doctrinally consistent with SPCT.
- 2) The Pastor shall organize midweek Bible studies, ensuring systematic teaching of Scripture, catechism, and doctrine.
- 3) Preaching schedules shall be prepared quarterly and submitted to the Session for approval.

b) Sacramental Duties

- 1) The Pastor shall administer the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper in accordance with SPCT guidelines and liturgical order.
- 2) The Lord's Supper shall be celebrated monthly unless otherwise directed by the Session; only the Pastor or an ordained minister shall preside.
- 3) The Pastor shall ensure that elements (unfermented juice, bread/wafer) and vestments (robe for Pastor, robes for ordained Elders) are prepared and used in a dignified manner.

c) Pastoral Care and Counseling

- 1) The Pastor shall provide pastoral counseling to individuals, couples, and families, ensuring confidentiality and biblical guidance.
- 2) The Pastor shall visit the sick, bereaved, and members in distress at least once a month, assisted by Elders and Deacons.
- 3) A counseling register shall be maintained for accountability, without breaching confidentiality.

d) Administration and Supervision

- 1) The Pastor shall maintain regular office hours (minimum three working days weekly) for administrative duties, counseling, and prayer.
- 2) He shall supervise all church departments (youth, women, children, choir, evangelism) through regular reports submitted to the Session.
- 3) The Pastor shall oversee financial accountability by verifying weekly reports from Deacons before submission to the Treasurer.

e) Leadership and Representation

- 1) The Pastor shall preside over the Session and serve as chief representative of the Local Church in Presbytery meetings.
- 2) He shall maintain unity and discipline within the Local Church, ensuring disputes are handled according to the Constitution and Church regulations.
- 3) The Pastor shall represent the Local Church in community, ecumenical, and interfaith engagements as approved by the Session.

f) Spiritual Discipline

- 1) The Pastor shall model a holy life, being devoted to prayer, Bible study, and personal sanctification.
- 2) He shall avoid conduct that brings reproach to the Gospel, including immorality, dishonesty, or misuse of church resources.
- 3) The Pastor shall encourage fasting, intercession, and revival in the Local Church.

g) Training and Development

- 1) The Pastor shall mentor and train Elders, Deacons, and lay leaders for service, ensuring continuity of ministry.
- 2) He shall recommend potential leaders for theological training and ordination to the Presbytery.
- 3) He shall attend diocesan and national trainings, ensuring alignment with the broader mission of SPCT.

h) Reporting and Accountability

- 1) The Pastor shall submit quarterly reports to the Presbytery on the spiritual, financial, and administrative state of the Local Church.
- 2) Annual reports shall be presented to the congregation during the Local Church Assembly, subject to Session approval.
- 3) The Pastor shall be accountable to the Session, Presbytery, and ultimately the General Assembly.

15. Code of Conduct and Ethics for SPCT Leaders

a) Spiritual Integrity

- 1) Every leader shall be a born-again Christian, maintaining a consistent testimony of holiness, prayer, and moral uprightness.
- 2) Leaders shall abstain from all forms of immorality, corruption, dishonesty, substance abuse, and conduct that brings disrepute to the Gospel of Christ.
- 3) Leaders shall serve as examples to the flock, demonstrating humility, love, and faithfulness in all aspects of life and ministry.

b) Financial Integrity

- 1) Leaders shall be faithful givers of tithes and offerings in their Local Churches.
- 2) Leaders shall not misuse church resources or funds for personal gain.
- 3) No leader, especially pastors, shall be allowed to accumulate unpaid debts or live under the bondage of creditors, since financial irresponsibility destroys their witness before the Church and the outside community (cf. 1 Tim. 3:7).

c) Administrative Integrity

- 1) Leaders shall uphold transparency and accountability in all church records, finances, and decision-making processes.
- 2) All leaders shall safeguard official documents, funds, and property entrusted to them by SPCT.
- 3) Confidential information obtained through church service shall never be disclosed or misused.

d) Dress and Presentation

- 1) Leaders shall dress in a manner that reflects dignity, modesty, and the sanctity of their office.
- 2) Approved clerical shirt colors for pastors are: **black, white, navy blue (sea blue), maroon (blood-red)**, each worn with a clerical collar.
- 3) During official worship services, leaders are to appear in neat and dignified attire that inspires reverence.

e) Liturgical Vestments

- 1) During holy sacraments (Baptism and the Lord's Supper), weddings, and funerals, pastors shall wear an official **SPCT robe with a stole** to signify the sacredness of the occasion.
- 2) Elders assisting in the Lord's Supper shall also wear robes as a mark of order and reverence.
- 3) The Lord's Table shall always be handled with honor, using white cloths and prescribed elements (unfermented juice and bread/wafer).

f) Conduct During Worship

- 1) Leaders shall ensure that worship is orderly, God-centered, and free from disorderly behavior.
- 2) Leaders shall avoid using the pulpit for personal gain, self-promotion, or political agendas.
- 3) The benediction in worship shall only be given by an ordained pastor in good standing.

g) Mutual Respect and Cooperation

- 1) Leaders shall respect one another's offices, working together in love and unity without rivalry, jealousy, or abuse of authority.
- 2) Leaders shall submit to the decisions of the higher councils of SPCT and model obedience to church order.

h) Special Attire for Moderators

- 1) National and Diocesan Moderators shall wear **purple clerical shirts** with collars as their official attire to distinguish their office.
- 2) During official functions, Moderators shall also wear the robe and stole in accordance with SPCT liturgical identity.

16. Enforcement Mechanism for SPCT Leadership Code of Conduct and Ethics

a) Oversight Bodies

- 1) The General Assembly shall be the supreme authority in enforcing the Code of Conduct for all national leaders.
- 2) The Diocesan Council shall monitor and enforce the Code among Diocesan leaders.
- 3) The Presbytery Council shall monitor and enforce the Code among Presbytery leaders.
- 4) The Session (Local Church Council) shall monitor and enforce the Code among Local Church leaders (Pastors, Elders, and Deacons).
- 5) The Disciplinary Committees at each level shall act as the primary investigative bodies.

b) Monitoring and Accountability

- 1) Each leader shall submit an annual accountability report (spiritual, financial, and ministerial) to the appropriate council.
- 2) The Treasurer and Finance Committee shall monitor leaders' financial integrity, including possible indebtedness.
- 3) Regular peer review sessions shall be held during Presbytery and Diocesan meetings to ensure ethical compliance.

c) Reporting Violations

Any member of SPCT may lodge a complaint in writing concerning a leader's misconduct (spiritual, financial, or moral).

- 1) Complaints shall first be addressed to the relevant council (Session, Presbytery, Diocese, or General Assembly) without skipping levels.
- 2) Anonymous complaints shall not be considered unless accompanied by verifiable evidence.

d) Investigation Procedure

- 1) Upon receiving a complaint, the relevant Disciplinary Committee shall open an inquiry within 14 days.
- 2) The accused leader shall be given a fair hearing (written defense or oral defense).
- 3) The Committee shall complete investigations within 30 days and submit its findings to the governing council.

e) Progressive Disciplinary Steps

- 1) Verbal Warning – For minor breaches (e.g., dress code violations, late reporting).
- 2) Written Warning – For repeated or moderate violations. The warning is filed in the leader's record.
- 3) Suspension – Temporary removal (from 3 to 12 months) for serious violations (e.g., misuse of funds, persistent debt, neglect of duties).
- 4) Removal from Office – Permanent removal for gross misconduct (e.g., immorality, heresy, corruption, chronic indebtedness).
- 5) Excommunication – If misconduct involves unrepentant sin that disqualifies the leader from both office and fellowship, subject to the General Assembly's final decision.

f) Special Provisions on Financial Misconduct

- 1) Any leader who falls into chronic debt, bankruptcy, or financial scandals shall be investigated immediately.

