

Handbook For Christian Sisters

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Handbook
For
Christian Sisters

SECTION I

DEFINITION OF A CHRISTIAN SISTERS' SOCIETY

The Christian Sisters' Society of The Unity of the Brethren Church is an organization of all women in the community who are over 16 years of age and who wish to cooperate in building the Kingdom of God in the community. (In this Handbook the term **society** refers to the local organization and the term **Union** refers to the statewide organization of the various local societies.)

PURPOSE (1962)*

The purpose of the Christian Sisters' Society is:

1. To deepen the spiritual lives of the women of the church and to encourage them to bear personal witness to Christ.
2. To promote the welfare of the church by supporting its spiritual, educational, financial, and social efforts.
3. To increase the knowledge of and participation in worldwide Christian missions.
4. To unite in Christian fellowship all the women of the Church.
5. To promote the effectiveness of Hus School and the conference programs by assisting
6. To take responsibility for the alleviation of suffering wherever it may arise.

GOAL

The goal of the Christian Sisters' Society is "Every Unity of the Brethren woman enlisted for Christ and active in the work of the local church."

GENERAL PLAN

The plan for a Christian Sisters' Society as suggested in this handbook is flexible and comprehensive; it can be adapted to the needs of any church and it allows each local group to choose its own course of study. The membership of a Society is open to all women over 16 years of age who are members or friends of the local church. However, a member is not qualified to hold an office in a Society or be a delegate to a Union convention unless she is a member of a Unity of the Brethren Church.

Each local organization is subject to the counsel of the Pastor and under the guidance of the local Board of Elders.

EXPECTED RESULTS

This plan, if prayerfully and systematically promoted among the women of the Unity of the Brethren Churches, should bring about the following results:

1. An increased knowledge of and interest in the work of the entire church. Through the study program of the local groups women acquire a broader knowledge of the Bible and a greater vision of the needs and opportunities entrusted to the members of the Unity of the Brethren.

Dates in parentheses indicate the year revisions were made.

2. Growth in the spiritual lives of the women of our Church through Bible study, worship and sharing in Christian experiences.
3. An increase in the number of women actively participating in Christian service. This result is accomplished largely through the work in the local groups, which provide opportunity for service and for association with other women in the church.
4. The strengthening of fellowship and friendship.
5. The development of leadership. Through giving women definite tasks and expecting an accounting of their responsibility, the Christian Sisters' Society offers growth in leadership.

SECTION II

(These By-Laws are only suggested and should be adapted to each local Society's needs and are not valid in any local Society unless they are adopted by the members of the Society.)

SUGGESTED BY-LAWS AND STANDING RULES

FOR A

LOCAL CHRISTIAN SISTERS' SOCIETY

ARTICLE I - NAME (1962)

This organization shall be called: The Christian Sisters' Society of the Brethren Church of:

(Town or Community)

ARTICLE II - - - - - PURPOSE (1962)

The purpose of the Christian Sisters' Society is:

1. To deepen the spiritual lives of the women of the church and to encourage them to bear personal witness to Christ.
2. To promote the welfare of the church by supporting its spiritual, educational, financial and social efforts.
3. To increase the knowledge of and participation in world-wide Christian missions.
4. To unite in Christian fellowship all the women of the Church.
5. To promote the effectiveness of Hus School and the conference programs by assisting in the maintenance and improvement of the Hus School Encampment, by inspiring young people to attend Hus School and the Conferences and by financially aiding young people who need such assistance in order to attend.
6. To take responsibility for all alleviation of suffering wherever it may arise.

ARTICLE III - - - MEMBERSHIP

1. Any woman who is over 16 years of age and is a standing member of the Unity of the Brethren Church is eligible for membership in the Christian Sisters' Society.
2. Also any woman who is not a member of the Church, but who wishes to be associated in the work of the Society and wants to conform to the duties of the Christian Sisters, stating her desire to the officers, may be accepted to membership in a regular meeting. (Such members do not have voting rights on matters pertaining to the Union, the Church or the Unity and cannot be elected to administrative office in the Society or as a delegate to a Union convention.)
3. Membership for women described in Article III No. 1 and 2 who are living far from Unity of The Brethren Congregations and/or a Christian Sisters' Society or who were members of a newly disbanded society may become members of the "Society-at-large". The President, Vice President,

Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer of the Christian Sisters Union shall be its officers. (2016)

4. Annual membership dues are set by each local Society.
5. The Christian Sisters' Society has the authority to discharge a member who has been lax in her duties. This must be done in a regular meeting.
6. The Christian Sisters' Society supports the work of the Christian Sisters' Union by sending its annual membership dues to the Union which are set by the Union convention.
7. Membership in the Society is voluntary and terminates on oral or written request to the secretary or other officer stating reasons for withdrawing.

ARTICLE IV - - - GOVERNMENT

The Christian Sisters' Society shall be subject to the counsel of the local pastor and under the general guidance of the local Board of Elders.

ARTICLE V - - - ORGANIZATION OR ADMINISTRATION

1. The duly elected officers and the chairmen of the standing committees shall constitute the Executive Committee.
2. The officers of the Christian Sisters' Society shall consist of a President, Vice-President, Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretary, Financial Secretary and a Treasurer.
3. Standing committees shall be as follows: Program and Study, Mission Study and Mission Projects, Hospitality, Christian Service and Welfare, Finance and Projects, Membership, Flower, Building and Grounds, Publicity and Social.
4. Standing committee members shall be appointed annually and should be contacted and agree to serve before the committees are announced.
5. Members of standing committees shall be appointed by the president and other elected officers.
6. In each committee at least one member who served on the Committee for the preceding year should be reappointed to the same committee for another year.
7. Decisions on any subject are determined in a regular meeting by a majority vote of members present in the meeting.
8. Elections of officers and delegates must be announced in a regular meeting before the annual meeting for such elections. Administrative officers shall be elected annually by secret ballot in the meeting which was previously announced. (See Article VII, Section 4.)
9. Special committees are appointed by the President and Vice-President.
10. All meetings shall begin and end with prayer. Regular meetings start with worship and study of the Bible or some phase of Christian work.
11. Regular meetings shall be held monthly. They shall be held in the church building or in the homes of members. Special meetings shall be held according to need and shall be called by the President or decided upon by members at any meeting.

