

# THE CHURCH OF PENTECOST HEADQUARTERS

## 45<sup>TH</sup> GENERAL COUNCIL DECISIONS – ISSUES OF CONCERN

### a. Ministerial Formation

The council took the decision to adopt a unified theological educational model in the ministerial formation of our Ministers and Elders. This will be done using the Church's higher educational institutions. Henceforth, all new entrants worldwide will be enrolled on a BA Theology programme.

The Elders Training Programme to be run by Pentecost University will kick-start soon.

### b. New Ministries

- **Schools Outreach Ministry and Chieftaincy ministry:** In pursuance of Possessing the Nations agenda of Vision 2023, two new ministries have been formed. They are Schools Outreach Ministry and Chieftaincy ministry. The Schools ministry will be under the auspices of the Area Head. These compliments the efforts of the PENZA Traveling Secretaries.
- **Campus Pastors:** In response to the growing need for closer pastoral care among students, the Council has also taken the decision to operate the Resident PENZA Campus Pastor Concept, as spelt out by Vision 2023, starting this year.

### c. Candidates for Full Time Ministry

Candidates to be called into the full time ministry should be within their 20s and early 30s.

### d. Ministers' Wives Working outside Duty Stations

The Council took the decision to encourage our wives who are professionals to as much as possible, avoid working far away from their duty stations. This is to forestall the situation where the pastor's wife is out of home and duty station for weeks. The Council considered this practice to be unhealthy for the progress of work in the districts.

### e. Women in Leadership Positions

The Council in its deliberations appreciated the enormous role our women play in the running of the church at all levels of the Church. Already it was observed that our women are part of the highest decision-making bodies at the various levels of the church – the Local, District and Area presbyteries as well as the General Councils.

In exploring the possibilities of enhancing their already functional roles in the administrative structures of the Church, the Council agreed to co-opt our District, Area and National Women's leaders and their Assistants into the Executive Committees at the various levels. This the Council believes will give our women much more space in leadership at all levels of the church. However, in nations where the culture and the understanding of people may pose a challenge, National Heads were to confer with the IMD in the implementation of this decision.

#### **f. Funerals**

- **Memorial Services in Church Auditorium:** Regarding funerals, the Council decided that whenever it became needful, memorial services of deceased members may be held in the church auditorium.
- **Funerals of Deceased Ministers and Ministers' Wives:** As a reminder, the Council reiterated that funerals of deceased ministers and ministers' wives are regional based. If for any reason, one would have to travel outside the region for such funerals, he or she should seek permission from the Area Head.

#### **g. Crowded Programmes**

Crowded programmes were to be avoided to create more room for the local church to operate and as well enhance marriage and family life of our members. Area Heads were advised to desist from the use of Ministry Meeting weeks for other purposes. Again, instances where some Heads use the Lord's Supper Weeks for Area level meetings was to be discouraged.

#### **h. CoP not being a Unionized Institution**

The Council, deliberating on issues regarding the non-ministerial staff of the Church, called for the need to orient them to understand and align themselves to the mission of the Church. This according to the Council, will streamline their outputs as well as their demands within the frame of the Church's mission and vision.

#### **i. Pre-marital Counselling and related Issues**

- **Counselling:** Ministers and their wives were encouraged to be actively involved in pre-marital counselling of would-be couples.
- **Parental Consent:** The practice where the parents of would-be couples are required to travel long distances on the invitation of marriage committees for the purpose of ascertaining their consent is to be discouraged. Rather, Ministers were encouraged to liaise with colleague Ministers of the Districts where these parents reside for such tasks.
- **Redefinition of Existing Marriages:** Ministers were also to note that the church's definition of existing marriage has not changed. Since the church has not redefined existing marriage, Ministers are advised to stop considering marriages as existing when the would-be couple engage in pre-marital sex during courtship. Should such an unfortunate issue arise, ministers are advised to counsel and encourage them to complete the process of registration, payment of dowry and move on as a married couple without the formal wedding. The practice where such cases are considered as an existing marriage and brought to church for a formal wedding without veiling is not acceptable. Such marriages may be considered at a later date and blessed without a veil. Preferably during a mass wedding. Would-be couples are admonished to stay chaste.

#### **j. Ministerial Handbook**

Ministers were directed to consciously take officers through the Ministerial Handbook to orient them on its contents as a means of equipping them for effective ministry in our Local Assemblies.

#### **k. Enhancing the Usage of Publications by the Church**

The Council decided that Literature Committees are to be constituted at the Local and the District levels to promote the sale and reading of the Church's publications.

#### **l. Addressing Challenges**

Despite the successes chalked in 2020, reports from the Areas pointed to the fact that we still have a lot of work to do in the following areas:

- i. The non-availability of leaders in our rural Districts due to high levels of illiteracy and the migration of people with the requisite potential to big towns and cities for greener pastures;
- ii. The provision of decent shelter for our local assemblies currently worshipping under trees and in classrooms;

- iii. Attendance to evening services as well as Ministry meetings;
- iv. High number of backsliders; and
- v. Welfare issues at the grassroots.

Each Area is requested to have a collective reflection on these challenges and map up appropriate strategies to tackle them for effective ministry. Detailed reports on these planned strategies are to be sent to the office of the Chairman on or before June 30, 2021.

### **m. National Population Census**

Leaders and members were encouraged to take the 2021 national population census exercise very seriously.