- 2) Failure to resolve debts honorably shall be considered grounds for suspension or removal.
- 3) Leaders are prohibited from using their office to solicit loans or personal financial favors from members.

g) Appeal Rights

- 1) A leader disciplined at the Local Church level may appeal to the Presbytery Council.
- 2) A leader disciplined at the Presbytery level may appeal to the Diocesan Council.
- 3) A leader disciplined at the Diocesan level may appeal to the General Assembly, whose decision shall be final.

h) Restoration Procedure

- 1) A suspended or removed leader may be considered for restoration only after demonstrating genuine repentance, accountability, and correction.
- 2) Restoration shall require approval from the governing council that issued the original discipline, subject to oversight from the next higher council.
- 3) A public acknowledgment of repentance may be required for the sake of restoring trust with the congregation.

i) Liturgical and Dress Code Enforcement

- 1) Pastors must wear approved clerical shirts and collars during official duties. Non-compliance shall attract a written warning.
- 2) During sacraments, weddings, or funerals, failure to wear the official SPCT robe and stole shall be treated as misconduct.
- 3) Moderators failing to wear official purple clerical shirts at official functions shall be reprimanded.

17. Leaders' Financial Accountability Policy

a) Principle of Stewardship

- 1) All SPCT leaders are stewards of both personal and Church resources, and must demonstrate integrity, transparency, and faithfulness in financial matters.
- 2) Leaders shall live modestly, avoiding extravagance or greed, in line with biblical teaching (1 Tim. 3:3; Titus 1:7).

b) Personal Debt and Financial Conduct

- 1) Leaders shall not engage in reckless borrowing or incur debts they cannot repay within reasonable time.

- 2) Chronic indebtedness or default in loan repayments shall be considered misconduct and a breach of Christian testimony.
- 3) A leader who falls into serious financial scandal shall be subject to investigation by the Disciplinary Committee.
- 4) Leaders are forbidden from using their office to pressure members into providing personal financial assistance.

c) Church Funds and Assets

- 1) Leaders must not mix personal funds with Church funds; all Church monies must be deposited in official SPCT accounts.
- 2) No leader shall use Church funds for personal purposes without written authorization from the relevant governing council.
- 3) Misappropriation, embezzlement, or unauthorized borrowing of Church funds shall lead to immediate suspension pending investigation.
- 4) All Church assets (vehicles, buildings, equipment, etc.) must be used strictly for ministry purposes and not for private gain.

d) Allowances, Salaries, and Benefits

- 1) Salaries or allowances of full-time SPCT leaders shall be determined and approved by the relevant governing council.
- 2) No leader shall alter or increase their own allowance without council approval.
- 3) Benefits such as housing, transport, or insurance may be provided, but must remain within the means of the Church.

e) Financial Transparency and Reporting

- 1) Each leader shall submit an **annual personal financial disclosure statement** to the relevant council, confirming they are not under unmanageable debt.
- 2) All Church financial transactions shall be reported quarterly and annually, with full transparency to members.
- 3) Leaders must cooperate fully with both internal and external audits.

f) Conflict of Interest

- 1) Leaders must disclose any financial interest in contracts, tenders, or projects involving the Church.
- 2) No leader shall award contracts to themselves, their immediate family, or business partners without council approval.
- 3) Leaders must not use insider information from their office for personal financial advantage.

h) Lifestyle and Testimony

- 1) Leaders shall maintain a lifestyle consistent with Christian modesty and responsibility.
- 2) Leaders must avoid practices that may bring reproach to SPCT, such as gambling, reckless speculation, or dependency on members' finances.
- 3) A leader must be "above reproach," maintaining a good testimony even outside the Church community (1 Tim. 3:7).

SECTION NINE: PASTORAL RETIREMENT AND SUCCESSION

1. Retirement Age and General Provisions

- a) Every ordained pastor of SPCT shall formally retire at the age of seventy (70).
- b) Retirement shall be regarded as a **celebration of faithful service**, not a dismissal. The Church shall honor retired pastors publicly during a farewell service.
- c) No pastor shall hold executive office, exercise financial signatory authority, or administer sacraments after the official retirement date, except by special invitation for honorary purposes.

2. Notification and Transition Planning

- a) Twelve (12) months before retirement, the pastor shall give formal written notice to the **Session and Presbytery**, copied to the Diocese.
- b) The Presbytery shall initiate succession planning, including consultation with the congregation, the Session, and the Diocese.
- c) The outgoing pastor shall cooperate fully in ensuring a peaceful transition, avoiding favoritism or personal influence in the choice of successor.

3. Welfare and Honorary Status

- a) A retired pastor may be designated **Pastor Emeritus** by the Presbytery or General Assembly as recognition of exemplary service.
- b) Retired pastors remain part of SPCT fellowship and may preach, teach, or counsel **only upon invitation**, but cannot interfere in the leadership of their former congregation.
- c) The Church shall provide pastoral care and welfare support for retired pastors, including participation in pension or benevolence funds where available.

4. Succession of a Retiring Pastor

- a) Upon receiving the retirement notice, the Session shall forward the matter to the Presbytery, which shall officially declare the congregation "vacant."

- b) The Presbytery, in consultation with the Session and congregation, shall prepare criteria for calling the next pastor, ensuring that the candidate meets SPCT doctrinal, educational, and moral standards.
- c) The call process shall include:
 - 1) Announcement of vacancy to all qualified SPCT pastors.
 - 2) Prayerful discernment and recommendations by the Presbytery.
 - 3) Congregational participation through consultation meetings and, where applicable, congregational voting.
 - 4) Final confirmation and induction by the Presbytery.
- d) No pastor shall succeed himself by influence, family succession, or personal appointment.

5. Interim Pastoral Arrangements

- a) During the vacancy period, the Presbytery shall appoint an **Interim Pastor** or a team of elders to oversee the congregation until a new pastor is inducted.
- b) The interim arrangement shall not exceed twelve (12) months without approval from the Diocese.

6. Handover Procedures

- a) Before retirement, the outgoing pastor shall formally hand over:
 - 1) Church property, documents, and financial records.
 - 2) Membership rolls, baptismal registers, and marriage registers.
 - 3) All pastoral responsibilities to the Session and Presbytery.
- b) A handover ceremony shall be conducted in the presence of the Presbytery, the Session, and representatives of the congregation.

7. Extension of Service (Special Cases)

- a) Where an exceptional need arises (e.g., severe shortage of pastors), the Presbytery may petition the General Assembly to extend the service of a pastor beyond seventy (70) for **not more than five (5) years**, provided the pastor remains physically and spiritually fit.
- b) Such extension shall be considered extraordinary and not a general rule.

SECTION TEN: SUCCESSION RULES FOR CHURCH LEADERSHIP

1. General Principles

- a) Leadership succession in SPCT shall be **orderly, transparent, and spiritual**, guided by prayer and the authority of the Session, Presbytery, and Diocese.

- b) No office shall remain vacant beyond six (6) months without an appointed or elected successor.
- c) Nepotism, favoritism, or inheritance by family line shall not be recognized as legitimate succession.