ARTICLE VI - - RIGHTS AND DUTIES OF MEMBERS

1. All members should use their rights of voting and of discussion as long as they are members of the Christian Sisters' Society. (See Article III, Section 2.)
2. It shall be a sacred duty of each member to try to live a true Christian life.
3. Each member shall attend all meetings regularly, if possible.

4. Each member shall support the Christian Sisters' work by regular payment of dues.
5. Each member shall make contributions to benevolences and shall cooperate in the work of the Christian Sisters.
6. A special duty of the Christian Sisters' Society is to be a member of the Christian Sisters' Union and to cooperate in its larger program of home and world missions, general benevolences and projects.

ARTICLE VII - - - NOMINATION, ELECTION, AND TERM OF OFFICE

1. A woman must be a member of The Unity of the Brethren Church and should be a member of the Society for at least one year in order to hold an office in the Christian Sisters' Society or be a delegate to the Union Convention.
2. At the annual meeting, after nominations from the floor or nominations by ballot, the election shall proceed by ballot except as provided in Section 3.
3. When there is but one candidate for the office, the election by ballot may be dispensed with and the election proceeds by acclamation.
4. The officers shall be divided into two groups, each group to be elected for a term of two years as follows:
 - (a) Even number years: President, Vice-President and financial secretary (if there is one).
 - (b) Odd numbered years: Recording Secretary, Treasurer and Corresponding Secretary (if there is one).
5. One officer may be elected to the same office for only two consecutive terms - - thus no person may serve in the same office for more than 4 years.
6. A majority of the votes of the members present shall constitute a quorum
7. The annual meeting and election of officers shall be held in December or earlier, if desired. (2016)
8. New officers shall assume office at the January meeting. (2016)
9. The fiscal year of the local society shall be January 1 to December 31. (2016)
10. The retiring officers shall complete the year's business and shall surrender to their successors all books and papers pertaining to their respective offices in a special meeting of both the retiring and the new officers to be held before the first regular meeting of the new year of work. In this meeting the retiring officers shall explain the duties of their respective offices to the new officers and answer any questions the new officers may have concerning the work of the Society.

ARTICLE VIII - - - DUTIES OF OFFICERS

PRESIDENT

- * The President shall preside at all regular meetings of the Christian Sisters' Society and of the Executive Committee and she shall call special meetings when necessary. She shall perform all the customary duties of this office.
- * She shall lead the officers in appointing the members of the standing and special committees and filling vacancies occurring in office.
- * She shall represent the Christian Sisters' Society in the larger program of the church.
- * She shall present in writing to the Christian Sisters' Society at the close of the fiscal year, a report of the year's work with recommendations for the coming year. A copy of this report is to be filed with the recording secretary.

- * She shall actively advance all phases of work of the Christian Sisters' Society and shall be ex-officio member of all committees.
- * She shall cast her vote only in case of a tie.

VICE –PRESIDENT

- * The Vice-President shall assist the President in carrying on the work of the Society and in the absence of the President shall assume the duties of the Office of President.
- * She shall be chairman of the Program and Study Committee.

RECORDING SECRETARY

- * The Recording Secretary shall keep in permanent form the minutes of the Society and of the Executive Committee.
- * She shall be custodian of all records of both the Society and the Executive Committee.
- * She shall keep an accurate membership roll.
- * If there is no publicity Committee, she shall assume the responsibility of the organization's publicity.

CORRESPONDING SECRETARY

- * The Corresponding Secretary shall conduct the correspondence of the Society and the Executive Committee and shall keep a record of such correspondence.
- * She shall send a list of the name of officers and chairmen of standing committees to the Union Secretary at the beginning of the new fiscal year.
- * She shall be chairman of the Christian Service and Welfare Committee.
- * In the absence of the Recording Secretary, she shall read and take minutes of the meetings.

FINANCIAL SECRETARY

- * The Financial Secretary shall receive and record all income (cash and checks) and then forward it to the Treasurer.
- * The books of the Financial Secretary shall be audited at the close of each fiscal year.

TREASURER

- * The Treasurer shall receive all income of the Society from the Financial Secretary.
- * She shall pay bills and disburse funds as directed by the Executive Committee and in accordance with the budget adopted by the Society.
- * She shall be responsible for ordering and purchasing of all literature requested by the various committees and approved by the Executive Committee.
- * She shall compile the annual financial report of the Society, present it at the last meeting of the fiscal year and file a copy with the Recording Secretary.
- * The Treasurer shall serve as chairman of the finance committee.
- * The books of the Treasurer shall be audited at the close of each fiscal year.

ARTICLE IX - - - DUTIES OF STANDING COMMITTEES

1. **THE PROGRAM AND STUDY COMMITTEE** - - of which the Vice –President shall be chairman, seeks to deepen the spiritual lives of the women of the church through devotional programs during the opening portion of each of the Society's meetings and through interesting and instructive study periods, either before or after the business session of the meetings. This committee strives to give all members an opportunity to participate in the devotional and study portions of the meetings.
2. **THE MISSION STUDY AND MISSION PROJECTS COMMITTEE** - - shall promote the study of missions, both home and world and shall suggest and supervise projects to aid in promoting the mission work of the Society.