2. Elders (Session Members)

- a) When an elder resigns, retires, or is removed, the vacancy shall be reported to the Session and Presbytery.
- b) The Session shall announce the vacancy to the congregation and invite nominations from among eligible members.
- c) Candidates must undergo vetting, including spiritual, moral, and financial standing, before being presented to the congregation.
- d) Election of new elders shall be conducted in a congregational meeting, and results confirmed by the Presbytery.
- e) Newly elected elders shall be ordained in a worship service led by the Pastor and confirmed by the Presbytery.

3. Deacons (Board of Deacons)

- a) In the case of vacancy, the Session shall oversee the nomination and election of a new deacon by the congregation.
- b) Candidates must be members in good standing, faithful in giving, and exemplary in service.
- c) Deacons shall be ordained by the laying on of hands in a public service.
- d) The Presbytery shall be notified of every change and shall confirm the ordination.

4. Departmental Leaders

- a) Departmental succession (Youth, Women, Children, Music, Evangelism, etc.) shall follow democratic elections supervised by the Session or Presbytery, depending on the level.
- b) Departmental leaders shall serve for a fixed term as set in departmental by-laws (normally 2–3 years).
- c) No leader may serve for more than two consecutive terms unless approved by the Session.
- d) Handover must include department records, financial statements, and future plans.

5. Presbytery and Diocesan Leaders

- a) When a Presbytery or Diocese leadership position falls vacant, the Presbytery/Diocesan Council shall appoint an interim officer until the next election.

- b) Elections shall be supervised by the Elections Committee of that level in accordance with SPCT guidelines.
- c) Outgoing leaders must submit written handover reports to their Councils before leaving office.

6. National Leaders

- a) Vacancies at the national level (Moderator, Secretary, Treasurer, etc.) shall be filled by a **special election session of the General Assembly** if the vacancy occurs mid-term.
- b) The Executive Council shall oversee interim arrangements until the General Assembly convenes.
- c) No national office shall be occupied by an acting leader for more than one (1) year without General Assembly approval.

7. Handover and Continuity

- a) Every leader, before leaving office, must prepare a **handover report** including:
 - 1) Financial accountability records.
 - 2) Ministry achievements and challenges.
 - 3) Pending programs or unresolved issues.
- b) A formal handover meeting shall be convened by the Session, Presbytery, or relevant Council.

8. Conflict Resolution in Succession

- a) If disputes arise in leadership succession, the matter shall be referred to the **Disciplinary Committee** of the relevant level.
- b) Appeals shall proceed step by step: Session → Presbytery → Diocese → General Assembly.
- c) No leader shall assume office until his/her succession is officially confirmed by the competent Council.

SECTION ELEVEN: COUNCILS

1. General Provisions (apply to all Councils)

- a) Each Council shall act within its constitutional mandate and in subordination to the higher Council.

- b) All decisions shall be recorded as formal resolutions with unique numbers (e.g., GA/2025/07/015).
- c) English or Kiswahili may be used; where both are used, the signed minute in the language of issuance controls.
- d) Observers may attend by prior written leave of the Chair; observers have no voice or vote.

2. Credentials and Representation

- a) Every sitting shall begin with a Credentials Report listing voting members present, alternates (if permitted), and observers.
- b) No proxy voting is allowed unless expressly authorized by these By-laws for a specific Council and session.
- c) A roll-call shall be taken at opening, before any election, and before any two-thirds (2/3) vote.

3. Notice and Call of Meetings

- a) Ordinary sessions: written notice and agenda shall be issued at least thirty (30) days for the General Assembly, fourteen (14) days for Executive, Diocesan and Presbytery Councils, and seven (7) days for Sessions and Congregational Meetings.
- b) Special sessions: notice shall state the single business to be transacted; only that business may be considered.
- c) Proof of service includes signed delivery, registered mail, or verifiable electronic dispatch.

4. Agenda and Order of Business

- a) Standard order: Devotions; Credentials; Adoption of Agenda; Reading & Approval of Minutes; Matters Arising; Reports (in order of subordination); Motions/Resolutions; Any Other Authorized Business; Benediction.
- b) A consent agenda may group routine items; any member may request extraction for debate.
- c) Late papers shall not be tabled without leave of the Chair and a simple majority.

5. Motions, Debate, and Voting

- a) Business is transacted by duly seconded motions reduced to writing and read before vote.
- b) Simple majority decides unless the Constitution or these By-laws require 2/3. Ties are defeated.
- c) Secret ballot shall be used for elections and disciplinary matters; open vote may be used for ordinary business.

- d) Abstentions are recorded but do not count as votes cast; conflicts of interest require recusal (see 10).
- e) A motion to reconsider may be moved only by a member who voted with the prevailing side and within the same session.

6. Minutes and Records

- a) The Secretary shall keep signed minutes, attendance, resolutions log, action tracker, and an exhibits register for all documents tabled.
- b) Minutes shall be circulated within fourteen (14) days and confirmed at the next sitting.
- c) Records shall be archived (digital and hard copy) for not less than ten (10) years at the competent Secretariat.

7. Reports and Accountability

- a) Each subordinate Council shall file an annual narrative and financial report to its superior Council by the deadlines set in the annual calendar.
- b) Reports must include: objectives, activities, outcomes, variances to plan, risks, finance summary, and decisions sought.
- c) Non-submission may trigger supervisory measures, including a compliance visit and temporary withholding of approvals.

8. Finance and Property Decisions

- a) Any motion with financial impact shall include a budget line, funding source, and implementation timeline vetted by the appropriate Finance Committee before debate.
- b) Expenditure outside an approved budget requires a virement or supplemental estimate approved by the Council that adopted the budget.
- c) Property transactions must attach legal due-diligence notes and the clearance pathway required by the Constitution and Trustees.

9. Special and Emergency Decisions

- a) Between sessions, the Chair with the Secretary may issue a circular resolution for urgent, single-issue matters; adoption requires a simple majority of voting members responding within the stated window.
- b) All circular decisions shall be tabled for ratification at the next ordinary sitting.

10. Ethics, Conflict of Interest, and Recusal

- a) Members shall disclose any personal, familial, or financial interest related to the matter under consideration.
- b) Upon disclosure, the Chair shall direct recusal from debate and vote; the Secretary shall record the recusal.

- c) Breach of this clause constitutes misconduct and may attract discipline.

11. Committees and Task Forces

- a) Councils may constitute standing or ad hoc committees with written terms of reference, deliverables, and tenure.
- b) Committees report to the constituting Council; they do not bind the Church unless their report is adopted.

12. Inter-Council Communication and Escalation

- a) Resolutions affecting a subordinate Council shall be communicated in writing within seven (7) days with clear actions and deadlines.
- b) Disputes of competence between Councils shall be referred upward one level; unresolved matters escalate to the General Assembly for a final determination.

13. Remote/Hybrid Meetings and Electronic Voting

- a) Councils may meet by secure audio-visual platforms; quorum and identity verification are mandatory.
- b) Electronic voting shall be conducted via a verifiable tool that preserves secrecy where required and produces an auditable report appended to the minutes.
- c) Members shall ensure confidentiality of meeting links and documents.

14. The General Assembly

- a) A Program Committee shall schedule the docket, allocate time, and manage floor control during sittings.
- b) National elections shall be run by an independent Electoral Committee; candidates shall not serve on that committee.
- c) Strategic plan reviews and national budgets must be tabled with committee reports at least thirty (30) days before the Assembly.