3. **THE HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE** - - seeks to promote a spirit of Christian fellowship among the members of the Society and throughout the entire Sunday School, Church and Community.
4. **THE CHRISTIAN SERVICE AND WELFARE COMMITTEE** - - of which the Corresponding Secretary shall be chairman, gathers information on the needs and possibilities of service in the Sunday School, Church, Hospitals, Schools and the Community as a whole and announces its findings to the Society. After the Society selects a project of service, this committee supervises the project to its completion. This committee shall also maintain contact with the sick, the shut-ins, the bereaved, the aged and the needy of the Church and the community through visits, cards, gifts of food or clothing, or other suitable tokens of concern.
5. **THE FINANCE AND PROJECTS COMMITTEE** - - shall have as its chairman the Treasurer of the Society. At the beginning of the fiscal year, this committee shall prepare and submit to the Executive Committee a budget covering the items of expense for various undertakings of the year. After the Executive Committee has studied and approved the budget, it shall be submitted to all members of the Society for approval or rejection or adjustment. The Finance Committee shall plan and supervise all money raising projects decided upon by the Society.
6. **THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE** - - of which the Recording Secretary is chairman, shall promote attendance through personal contacts, telephone calls, and any other means considered helpful. This committee shall endeavor to interest every woman of the Church to become a member of the Society. The committee shall also investigate the cause of all absences of members from a Society meeting.
7. **THE FLOWER COMMITTEE** - - shall provide fresh flowers in the sanctuary at every Church service. It shall also provide floral decorations in the sanctuary, or the Society's meeting place, on special occasions. If it is the desire of the Society to send flowers to the sick and to funerals of deceased members of the Church, this committee fulfills this decision.
8. **THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE** - - shall be responsible for the neatness and readiness of the Society's meeting place at all times. It may also take over the janitorial duties in the sanctuary if needed. This committee shall supervise the upkeep of the flowerbeds around the Church buildings if needed.
9. **THE PUBLICITY COMMITTEE** - - shall be responsible for all publicity considered helpful to the Society and its activities.
10. **THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE** - - shall plan all social functions of the Society and shall apportion the duties connected with these functions to various members of the Society.

ARTICLE X - - EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. The administrative officers of the Society and the chairman of standing committees shall constitute the Executive Committee.
2. The Executive Committee shall have general supervision over the affairs of the Christian Sister's Society and shall do creative planning for its program. In planning the Society's work, the Executive Committee shall strive to carry out all the recommendations of the Union.
3. The Executive Committee shall refer to the Society all proposed matters with recommendations for the Society's final decision and action.
4. The Executive Committee takes care of all emergency matters concerning the Society's work which occur between meetings. Any such action shall be reported to the Society for ratification at the next meeting.

ARTICLE XI - - MEETINGS

1. The regular meetings of the Executive Committee shall be held monthly during the _____ week of the month.
2. The standing committees shall meet monthly during the _____ week of the month.
3. The meetings of the Christian Sisters' Society shall be held monthly during the _____ week of the month.
4. The last meeting of the fiscal year (December) shall be designated as the annual meeting. (2016)
5. Special meetings of the Christian Sister's Society shall be held at the call of the President, or upon the written request of 5 members.

ARTICLE XII - - QUORUM

1. Any number of the members attending a properly announced meeting of the Christian Sisters' Society shall constitute a quorum for a normal business session.
2. After proper announcement, one-third of the total membership of a Society shall constitute a quorum for the annual meeting and important business sessions.

ARTICLE XIII ORDER OF BUSINESS FOR MEETINGS OF THE CHRISTIAN SISTERS' SOCIETY

1. Call to Order
2. Devotional Program (Song, Prayer, Scripture reading or meditation)
3. Roll Call
4. Reading and approval of minutes
5. Reports of officers
6. Reports of chairmen of standing committees
7. Reports of chairmen of special committees
8. Reading of correspondence and announcements
9. Old or unfinished business
10. New business
11. Study period (conducted by the program and study committee with various members participating. The study period may be combined with the devotional program at the beginning of the meeting, if desired.)
12. Meeting adjourned (Prayer)

ARTICLE XIV - - AMENDMENTS

1. These By-Laws may be amended at any business meeting of the Christian Sisters' Society by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided notice of the proposed amendment has been given at a previous regular business meeting.
2. All such amendments shall be submitted in writing and signed by 2 members.

SECTION III

SUGGESTED PLAN OF WORK
FOR
THE CHRISTIAN SISTERS' SOCIETY
IN A LOCAL CHURCH

The work of the Society is planned in accordance with the recommendations made by the Biennial Convention of the Christian Sisters' Union and should be carried out through the following:

THROUGH MEETINGS

- * **General Meetings**
The membership holds monthly meetings either day or evening. A well-balanced program of spiritual growth, missionary education, fellowship and service should be carried out in these meetings.
- * **Executive Committee Meetings**
The officers and chairmen of standing committees constitute the Executive Committee which should meet monthly to compile reports and make plans for the work of the entire organization.
- * **Biennial Conventions**
Each Society sends delegates to the Biennial Convention of the Christian Sisters' Union.

THROUGH TRAINING ITS LEADERS

- * **Training Sessions**
One or more meetings of the Society's officers and chairmen of standing committees should be held before they take up the work of the year. The topics for consideration should include the By-Laws, duties of officers and chairmen of standing committees; study materials and any other subjects of value to the Executive Committee.
- * **Instructions at Executive Committee Meetings**
A short time may be used by the President at each monthly Executive Committee meeting for any timely instruction or inspiration in accordance with the needs of the local organizations.

THROUGH THE STUDY PROGRAMS

- The officers and program leaders plan the study programs and work of the Society with emphasis on spiritual growth, missionary education, fellowship and Christian service.
- * **Emphasis on Spiritual Growth**
The Christian Sisters' Society stresses the importance of spiritual growth in the lives of its members. This development is fostered by the monthly Bible study in meetings, by encouraging all members to participate in public and private worship, to practice Christian stewardship and to be Christian witnesses. The Society emphasizes united prayer and encourages members to develop the habit of personal prayer so that they may lay hold of Divine Power for the Word of God on earth. The World Day of Prayer offers an opportunity for united intercession with women of other denominations, races, and nations.
 - * **Emphasis on Missionary Education**
The program and study committee along with the mission study and mission projects committee are encouraged to work together in presenting programs to make the entire Society more aware of: (1) the importance of mission work and (2) the Society's responsibility in supporting with prayers and finances the various areas of mission work recommended by the Union Members are also urged to read the monthly publication of the Church, "**The Brethren Journal**," the local

church newsletters, bulletins and other current publications, and background material concerning the life and history of the Church. These materials offer an opportunity for the women to be well-informed on the affairs and work of their own Church and the entire Christian Church throughout the world.