15. The Executive Council

- a) Acts as the implementing authority between General Assembly sessions; it shall maintain an "Implementation Matrix" tracking every GA resolution to closure.
- b) Quarterly management accounts and risk registers shall be reviewed and signed by the Executive before submission to the GA.

16. The Diocesan Council

- a) Shall adopt an annual diocesan plan aligning Presbytery targets, personnel deployment, and budget ceilings.

- b) Diocesan audit and compliance visits to Presbyteries shall be scheduled at least once per year with written follow-ups.

17. The Presbytery Council

- 1) Shall maintain a register of Sessions and officers, including terms of office and training compliance.
- 2) Pastorate vacancies, interim arrangements, and candidate examinations shall be processed at Presbytery level with written recommendations.

18. The Session

- a) The Session shall meet at least monthly for governance and shepherding, including review of attendance, discipline, catechism, visitation schedules, and sacramental calendar.
- b) A Membership Roll, Catechumens Roll, and Discipline Register shall be maintained and reported to the Presbytery annually.
- c) No financial commitment above the approved Local Church budget may be incurred without Presbytery clearance.

19. The Board of Deacons

- a) Operates under Session mandate with written assignments (charity cases, benevolence funds, facility care).
- b) All benevolence disbursements shall follow a simple case file (need assessment, approval, receipt) and be reported monthly to the Session.
- c) Deacons shall coordinate logistical support for worship (elements, vestments, seating, cleanliness) per the Worship By-laws.

20. The Congregational Council

- a) Notice of a Congregational Meeting shall include eligibility to vote, nomination procedures (where applicable), and access to reports at least seven (7) days in advance.
- b) Ballot counting shall be supervised by tellers appointed from members not standing for election; results are announced and recorded immediately.
- c) Major development proposals shall include feasibility, budget, and maintenance plans before adoption.

21. Compliance and Sanctions

- a) Persistent failure to meet By-law requirements (reports, audits, quorum practice) may attract remedial directives from the superior Council, including temporary suspension of certain approvals.
- b) Any action taken without quorum or contrary to these By-laws is voidable upon review by the competent superior Council.

22. Coming into Force and Review

- a) These operational guidelines take effect upon adoption by the competent Council and remain in force unless amended by the General Assembly.
- b) A triennial review shall be scheduled to ensure alignment with the Constitution and evolving operational needs.

SECTION TWELVE: ELECTIONS OF LEADERS

1. General Principles

- a) Elections shall be conducted in accordance with the Constitution of SPCT and these By-laws.
- b) The process shall reflect Christian integrity, transparency, and fairness, free from favoritism or corruption.
- c) All elections shall be conducted by secret ballot unless otherwise directed by the Constitution.
- d) The Electoral Committee shall be the only authorized body to manage the election process at every level.

2. Electoral Committee

- a) Shall be appointed at least six (6) months before any scheduled election.
- b) Membership shall exclude any individual who is a candidate for election.
- c) At least one-third of members shall be ordained elders to ensure integrity and spiritual oversight.
- d) The Committee shall prepare voter rolls, oversee nominations, distribute and collect ballots, and announce results.
- e) Observers may be invited from other councils to ensure transparency, but shall not vote or intervene in the process.

3. Eligibility of Voters

- a) Only registered communicant members in good standing may vote at Congregational level.
- b) Only duly accredited delegates may vote at Presbytery, Diocesan, or National level elections.
- c) Members under church discipline shall not exercise the right to vote until formally restored.

4. Eligibility of Candidates

- a) Candidates must be members in good standing who meet the qualifications prescribed for the office sought.
- b) No person under active discipline, or in arrears of tithes and offerings without valid reason, may be nominated.

- c) Written nominations shall be submitted within the announced timeframe and supported by at least two eligible nominators.
- d) A candidate may withdraw before the ballot is printed, but not thereafter.

5. Notice of Elections

- a) Notice of an election shall be issued at least sixty (60) days before the date of polling at national and diocesan levels, thirty (30) days at Presbytery level, and fourteen (14) days at Local Church level.
- b) The notice shall specify the offices to be filled, eligibility requirements, nomination procedures, and the date and place of the election.

6. Nomination Procedure

- a) Nomination forms shall be distributed by the Electoral Committee and must include candidate's details, consent to serve, and signatures of nominators.
- b) The Electoral Committee shall screen all nominations against the requirements of the Constitution and issue a final list of qualified candidates.
- c) Any appeal against disqualification shall be lodged within seven (7) days and determined by the superior council before the election date.

7. Campaign Guidelines

- a) Campaigning shall be dignified, focusing on qualifications and calling, not character attacks.
- b) The use of church property or funds for campaigns is strictly prohibited.
- c) Campaigns shall cease twenty-four (24) hours before polling day.

8. Voting Procedure

- a) Voting shall be by secret ballot, with ballot papers bearing the official stamp or signature of the Electoral Committee.
- b) Each voter shall vote once per office; spoiled ballots shall be set aside but recorded.
- c) Ballot boxes shall be transparent or sealed and opened only in the presence of the Committee and observers.

9. Counting and Declaration of Results

- a) Counting shall begin immediately after the close of polling, in the presence of candidates or their agents.
- b) Results shall be announced publicly by the Chair of the Electoral Committee.
- c) The Committee shall prepare a signed certificate of results, which shall be appended to the minutes of the relevant council.

10. Run-off Elections

- a) Where no candidate attains the required majority (simple majority or two-thirds, depending on the office), a run-off shall be held between the two leading candidates.
- b) The run-off shall be conducted immediately or within seven (7) days as determined by the Electoral Committee.

11. Appeals

- a) Any dispute concerning the conduct or results of an election shall be filed in writing within seven (7) days.
- b) Appeals shall be heard by the next higher council whose decision shall be final.
- c) Pending resolution of an appeal, the declared winner shall provisionally assume office unless otherwise directed.

12. Installation of Elected Leaders

- a) All elected leaders shall be formally installed through prayer and laying on of hands where applicable.
- b) National and Diocesan leaders shall be installed at the General Assembly or Diocesan Council respectively.
- c) Local Church leaders shall be installed in a congregational worship service.

13. Records and Archiving

- a) The Electoral Committee shall preserve all ballots, records, and related documents for not less than six (6) months.
- b) Certified copies of election reports shall be deposited with the Secretariat at the relevant level.

14. Transitional Provisions

- a) Outgoing leaders shall hand over all books, seals, records, and property of the office within thirty (30) days of the new leader's installation.
- b) A joint handover report shall be signed by both outgoing and incoming officers, witnessed by the Electoral Committee.

SECTION THIRTEEN: DEPARTMENTS OF SPCT

1. General Provisions on Departments

- a) Every department at Local, Presbytery, Diocesan, and National levels shall prepare its own operational by-laws consistent with the Constitution.
- b) Departmental leadership shall serve for five (5) years, renewable, subject to evaluation by the respective council.

- c) Departmental funds shall be raised through member contributions, designated offerings, and approved projects, and must be accounted for through proper records.

2. Youth Department

- a) Every Local Church shall ensure continuous catechism, mentorship, and discipleship programs for its youth.
- b) No youth camp or large gathering shall be convened without written approval from the Presbytery Council.
- c) National Youth Conventions shall be organized every three (3) years, rotating among Dioceses, under the oversight of the National Youth Coordinator.
- d) Participation in secular events shall require prior vetting to ensure alignment with Christian values.

3. Women's Department

- a) Women leaders at all levels shall establish training programs in family care, entrepreneurship, and Christian service.
- b) A quarterly fellowship shall be mandatory at the Presbytery level to review progress and prayer concerns.
- c) Women's projects generating income must be registered with the Session (Local) or Council (Presbytery/Diocese) and audited annually.
- d) National Women's Conferences shall be convened once every three (3) years under the National Women's Department.

4. Children's Department

- a) Sunday School curriculum shall be uniform across SPCT, prepared and distributed by the National Children's Department.
- b) Teachers shall undergo at least one (1) training seminar annually at Presbytery or Diocesan level.
- c) Children's Camps shall be approved and supervised by ordained pastors and at least two elders.
- d) Every Diocese shall organize an Annual Children's Camp, ensuring all Local Churches participate through their Sunday School programs.
- e) Safety and welfare measures, including medical care, food, accommodation, and child protection policies, must be in place before and during all Children's Camps.
- f) Parents and guardians shall be duly informed of camp details in writing, and no child may attend without parental/guardian consent.

- g) All financial contributions for Children's Camps (including registration fees, offerings, and donations) shall be properly receipted, recorded, and deposited into the designated Church account.
- h) The Camp Treasurer, appointed by the organizing committee, shall prepare a detailed report of all income and expenditure, which must be verified by the Session and submitted to the Presbytery or Diocesan Council.
- i) No camp funds shall be handled by a single individual; at least two authorized signatories shall be required for any withdrawal or payment.
- j) Any surplus funds from Children's Camps shall be remitted to the Diocesan Children's Department account for future programs, subject to proper accountability.

5. Music Department

- a) Every choir and music group must be registered with the Local Church Session. Independent groups are prohibited.
- b) Uniforms, song selections, and worship style must reflect reverence and unity, avoiding extremes that contradict SPCT doctrine.
- c) Music seminars shall be held annually at Presbytery level for capacity building.
- d) National Music Festivals shall take place once every three (3) years, under the National Music Department.
- e) All recordings, albums, or public performances using the name of SPCT must receive written clearance from the Diocesan Council.

6. Evangelism Department

a) Church Planting

- 1) A new Local Church may only be planted with written authorization from the Presbytery and confirmation by the Diocesan Council.
- 2) No pastor may transfer with his congregation to SPCT. If such a pastor seeks affiliation, he must:
 - 1. Submit a written application to the Diocesan Council.
 - 2. Hand over legal documents of land, buildings, or property to be re-registered under SPCT Trustees.
 - 3. Publicly affirm acceptance of SPCT doctrine and regulations.
- 3) A church planted under SPCT shall immediately begin registration in the name of SPCT, not the name of the planter.

b) National Conventions

- 1) SPCT shall hold a National Evangelism and Missions Convention once every three (3) years, hosted by rotating Dioceses.

- 2) Each Diocese shall organize preparatory conventions at least six (6) months prior to the national event.
- 3) The National Evangelism Department shall produce official teaching materials and prayer guides for each convention.

c) Operational Guidelines

- 1) Evangelism teams must always operate in pairs or groups, never singly, unless assigned by the Session.
- 2) Annual evangelism plans, including budgets, must be submitted to the Session/Presbytery for approval before implementation.
- 3) New converts shall be enrolled in catechism classes immediately, with baptism scheduled only after completion.
- 4) Evangelism materials (tracts, books, recordings) must be reviewed and approved by the National Evangelism Department.

SECTION FOURTEEN: CHURCH COMMITTEES

1. Disciplinary Committee

- a) Each level of the Church (Local, Presbytery, Diocese, National) shall maintain a standing Disciplinary Committee to address cases of misconduct.
- b) The Committee shall develop a written code of procedure, ensuring every accused person has the right to be heard before any recommendation is made.
- c) Confidentiality shall be strictly observed; minutes and case files shall be stored securely and accessed only by authorized persons.
- d) Members of the Committee must not preside over cases in which they have personal interest or conflict.
- e) A written report of all cases handled shall be submitted to the competent Council within fourteen (14) days after conclusion.

2. Planning and Finance Committee

- a) This Committee shall draft annual budgets, monitor income and expenditure, and submit quarterly reports to the competent Council.
- b) All accounts must be operated under dual signatories approved by the Council, one being the Treasurer.
- c) Receipts, vouchers, and supporting documentation must be filed and made available for inspection at any time.
- d) Independent audits shall be carried out annually by qualified auditors approved by the competent Council.

- e) The Committee shall maintain strict financial integrity: no member shall approve, receive, or disburse funds where he/she is a direct beneficiary.
- f) The Committee shall organize regular training for treasurers and departmental leaders on stewardship and accountability.

3. Development Committee

- a) The Committee shall design and propose short-term and long-term development projects (construction, education, health, agriculture, etc.) for approval by the Council.
- b) Every approved project must have a written project plan with timelines, budget, responsible officers, and monitoring framework.
- c) Progress reviews shall be conducted quarterly, and deviations from approved plans must be reported immediately to the Council.
- d) Partnerships with external stakeholders (government, NGOs, donors, private sector) shall be subject to prior approval by the competent Council.
- e) No contract or procurement shall be executed without at least three (3) competitive quotations, unless otherwise directed by the Council in writing.

4. Information and Communications Committee

- a) The Committee shall regulate all social media accounts and communication channels operating under the Church's name. No account shall be opened without prior written approval.
- b) Passwords, domain names, and access rights shall be securely stored and regularly updated, with at least two officers designated as custodians.
- c) All official communication to the public shall be cleared through the Office of the Secretary at the relevant level.
- d) Content published through Church media shall reflect Christian ethics: no abusive, partisan, or defamatory material shall be permitted.
- e) Annual media plans, including evangelistic campaigns, publications, and online programs, shall be submitted for Council approval.
- f) The Committee shall explore income-generating opportunities from media and technology (recordings, online broadcasting, publications), provided they align with the values of SPCT.

5. Education and Theology Committee

- a) The Committee shall coordinate all educational institutions and theological programs under SPCT, ensuring doctrinal consistency and academic quality.
- b) A uniform theological and catechetical curriculum shall be developed and distributed across all SPCT training centers.

- c) Faculty and staff of SPCT institutions shall be vetted and approved by this Committee before appointment.
- d) Regular in-service training, seminars, and workshops shall be organized for pastors, elders, and teachers.
- e) The Committee shall ensure every Bible school and college under SPCT is legally registered and compliant with national education laws.
- f) Annual academic reports, including enrollment, graduation, and financial performance, shall be presented to the National General Assembly.

SECTION FIFTEEN: CHURCH REVENUE AND PROPERTY

1. General Principles

- a) All revenue, contributions, and assets of SPCT shall be regarded as sacred resources dedicated to the work of the Gospel.
- b) Transparency, accountability, and stewardship shall govern every financial transaction and property management decision.
- c) No leader or member shall derive personal financial benefit from Church revenue or property, except in the form of duly approved allowances or reimbursements for official ministry expenses.

2. Offerings and Tithes

- a) Offerings shall be collected in every official worship service, with designated Deacons/Elders responsible for counting in pairs or groups.
- b) Tithes shall be encouraged from every member; receipts shall be issued for each tithe.
- c) Every congregation shall maintain a register for weekly offerings and monthly tithes, signed by at least two officers after counting.
- d) Offerings collected shall be banked within forty-eight (48) hours, unless exceptional circumstances are authorized by the Session.