* **Emphasis on Fellowship**

Everyone recognizes the need for a friendly attitude and atmosphere in the life of the Church. The Christian Sisters' Society promotes this spirit of fellowship wherever and whenever possible—especially by visits and by expressing sympathy in time of sickness and sorrow. Members of the Society can also be of invaluable service to the pastor of the local church by providing him/her with the names and addresses of families moving into the community and by inviting new families to the services of the church and in other ways showing them Christian hospitality.

* **Emphasis on Christian Service**

Various ways are open to the women of our Church to express their love, compassion and concern for people and to give proof of their own Christian attitudes toward all other persons. Such service and such expression are practical Christianity at work and are the outgrowth of sincere love and loyalty to Christ. Service projects may be recommended by the delegates of each local Society in the Union through the Christian Sisters' Biennial Convention. The members of a Society should cooperate with the Christian Service and Welfare Committee in completing successfully at least one service project each year.

THROUGH STEWARDSHIP OF TIME, TALENTS AND MONEY

Christian stewardship should be basic in all of the areas of work in the Christian Sisters' Society. Some members have one gift—some another. Each is God's steward of what talents she may possess. The Christian Sisters' Society has a place for every woman, and every woman has a place in the Society.

The Society shows the general need and opportunity for extending Christ's Kingdom through the channels of our Church, and its budget offers a medium for and encourages systematic and proportionate giving.

The Society should endeavor through programs, leaflets, articles in Church papers and spoken messages by its leaders to stress the tithe as the minimum of giving as emphasized in the Bible.

THROUGH FINANCES

The Society has its own set membership dues. It also urges each member to make freewill offerings at its meetings - - when a benevolent cause arises. The Society should prepare and adopt a budget at the beginning of its fiscal year. The Union recommends that the benevolent causes included in the Society's budget be those which the Christian Sisters' Union and The Unity of The Brethren sponsor. The budget should also include the expense of running the local society with its special projects, as well as contributions for the work of the Christian Sisters' Union. All contributions to the work of the Christian Sister's Union are mailed to the Financial Secretary of the Union and after she makes proper records she mails all checks to the Treasurer of the Union for deposit or distribution as indicated by the checks. All checks supporting funds which are held by the Union's Treasurer are made payable to The Christian Sisters' Union (2010). Checks to other various funds are made payable directly to the fund desired.

THROUGH WORK WITH WOMEN OF OTHER CHURCHES

The Christian Sisters' Society is a strong factor in the development of womanhood of The Unity of the Brethren, both educationally and spiritually. The organization is a means whereby the women may be brought into closer fellowship with their Lord and Savior and be led into broader Christian service in the home, the Church, the community and the world.

Local Councils of Church Women offer the opportunity for worship, study, fellowship and service with other Christian women of the community.

SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES FOR COMMITTEES

1. **THE PROGRAM AND STUDY COMMITTEE** - - has the responsibility of planning and directing both the devotional programs and the study periods for the Society's meetings. The devotional program and the study period of a meeting may be combined at the beginning of the meeting or they may be separated with the devotional program coming before the business meeting and the study period coming after the business meeting.

The devotional program may be defined as a time of worshipping God and meditating upon His will for our lives. The devotional program should set a spiritual tone for the entire meeting and give members inspiration for daily living. It may consist simply of a hymn, the reading of a passage of scripture, and a prayer or it may be enlarged to include a few words about the meaning of the scriptural passage and its application to life, or a poem, or additional hymns. Occasionally including the story behind a familiar hymn will add variety to the devotional program and give inspiration to the women. It is also suggested that if a Society has regular voluntary offerings at each of its meetings that this offering be made a part of the devotional program to show that we worship God with our gifts of money as well as our hymns and prayers.

The study periods of a Society's meetings may be devoted to intensive study of various books of the Bible, or lessons on such topics as: suggestions for private and family worship; Christian stewardship; Church history; areas of Christian service; and mission work. If desired, the Program and Study Committee may call upon the Mission Study and Mission Projects Committee to present the programs on mission work.

2. **THE MISSION STUDY AND MISSION PROJECTS COMMITTEE** - -should circulate missionary information as provided by The Unity of the Brethren Mission Board; promote individual and united prayer for missions; present special missionary programs and make recommendations to the Society for special missionary projects concerning both the home and world missions.

In addition to regular financial support of The Unity of the Brethren Mission Fund some possible special mission projects of a Society may be:

- * regularly sending money gifts to CARE, CROP and other such organizations;
- * adopting and sponsoring an orphan child in a foreign country'
- * helping to establish Sunday Schools, Churches and Christian Sisters' Societies of the denomination in communities where there are not any.

3. **THE HOSPITALITY COMMITTEE** - - seeks to promote a spirit of Christian fellowship among the members of the Society and throughout the entire Sunday School and Church. To do this the committee may provide two or more persons for each Sunday morning to greet and welcome members and visitors at the Sunday School and Church Service. Persons may also be appointed to greet and welcome visitors to regular Society meetings. The committee may provide transportation for individuals needing transportation to Society meetings, Sunday School or Church Services. The committee should visit new families and non-church families of the community to invite them to attend the Sunday School, Church and Society meetings. The committee can also assist the Pastor by giving his/her names and addresses of new families and inactive members in the community.