3. Evangelism and Special Contributions

- a) Contributions specifically designated for evangelism and church planting shall be accounted for separately and applied strictly for that purpose.
- b) National evangelistic conventions shall be funded by a combination of member contributions, designated offerings, and approved external donations.
- c) Special projects (construction, missions, humanitarian relief) may only conduct fundraising with prior written approval from the competent Council.

4. Donations and External Support

- a) Donations from domestic or foreign benefactors shall be vetted by the Planning and Finance Committee before acceptance.
- b) No donation shall be accepted if it compromises SPCT's doctrinal position, governance autonomy, or public testimony.
- c) All donations shall be formally receipted and acknowledged, with public records presented to the next Congregational or Council meeting.

5. Banking and LIPA Numbers

- a) Every Church unit shall operate one official bank account in the full registered name of that unit.
- b) At least three (3) signatories shall be maintained: Treasurer, Secretary, and Moderator (or equivalent officer at that level). Any withdrawal shall require two of these, including the Treasurer.
- c) **LIPA Numbers** or mobile money accounts shall only be opened with prior written authorization from the National level and must be linked to the Church's official bank account.
- d) All digital platforms (mobile money, online giving, POS) shall be reconciled monthly with official bank statements.

6. Church Property Management

- a) All movable and immovable property (land, buildings, vehicles, equipment, books, instruments, etc.) shall be entered into an Asset Register maintained at each level.
- b) The Board of Trustees shall keep certified copies of all property documents and submit an annual property report to the General Assembly.
- c) No land or property shall be transferred, leased, or mortgaged without prior written authorization of the National General Assembly.
- d) Each Local Church shall conduct an annual verification of assets, signed by the Pastor, Treasurer, and two Elders, and filed with the Presbytery.
- e) Property used for worship, education, or ministry purposes shall not be repurposed for private business without explicit Council approval.

7. Financial Reporting and Audits

- a) Local Churches shall submit monthly financial reports to the Presbytery; Presbyteries shall submit quarterly reports to the Diocese; Dioceses shall submit consolidated reports annually to the National level.
- b) Internal audits shall be conducted semi-annually; external audits shall be conducted annually by auditors approved by the General Assembly.

- c) The annual audit report shall be presented publicly at the General Assembly and summarized to members of Local Churches during Congregational meetings.
- d) A special audit may be commissioned at any time if allegations of mismanagement arise.

8. Accountability Rules

- a) No offering or tithe shall be received, counted, or deposited by a single individual. At least two officers must be present at all times.
- b) The Lead Pastor and his/her spouse shall not be involved in direct custody or counting of funds except in newly planted churches without appointed officers, and only with Session authorization.
- c) Officers found guilty of embezzlement, misappropriation, or falsification of records shall face both disciplinary measures of SPCT and legal consequences under the laws of Tanzania.
- d) Church officers at all levels shall undergo regular training in financial management and ethical stewardship.

SECTION SIXTEEN PASTORAL ALLOWANCES AND WELFARE

1. General Principle

- a) Every ordained and serving pastor of SPCT shall receive a regular allowance from the Local Church he or she serves, as a form of welfare support and not as a salary in the commercial sense.
- b) The purpose of the allowance is to ensure dignity, sustenance, and family stability for pastors, in accordance with biblical principles of ministerial support.

2. Determination of Allowances

- a) Each Presbytery or Diocese shall establish a framework for determining the level of pastoral allowances, considering the economic capacity of congregations within its jurisdiction.
- b) Minimum thresholds may be recommended nationally, but flexibility shall be allowed to suit local realities.
- c) Allowances shall be reviewed periodically, at least once every three (3) years, to reflect economic changes.
- d) Every Local Church shall organize a monthly contribution dedicated to the welfare of its pastor.
- e) Each Presbytery and Diocese shall review available income and ensure that a reasonable allowance is provided to their respective officers and ministers.

3. Additional Guidelines on Pastoral Benefits

a) Pastors may be supported with:

- 1) **Monthly Allowance.** Each Local Church shall provide a regular monthly allowance to its pastor for basic family needs.
- 2) **Housing Provision.** Where possible, a parsonage shall be provided, or housing allowances arranged, for the Lead Pastor.
- 3) **Training Support.** Pastors shall be assisted to attend seminars, professional conferences, or further studies for their ministry development.
- 4) **Family Bereavement Support.** In the event of a family death, the Local Church and Presbytery shall provide financial and spiritual support.
- 5) **Food Assistance.** Pastors may be supported with food supplies or special packages during times of need.
- 6) **Worship Attire.** Churches shall assist pastors in obtaining official robes or worship garments as needed.
- 7) **Annual Leave.** Pastors shall be granted annual leave, during which their duties are delegated appropriately.
- 8) **Counseling and Spiritual Care** – Pastors shall also receive access to counseling and spiritual support for their own well-being.

b) Each Diocese/ Presbytery/Session shall ensure that part of its budget addresses pastoral welfare.

4. Social Security and Savings

- All pastors shall be enrolled in recognized national social security schemes (e.g., NSSF or equivalent).
- Presbytery and Diocesan leadership shall coordinate contributions to secure retirement benefits.

5. Accountability

- All allowances shall be processed transparently, recorded in financial reports, and audited as part of Church finances.
- No pastor shall independently set or adjust his/her allowance; decisions shall be made by the competent Council (Session, Presbytery, or Diocese).
- Withholding or misuse of pastoral allowances constitutes financial misconduct and may lead to disciplinary measures.

6. Special Support

- In cases of sickness, disability, or hardship, additional support may be mobilized by the Presbytery or Diocese.
- A National Solidarity Fund may be established to support pastors in extraordinary situations.

SECTION SEVENTEEN: BOARD OF TRUSTEES

1. Appointment and Vetting of Trustees

- a) The General Assembly shall appoint Trustees only after a thorough vetting process that includes background checks on integrity, financial discipline, and legal standing.
- b) No candidate shall be recommended unless he/she has served SPCT faithfully for not less than five (5) consecutive years in leadership, ministry, or committed membership.
- c) Each nominated Trustee shall submit a written declaration of assets and liabilities to the General Assembly before confirmation.

2. Oath of Office

- a) Upon confirmation, every Trustee shall take an oath before the General Assembly to serve faithfully, to protect Church property, and to act solely in the interest of SPCT.
- b) The oath shall be recorded in the minutes of the General Assembly and kept in the archives of the National Office.

3. Property Registration and Documentation

- a) All titles, deeds, and registration documents shall bear the legal name “The Registered Trustees of Shekinah Presbyterian Church Tanzania.”
- b) Copies of property documents shall be kept both at the National Office and at the Board of Trustees’ archive.
- c) Digital copies shall also be created and stored in a secure electronic system with controlled access.

4. Meetings and Reporting

- a) The Board of Trustees shall meet at least twice annually, and whenever urgent property matters arise.
- b) Minutes of all meetings shall be prepared, signed by the Chairperson and Secretary, and submitted to the General Assembly within thirty (30) days.
- c) An annual comprehensive report of all Church property, acquisitions, disputes, and registrations shall be presented to the General Assembly.

5. Conflict of Interest

- a) A Trustee shall not use his/her position for personal or family gain.
- b) Trustees shall declare any conflict of interest in writing and shall abstain from deliberations or votes concerning the matter.
- c) Failure to declare conflict of interest shall be grounds for immediate removal.

6. Use of the Seal

- a) The official seal shall be kept under dual control: the Board Chairperson and Secretary must both be present whenever the seal is affixed.
- b) The seal shall only be used for:
 - 1. Property transfers and registrations.
 - 2. Official contracts, leases, and agreements duly approved by the General Assembly.
 - 3. Legal representations required by law.
- c) Unauthorized use of the seal shall constitute gross misconduct.

7. Removal and Replacement of Trustees

- a) If a Trustee resigns, dies, or is removed, the General Assembly shall fill the vacancy at its next session.
- b) **Interim** appointments may be made by the Executive Council but must be ratified by the General Assembly within twelve (12) months.

8. Accountability and Legal Compliance

- a) Trustees shall ensure full compliance with Tanzanian property laws, land laws, and regulations of RITA.
- b) No property transaction shall proceed without written legal opinion from an accredited advocate.
- c) Trustees are personally liable for negligence or misconduct leading to loss of Church property.

SECTION EIGHTEEN: DISPUTE RESOLUTION OPERATING GUIDELINES

1. Submission of Complaints

- a) All complaints must be presented in written form, signed and dated.
- b) The receiving officer (Secretary of the Committee at that level) shall stamp and register the complaint in the official Dispute Register Book.
- c) A receipt copy shall be issued to the complainant within two (2) working days.

2. Handling and Documentation

- a) Every case shall be assigned a unique reference number for tracking.
- b) Files shall be stored securely in both physical and digital formats, accessible only to authorized officers.
- c) No case shall be processed without a complete file, including all supporting documents and communication records.

3. Communication with Parties

- a) Notifications of hearings shall be delivered in writing and, where possible, via electronic means (SMS/Email) for faster communication.
- b) Both parties must acknowledge receipt of notice; failure to acknowledge shall not invalidate the process if proof of delivery exists.

4. Hearing Procedures

- a) Hearings shall open and close with prayer.
- b) Proceedings must follow orderly conduct; interruptions, insults, or threats shall result in disciplinary sanctions.
- c) Witnesses, if any, shall testify under the guidance of the Chairperson; questions shall be routed through the Chairperson to avoid direct confrontation.
- d) At least three (3) members of the Committee must be present for a valid sitting.

5. Confidentiality Rules

- a) All proceedings and records shall remain confidential.
- b) Committee members are prohibited from discussing cases outside official sessions.
- c) Breach of confidentiality shall be treated as misconduct.

6. Timelines Management

- a) All deadlines mentioned in the Constitution (such as review, hearings, or appeals) shall be strictly monitored by the Secretary.
- b) The Secretary shall keep a Timeline Compliance Chart to ensure no step exceeds the prescribed timeframe.

7. Appeals Management

- a) Appeals shall be filed in triplicate: one copy for the appellate body, one for the opposing party, and one for archival records.
- b) All appeals must be accompanied by proof of having exhausted the lower level's mechanism.

8. Preventive Practices

- a) Each Diocese shall hold at least one (1) annual training for pastors and elders on Christian conflict resolution and mediation skills.
- b) Local Churches shall encourage reconciliation at early stages through pastoral counseling before formal escalation.
- c) Informal mediation efforts shall be documented to demonstrate attempts at reconciliation prior to filing formal complaints.

9. Enforcement of Decisions

- a) Once a decision is issued, implementation must begin within seven (7) days unless otherwise stated in the ruling.
- b) The Secretary of the relevant Council shall monitor compliance and submit a follow-up report at the next scheduled meeting.

SECTION NINETEEN: AMENDMENT PROCEDURES

1. Submission of Proposals

- a) All amendment proposals must be submitted in hard copy and electronic format to the Office of the General Secretary.
- b) A receipt number shall be issued to the proposer, and a copy of the proposal filed in the **Amendment Register**.
- c) Proposals must clearly indicate the article number, proposed change, and a written justification.

2. Screening of Proposals

- a) The General Secretary shall acknowledge and review submissions within fourteen (14) days.
- b) Incomplete proposals or those without reasons shall be returned to the proposer for correction within thirty (30) days.

3. Circulation

- a) Proposals accepted for consideration shall be translated into both English and Kiswahili (where necessary) and circulated to all dioceses through official communication channels.
- b) The Executive Council shall ensure delivery at least two (2) months before the General Assembly, with proof of receipt from each Diocese and Presbytery.

4. Pre-Assembly Consultation

- a) Each Diocese shall hold at least one (1) consultation meeting to deliberate on the proposed amendment before the General Assembly.
- b) Minutes of such consultations shall be submitted to the Executive Council for record.

5. Voting Arrangements

- a) Ballot papers shall list the specific amendment proposals with options: "For Amendment" and "Against Amendment."
- b) Votes shall be counted openly in the presence of scrutineers appointed by the General Assembly.

6. Record Keeping

- a) All amendment proceedings shall be documented in full, with audio and written minutes preserved in the National Archive of SPCT.
- b) A certified copy of any passed amendment shall be submitted to the Registrar of Societies within thirty (30) days.

7. Post-Approval Implementation

- a) Once approved by the Registrar, the updated Constitution shall be printed, dated, and sealed.
- b) Copies shall be distributed to all levels (National, Diocese, Presbytery, Local Churches) within sixty (60) days.
- c) Old versions shall be withdrawn to avoid parallel use.

SECTION TWENTY: DISSOLUTION AND DISPOSAL OF PROPERTY

1. Initiation of Dissolution

- a) Any motion to dissolve the Church must be formally written and signed by at least one-third (1/3) of the General Assembly members or initiated by an order of Government/Court.
- b) Such motions shall be registered with the General Secretary, who shall circulate notice within seven (7) days.

2. Verification of Quorum

- a) Before voting on dissolution, attendance must be verified by the Credentials Committee to ensure that the two-thirds (2/3) quorum requirement is met.
- b) Attendance registers must be signed by all participants.

3. Safeguarding Assets

- a) Immediately upon commencement of dissolution proceedings, the Board of Trustees shall freeze all bank accounts and secure property records.
- b) No assets may be disposed of until a lawful resolution is passed.

4. Asset Transfer Process

- a) The Board of Trustees shall conduct a full inventory of all movable and immovable assets within thirty (30) days.
- b) Assets shall be valued by an independent auditor appointed by the General Assembly.
- c) All transfer deeds must bear the seal of the Board of Trustees and be lodged with the Registrar of Societies.

5. Settlement of Liabilities

- a) Creditors shall be notified in writing and through public notice (newspaper or radio) within fourteen (14) days of a dissolution resolution.

- b) Verified debts shall be settled before distribution of remaining assets.

6. Designation of Beneficiary Institution

- a) The General Assembly, in consultation with the Board of Trustees, shall identify one or more Christian institutions of similar faith to inherit remaining assets.
- b) The Registrar of Societies must approve the beneficiary institution before transfer.

7. Record of Dissolution

- a) The entire process of dissolution shall be recorded in certified minutes signed by the Moderator, General Secretary, and the Board of Trustees.
- b) A final dissolution report shall be filed with the Registrar of Societies and copies archived in SPCT records.

SECTION TWENTY ONE: OPERATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR SEALS

1. Authorization of Use

- a) No seal shall be affixed without a written minute, resolution, or instruction from the competent council at the respective level.
- b) Every application of a seal must be accompanied by the signature of at least two authorized officers (e.g., Moderator and Secretary at that level).

2. Record Keeping

- A **Seal Register** shall be maintained at every level where a seal exists. The Register shall contain:
 - Date of use
 - Document title and reference number
 - Names and signatures of authorizing officers
 - Purpose of affixing the seal
- Each entry must be confirmed by the custodian of the seal.