4. **THE CHRISTIAN SERVICE AND WELFARE COMMITTEE** - - A service project is an act of Christian thoughtfulness for which no return is expected except the joy of being used for the good of others.

It shall be the regular responsibility of the Christian Service and Welfare Committee to remember the sick, the shut-ins, the bereaved, the aged, and the needy of the Church and the community through visits, cards, gifts of food or clothing, or other suitable tokens of concern.

This committee also gathers information on the needs and possibilities of service in the Sunday School, Church, local hospitals, school and the community as a whole and announces its findings to the Society. The Society shall carefully consider the possible avenues of service reported by the committee and choose the ones it wishes to support. After the Society has selected a special area for service, it shall be the job of this committee to see that the service project is carried out to its completion. Some suggestions for special service projects are:

- * arrange for transportation to the doctor's office, hospital or shopping for those who need it;
- * arrange for and supervise help with household chores where needed;
- * sponsor Vacation Bible School;
- * provide a nursery for babies and small children during the Church services;
- * sponsor educational and social activities for young and old in the community;
- * provide refreshments and entertainment for U.S.O. units, Veterans' Administration Hospitals and Homes for the Aged;
- * collect and repair toys for a children's ward of a hospital;
- * collect and send clothes to Church World Service for distribution among the needy all over the world.

5. **THE FINANCE COMMITTEE** - - at the beginning of the fiscal year, prepares a budget covering the items of expense for various undertakings of the year. This budget is first submitted to the Executive Committee for its approval or adjustment and then to the Society for adoption.

This committee also gathers money – raising ideas and recommends suitable ones to the Society whenever the raising of funds is necessary. Once the Society has selected a money-raising project, it is the responsibility of the Finance Committee to supervise the project and see that it is carried to its completion.

In selecting a money – raising project, a Society should select projects suitable for a Christian Sisters' Society. This committee may refer to the Union Secretary's Locals Reports to Convention for suggested suitable money-raising projects.

6. **THE MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE** - - In addition to personally contacting members by various methods to notify them of meetings, the membership committee may conduct membership drives and contests. This committee investigates reasons for absences from meetings. It also keeps in close contact as to the various needs of the members and then reports these findings to other committees for their action.
7. **THE FLOWER COMMITTEE** - - Enlists the cooperation of all members in furnishing flowers for all Church activities, services, and for special occasions as needed.
8. **THE BUILDING AND GROUNDS COMMITTEE** - - May conduct periodical "clean up and planting days" with the help of all the members that can participate. Landscaping the church grounds with shrubs and flowers can also be a good project for this committee.
9. **THE PUBLICITY COMMITTEE** - - Sends notices of special activities to the local Church newsletter, the newspapers in the community and to "**The Brethren Journal**." To advertise special programs or worship services, posters may be placed in business establishments in addition to newspaper advertisements.
10. **THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE** - - Suggests regular social functions for the Society. Once the Society decides on the social activity it wishes to hold, the committee plans the social, apportions necessary duties among the Society's members and supervises the activity to its completion. The social functions planned by this committee are for fellowship and not for the purpose of raising money. Some possible suggestions for such social activities are family covered dish dinners or suppers, ice cream or watermelon suppers, birthday parties, joint meetings with other nearby Societies or other women's groups, breakfast following Easter sunrise service; etc.

SECTION IV

DEFINITION OF THE CHRISTIAN SISTERS' UNION

The Christian Sisters' Union is an organization composed of all the local Christian Sisters' Societies in the State of Texas banded together for the purpose of accomplishing the work of the local Societies on a larger scale.

OBLIGATIONS OF THE LOCAL SOCIETY TO THE CHRISTIAN SISTERS' UNION

1. The Society should be prompt in sending annual membership dues after the end of each fiscal year (December 31) to the Union Financial Secretary with the check made payable to the Christian Sisters' Union treasurer. (2016) The name of the local Society and the number of members should be designated on the check. (1974)
2. The Society should support the projects and funds recommended by the Union.
3. Immediately after the Society's elections of officers, the Secretary of the Society should mail a list of the names and addresses of the incoming officers (especially the President and the Secretary) to the Union's Secretary.
4. The Society should keep an accurate record of its activities and projects throughout the year so that the biennial questionnaire can be promptly filled out and returned to the Union's Secretary. (Deceased sisters' deadline will be the same as questionnaire. Deceased sisters after the deadline date will be included at the following convention.) (1986)
5. When the Union's Executive Committee makes a request for convention motions or for the Society's opinion on any specific problem, the Society should be prompt in taking action upon the Union's request and sending the results to the Union Secretary.

BY-LAWS OF THE CHRISTIAN SISTERS' UNION
OF
THE UNITY OF THE BRETHREN

ARTICLE I. NAME (1962)

The organization shall be called: The Christian Sisters' Union of The Unity of the Brethren.

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE (1962)

The purpose of the Christian Sisters' Union is to promote the work of the Kingdom of God and to co-ordinate local Christian Sisters' Societies into a unified whole for more effectiveness in this work.

In striving to achieve this purpose, the Christian Sister's Union directs and encourages local societies:

1. To deepen the spiritual lives of the women of the church and to encourage them to bear personal witness to Christ.
2. To promote the welfare of the church by supporting its spiritual, educational, financial and social efforts.
3. To increase the knowledge of and participation in worldwide Christian Missions.
4. To unite in Christian fellowship all the women of the Church.
5. To promote the effectiveness of Hus School and the conference programs by assisting in the maintenance and improvement of the Hus School Encampment, by inspiring young people to attend Hus School and the conferences, and by financially aiding young people who need such assistance in order to attend.
6. To take responsibility for the alleviation of suffering wherever it may arise.