3. Security and Custody

- a) Seals must be kept in lockable cabinets, accessible only to the authorized custodian.
- b) Loss, theft, or suspected duplication of a seal must be reported immediately to the National Office and recorded in writing.
- c) No seal shall be loaned or transferred informally between officers.

4. Design Standards

- a) Any new or replacement seal must conform to the national design template approved by the National Office.
- b) The design shall not be modified without approval of the General Assembly.
- c) Defaced or worn-out seals shall be surrendered and destroyed under supervision, with a replacement registered officially.

5. Misuse and Discipline

- a) Unauthorized use of a seal constitutes gross misconduct and shall attract disciplinary measures, including possible removal from office.
- b) In cases of suspected forgery or fraudulent use, legal action shall be taken in accordance with national law.

6. Special Provision for Trustees' Seal

- a) The Trustees' Seal shall only be used on property titles, legal contracts, or court-related documents.
- b) Every use must be recorded in a **Trustees' Seal Register** and co-signed by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

SECTION TWENTY TWO: AMENDMENT OF GUIDELINES

- 1) These Guidelines may be amended at any time by resolution of the General Assembly of SPCT, provided that such amendments are consistent with the Constitution of the Church.
- 2) Proposals for amendment shall be submitted in writing to the General Secretary at least three (3) months before the sitting of the General Assembly.
- 3) Amendments shall be deliberated openly, with adequate opportunity for members to provide input prior to adoption.
- 4) Interim recommendations for amendment may be initiated by the Executive Council, but no change shall take effect until ratified by the General Assembly.
- 5) In urgent matters, the General Assembly may call a Special Session specifically to deliberate on amendments, subject to the required quorum.
- 6) Amendments shall require approval by a two-thirds (2/3) majority of eligible members present and voting at the General Assembly.
- 7) Once approved, amendments shall be circulated in writing to all levels of the Church (National, Diocesan, Presbytery, and Local) within sixty (60) days of adoption.

- 8) The Constitution of SPCT shall remain the supreme and binding authority; no amendment to these Guidelines shall override, conflict with, or diminish its provisions.
- 9) The amendability of these Guidelines is not to be interpreted as instability, but as a means of ensuring flexibility, relevance, and faithful service to God’s mission.

SECTION TWENTY THREE: DECLARATION OF ADOPTION

1. Archiving of Adoption Records

- a) The signed and sealed copies of the adopted Constitution shall be archived in three forms:
 - 1. Hard copy at the National Headquarters.
 - 2. Certified copies lodged with RITA and the Registrar of Societies.
 - 3. Digital copies stored securely in the Church’s central database.

2. Circulation of the Constitution

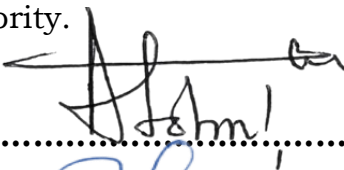
- a) Within sixty (60) days of adoption, printed copies must be distributed to all Dioceses, Presbyteries, and Local Churches.
- b) A soft copy shall be circulated officially via SPCT digital platforms to ensure universal accessibility.

3. Signatures and Seal Authentication

- a) The General Moderator and General Secretary must sign in the presence of at least two witnesses, whose names and signatures shall also appear.
- b) The National Seal must be affixed in red or blue ink for official authentication.

4. Date and Version Control

- a) Every adopted edition of the Constitution shall carry a clear adoption date, year, and version number.
- b) Superseded versions must be collected and withdrawn from circulation to avoid parallel authority.

GENERAL MODERATOR.....

GENERAL SECRETARY.....



APPENDIX

Leadership Application Form

Leadership in the Church of Jesus Christ is both a sacred calling and a solemn responsibility. In accordance with the Constitution of SPCT and the Word of God, every leader is expected to serve with humility, integrity, and faithfulness, as a steward of Christ and His people.

This application form is provided to ensure that all candidates for leadership positions within SPCT are carefully examined, guided by the principles of Scripture, the Statement of Faith, and the operational guidelines of our Church.

All applicants are therefore required to:

- Provide truthful and complete information.
- Demonstrate commitment to the doctrines, worship, and mission of SPCT.
- Uphold moral and spiritual integrity in personal life and public witness.
- Accept accountability to the governing bodies of SPCT at every level.

By completing this form, you acknowledge your willingness to serve Christ's Church with diligence and to submit to the authority and discipline of SPCT, "not lording it over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock" (1 Peter 5:3).

Section A: Personal Information

- Full Name: _____
- Date of Birth (DD/MM/YYYY): _____
- Age: _____
- Gender: _____
- Nationality: _____
- Marital Status: _____
- Spouse's Name (if applicable): _____
- Number of Children (if any): _____

Section B: Contact Information

- Residential Address: _____
- Phone Number: _____
- Email: _____

Section C: Church Membership

- Local Church: _____
- Presbytery: _____
- Diocese: _____
- Date of Baptism: _____
- Length of Membership in SPCT: _____ years

Section D: Education & Training

- General Education (highest level attained): _____
- Theological Training (institution & qualification): _____
- Other Professional Qualifications: _____

Section E: Leadership Experience

- Current Position in SPCT: _____
- Previous Positions Held: _____
- Years of Service in Ministry/Church: _____
- Specific Contributions to SPCT: _____

Section F: Doctrinal & Spiritual Commitment

1. Do you affirm your faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior?
 Yes No
2. Do you fully subscribe to the **SPCT Constitution and Statement of Faith**?
 Yes No
3. Are you committed to uphold Christian ethics and financial integrity in leadership?
 Yes No

Section G: Position Applied For

- General Moderator
- Deputy Moderator

- General Secretary
- Deputy General Secretary
- Treasurer
- Diocesan Moderator / Secretary / Treasurer
- Presbytery Chair / Secretary / Treasurer
- Local Church Pastor / Elder / Deacon
(Select one)

Section H: References

Provide details of **three referees** (at least one ordained SPCT pastor):

1. Name: _____ Contact: _____
2. Name: _____ Contact: _____
3. Name: _____ Contact: _____

Section I: Declaration by Applicant

I, _____, hereby declare that:

- The information provided in this application is true and accurate.
- I am willing to serve in the office applied for with integrity, humility, and accountability.
- I accept that any false information or misconduct shall result in disqualification or removal from office.

Signature of Applicant: _____

Date: _____

Section J: Recommendation

(To be completed by the Local Church Session/Presbytery/Diocese)

We hereby confirm that the above applicant is a member in good standing and meets the spiritual, moral, and educational qualifications required.

Name & Signature of Session Clerk: _____

Date: _____

Seal/Stamp of Local Church: _____

Membership Form

1. Personal Information

- Full Name: _____
- Date of Birth: _____
- Gender: Male Female
- Marital Status: _____
- Contact (Phone/Email): _____
- Address/Residence: _____

2. Spiritual Information

- Date of Baptism: _____
- Place of Baptism: _____
- Salvation Testimony (brief): _____

3. Commitment

I, the undersigned, affirm my commitment to:

- Uphold the faith and doctrine of SPCT.
- Participate faithfully in worship, sacraments, and church programs.
- Contribute regularly through tithes, offerings, and other approved collections (including bereavement support).
- Support the unity and mission of the Church in word and deed.

4. Declaration

I hereby apply for membership in SPCT and pledge to abide by its Constitution, guidelines, and lawful decisions.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

5. For Official Use Only

- Received by (Name/Position): _____
- Local Church/Presbytery: _____
- Membership No.: _____
- Approved by Session on (Date): _____