ARTICLE III. MEMBERSHIP

1. Each local Christian Sisters' Society and the Society At large may become a member of the Christian Sister's Union (2016). Every woman member in a congregation of the Unity of the Brethren, who has attained the age of 16 years, may become a member of the local group, and thereby also of the Union.
2. Every organized Christian Sisters' Local of a congregation or a mission under the care of a pastor of the Unity may apply for membership in the Christian Sisters' Union.
3. Other Christian Sisters' Locals may apply for membership in the same manner.
4. Membership of the local Societies within the Christian Sisters' Union is wholly voluntary, beginning and terminating according to the regulations of the local organization.
5. The local Societies may apply for membership in the Christian Sisters' Union by writing to the Secretary of the Union who will duly present the application to the Executive Committee of the Union.
6. The local Society may also sever its relations with the Union at any time, provided it officially notifies the Executive Committee and fulfills any and all obligations it has to the Union.
7. The annual fee to the Union treasury for each member is as designated by the latest convention. The total of the fees plus any special offerings comprises the fund from which all obligations of the Union are paid.

The local Societies are authorized to send one delegate to the convention for every complete unit of 15 members, or if the Society has less than 15 members. Any Society, which is

authorized to send more than one delegate, but sends only one, will have its delegate restricted to one vote.

Any Society, which fails to send a delegate to two consecutive conventions and fails to send an acceptable excuse or fails to send the Union dues for four consecutive years, automatically loses its membership in the Union. (1982)

ARTICLE IV. ADMINISTRATION

1. Highest authority of the Christian Sisters' Union rests in the hands of the convention.
2. The Executive Committee, consisting of a President, Vice President, Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer, takes care of all business matters between conventions.
3. Standing committees, elected for a period of two years, perform their special tasks along with the Executive Committee.
4. The fiscal year of the Christian Sisters' Union shall end on the last day of January. (2016)
5. The Christian Sisters' Union is subject to council of the Synodical Committee of The Unity of the Brethren. (2018)

ARTICLE V. CONVENTION

1. * The Convention of the Christian Sisters' Union is held biennially the last week in April or the first part of May, But not on the Primary Election Day. The place is designated by the previous convention. (1964)
*The questionnaire shall be sent out the middle of November and returned to the Executive Committee by the end of January. This will require the local fiscal year to be closed by December 31. (2016)
2. * The sermon at the convention service shall preferably be delivered by a minister of the Unity selected in rotation by the Executive Committee; however, other speakers can be selected if deemed desirable (1984).
* A memorial service shall be prepared by the Executive Committee.
3. Only the convention delegates (See Article III, Sec. 7) have voting power. The members of the Executive Committee and the ministers of the Unity of the Brethren serve as advisory members of the convention and have only the right of discussion. (2016)
4. The duly elected officers shall plan and preside at the convention held during their administration and the convention committees shall be appointed from the convention body.
5. All decisions voted on and made by delegates present at a convention become valid right after votes are counted.
6. The order of the convention is as follows:
 - * The convention is called to order with a prayer.
 - * Roll call of convention members
 - * Seating of delegates
 - * Naming of convention committees
 - * Reading of minutes
 - * Report of President
 - * Report of Vice-President
 - * Report of Secretary
 - * Report of Financial Secretary
 - * Report of Treasurer

- * Report of standing committees
 - * Report of delegates about work of local groups
 - * Unfinished business
 - * Report of convention committees
 - * Motions from the floor
 - * Report of the nominating committee
 - * Election of officers and standing committees
 - * Reading of courtesy resolutions
 - * Installation of officers
 - * The convention is adjourned with a prayer or benediction
7. * The convention expenses of the delegates shall be paid by their own local societies. The expenses of the Members of the Executive Committee shall be paid from the Central Treasury. Christian Sisters Union representative to the Hus School Board of Trustees omitted by Church Convention 2017.
- * The expenses of convention needs (reports, badges, programs, remuneration of convention speaker, secretaries, etc.) shall be paid from the Central Treasury. The convention offering will be divided between the Christian Sisters' Union and the place where the convention is held. (1984)

ARTIVLE VI. THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

1. * The Executive Committee is elected by the Convention for a term of two years. Each member of the committee will serve not more than 4 years in succession in one office but may be elected to any other office at the termination of her 4 years. No individual to serve as a Christian Sisters' Executive officer for more than 8 years in succession (2010). This committee consists of a President, Vice-President, Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer.
 - * Travel expenses for the Executive Committee and Standing Committees shall be 25 cents a mile both ways. (2006)
 - * The President, Financial Secretary and Treasurer shall be bonded yearly. The bonding fee is to be paid by the Christian Sisters' Union. (2018)
2. The President calls the meeting of the Executive Committee and with the other members of the committee plans the conventions of the Union, certifies payments of all accounts and concerns herself with the general welfare of the whole organization.
3. The Vice-President presides in the absence of the President and assists the President generally. She is chairman of the mission projects therefore she shall be a woman who is sincerely concerned about the mission endeavor of the Church (2018). She will give a report of the work of the Board of Missions at the Christian Sisters' Union convention.
4. The Secretary takes the minutes of the Conventions and Executive Board meetings, keeps a record of all the local Societies within the Union and the names of all the local secretaries. She also takes care of all official correspondence and gives reports of the activities of the union in the official publication.
5. The financial Secretary receives payments of membership fees and other contributions from the local Societies and turns the money over to the treasurer.
 - * The Financial Secretary will bring all records to each executive meeting.
 - * The Financial Secretary's books will be reviewed each meeting of the Executive Board.
 - * The Financial Secretary and the Treasurer will each have access to the Bank Statements.

- * The Financial Secretary's books will be audited annually by a committee other than the Executive Committee no later than March 1st. (2018)
- 6. The Treasurer receives the money from the Financial Secretary, keeps accurate record of all receipts and pays all expenses of the Union with the knowledge of the President.
 - * The Treasurer will bring all records to each executive meeting.
 - * Treasurer's report will be reviewed each meeting of the Executive Board.
 - * The Treasurer and the Financial Secretary will each have access to the Bank Statements.
 - * The Treasurers' books will be audited annually by a committee other than the Executive Committee no later than March 1st. (2018)

Paragraph #7 omitted re-numbered 8, 9, 10, 11 to 7, 8, 9, 10 (2012)

7. CHRISTIAN SISTERS' REPRESENTATIVES TO THE HUS SCHOOL ENCAMPMENT BOARD
OF TRUSTEES omitted by Church Convention 2017.

- 8. All other business of the Christian Sisters' Union. The President calls a meeting whenever she deems it necessary and specifies the place of meeting. Minor items may be handled by means of a circular letter, which must then be inserted into the minutes of the Executive Committee.
- 9. The Executive Committee gives reports of its activities to the official publication, "The Brethren Journal."
- 10. In the event that vacancies should occur on the Executive Committee or Nomination Committee between conventions, the remaining Executive Committee members shall appoint replacements.

ARTICLE VII. NOMINATING COMMITTEE
(1964, 1966, 1968)

- 1. A five member nominating committee shall be elected by the convention. Each member shall be elected for a term of four (4) years; however, the members are elected on an alternating basis. Members for place 1, 2, 3 shall be elected at one convention while members for place 4 and 5 shall be elected at the following convention. If at all possible, each member of the committee should be from a different local society.
- 2. The task of the nominating committee is to formulate a slate of eligible nominees for Christian Sisters' Union offices to be presented to the convention. (1980)
- 3. The Chairman of the nominating committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee at its first meeting following each convention.
- 4. * The nominating committee shall begin work at least six months before the convention and the chairman shall inform the Executive Committee of the progress of the nominating committee before the convention.
 - * The nominating committee shall be paid travel expenses on same basis as Executive Committee. (1970)
- 5. Nominees for office may be selected from the entire Union membership rather than only from officers and delegates of the Convention Body, provided that the nominee:
 - * Is in good standing and a regular and participating member of the church and her local.
 - * That nominee will uphold the doctrine (or teaching) of The Unity of the Brethren Church at all times.
 - * Has had at least one year of experience as an officer in her local.
 - * Has served as a delegate to one or more Christian Sisters conventions
 - * Will be present either as a delegate or visitor at the current convention.

- * That the nominee will not withdraw her name from the ballot to give precedence to the nomination of someone else.
 - * The nominee for the office of President shall have served at least one term in some position of the Executive Committee prior to election as President. (1972)
6. All nominees presented must have been previously contacted and agreed to serve if elected.
 7. When possible, the slate of nominees should include at least two carry-over officers from the last Union Executive Committee in order to provide continuity of experience.
 8. Following the reports of the nominating committee to the convention the floor is open for further nominations for each office.

ARTICLE VIII. LOCAL SOCIETIES

1. The local Societies have complete freedom in the administration of their own organization.
2. Participation in the administration and in the co-operative work of the whole Christian Sisters' Union comes through the delegates sent by the local to the convention.
3. The local Societies conduct regular, preferably monthly, meetings. In these meetings they study the Scriptures, discuss the needs of the Kingdom of God at home and in faraway places and take care of the business matters which are necessary to the work.
4. When the local Society is at times confronted with a task too big to handle, it notifies the Executive Committee and the committee after due consideration, presents the problem to all the Societies for solution. Such a task principally involves the care of the sick and the poor.
5. The local secretaries send biennial reports to the Union Secretary concerning the activities of the local Societies.

ARTICLE IX. BY-LAWS

1. These by-laws may be changed at regular convention when two-thirds of the delegates present vote in favor of the changes.
2. The central treasury is the trust of the whole Union and in case of the dissolution of the Christian Sisters' Union; the contents of the treasury go to The Unity of the Brethren.
3. The publication of record for the Christian Sisters Union is the official church publication, "The Brethren Journal." (2016)

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE
OF
THE CHRISTIAN SISTERS' UNION

This Committee is composed of five members, namely:

President, Vice-President, Secretary, Financial Secretary and Treasurer, elected by the delegates representing the local societies at the Union's biennial convention. Each officer is elected for a term of two (2) years and may succeed herself in the same office for only one other two-year term. After that she may be elected to some other office, or after one term of absence, she may be elected to the same office previously.

The President calls this Committee for a meeting whenever she deems it necessary. Postage and traveling expenses are the only remuneration of the Committee's members and expenses for carrying out the activities of the Executive Committee are paid from the general treasury of the Union.

The general functions of the Committee are:

1. To see that all decisions and recommendations made at the biennial convention are carried out.
2. To dispense with all minor business that may occur between conventions.
3. To plan and conduct conventions. (2016)
4. To plan and consult with other leaders of the Church concerning the program and work of the Christian Sisters' Societies and the Christian Sisters' Union.
5. To make a report of the Union's work to the Synodical Committee or the convention of The Unity of the Brethren.

SECTION V

LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven,
Hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done
On earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our trespasses, as we
Forgive those who trespass against us.
And lead us not into temptation, but
Deliver us from evil. For thine is the
Kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.
Amen

THE APOSTLES' CREED

I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth.

And in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead and buried. He went to the place of departed spirits. The third day He rose from the dead. He ascended into heaven, and sitteth at the right hand of God, the Father Almighty; from thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit; the Holy Christian Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body, and life everlasting. Amen.

PRAYERS OF PRAISE

Father, we praise your Holy name. We praise you for all the blessings you provide for us. Most of all, Father, we praise you for the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ. Without Him we could not come into your presence.

Thank you for the gift of Your Holy Spirit who dwells within us, who leads, guides and directs us in your service.

Thank you, Father. We praise Your Holy name.

Amen

Father, we praise You because You hear our prayers and answer them. You are so good and merciful. You have freed us from the bonds of sin and we will worship and serve You forever. Praise be to God.

Amen

Father, we praise You because you love us. Your love for us never ceases, Jehovah God. You are our light, and we give thanks to You for your loving kindness. We praise Your name.

Amen

Father, we praise Your Holy name. You who made heaven and earth watch over us and bless us abundantly. We praise You for the very breath of life. May we show our love and appreciation by being obedient to your calling.

We praise your Holy name, God. We praise your name.

Amen

PRAYERS FOR GENERAL MEETINGS

Heavenly Father, as we come today we thank you for sending us your Son, Jesus Christ. It's through Him that we are able to come to you in boldness and without fear.

Father, You have blessed us so richly with gifts of time, talents, and possessions. We offer these gifts back to You. Use us and these gifts to spread the Good News of Your Son, Jesus Christ here at home and around the world.

Forgive us when we have been lukewarm or have failed to be obedient to your calling. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit and empower us to serve you faithfully.

In your Sons' precious name we pray.

Amen

Merciful Father, we praise You and thank You for the mercies you show to us. Thank you for sending Your Son who made it possible for all our sins to be forgiven. Thank You for giving us the Holy Spirit who is our Helper.

Father, we ask now that if there is anything in our hearts that would block us from receiving Your fullest blessings, that you would forgive us and cleanse those things from our hearts. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit so that we may know Your will for us.

Father, as we go about Your work, we would ask that You increase our territory, so that we might fulfill Your Great Commission to spread the Good News.

In Christ's name we pray.

Amen

Merciful Father, we love You and we humbly come to serve You. Cleanse our hearts and minds of anything that is displeasing to you. May Your Holy Spirit fill us with what is good and pure. Reveal to us Your will and purpose for us, both individually and corporately.

Purge from our hearts any false pride that we may have about the works we do. May we always remember that what we do is out of love for You, and may these works bring honor and glory to You.

In Your Son's name we pray.

Amen

PRAYERS FOR EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETINGS

"Ask the Lord to bless your plans, and you will be successful in carrying them out." Proverbs 16:3

Father, You have been so faithful to us in the past. We humbly come now and ask for Your guidance and direction during our time together. We know that if we are faithful to You and seek Your will for the women of Your Church, You will bless us with fruitfulness.

Father, we ask that You prepare our hearts to receive direction from our Helper, Your Holy Spirit. Give us unity of purpose. May others see Jesus in us as we follow His example of service to mankind.

In Your Son's precious name we pray.

Amen

"Remember the Lord in everything you do, and He will show you the right way." Proverbs 3:6

Merciful and loving Father, we come with thanksgiving to praise You. We praise you for sending Your Son, Jesus Christ. We praise You for the privilege of serving You with joy.

Father, as we gather now to plan for the work of Your Kingdom, we offer ourselves up to You and ask that You use us in whatever way You see fit. Fill us with Your Holy Spirit to guide and direct us. Give us Your vision as to how we should carry out Your Great Commission – to "go and make disciples of all nations."

On Christ's name we pray.

Amen

PRAYERS FOR CLOSING A MEETING

The God who said, "Out of darkness the light shall shine!" is the same God who made his light shine in our hearts, to bring us the knowledge of God's glory shining in the face of Christ. 2 Corinthians 4:6

Creator, God, You have made the light shine in our hearts in this meeting. We pray that the work done here is according to Your will and is pleasing to You. What a joy it is to be used by You to reach those in the world who are in need of Your Light. Father, there are some women who do not know this joy in serving You. May Your Light continue to shine through us as we leave this place. May our joy be contagious with those we come into contact during our daily lives.

In Christ's name.

Amen

PRAYERS FOR BIBLE STUDY MEETING

"If you remain in me and my words remain in you, then you will ask for anything you wish, and you shall have it." John 15:7

Father, God, we thank you for Your Word. We thank You for Your Son, Jesus Christ. Thank You for Your Holy Spirit, our Helper and Guide to all Truth.

Loving Father, as we come to study Your Word, we would ask that you take the blinders from our eyes so that we can understand what You want us to learn. Clear our minds, cleanse our hearts and make us aware of Your presence. And, Father, as we leave from this study, help us to live the truths that You reveal to us.

In Christ's name.

Amen

SOME PRAYERS FOR TABLE USE

Be present at this table, Lord
Be here, as everywhere, adored,
These mercies bless and grant that we
May feast in Paradise with Thee.
Amen

Father, we thank Thee for every good
And perfect gift. Bless this food to
Our use and us to Thy service.

Lord Jesus, be our Holy Guest
Our morning joy, our evening rest
And with our daily bread impart
Thy love and peace to every heart.
Amen

Come, Lord Jesus
Our guest to be,
And bless these gifts
Bestowed by Thee.
Amen

SECTION VI

INSTALLATION SERVICE

(Installing officer calls incoming officers forward one at a time and introduces each by name and the office to which she has been elected. Officers stand facing membership of the Society and to the left of the installing officer.)

INSTALLING OFFICER: (addressing incoming officers)

Beloved in the Lord; you have been called to a special Christian service. Through the offices to which you have been elected you are to serve the Church, extending its ministry of service and activity through the work of the Christian Sisters Society, which is an auxiliary of the Church.

By electing you to these offices, your sister-members have shown their confidence in you and in your abilities to fulfill the duties of the positions for which you have been chosen. We invite you, therefore, to enter upon the duties of your offices in the spirit of Christian service and consecration.

You have come to assume publicly the offices to which you have been elected by our Society. As you enter upon your duties in the Christian spirit you will find the fulfillment of your obligations to be, not a burden, but a source of joy and blessing. We commend you to Him who is able to fill you with grace and knowledge, and to crown your earnest endeavor with success.

I now ask you, in the presence of God and of the members of this Christian Sisters Society: Do you promise, trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for strength and guidance, that you will faithfully fulfill the duties of the offices to which you have been elected?

OFFICERS ANSWER: We do.

INSTALLING OFFICER: (addressing members of the Society)

I remind you, the members of the Christian Sisters Society, that your officers can discharge their obligations only with your loyal cooperation. Therefore, I admonish you to follow their guidance, to support and sustain them, and to remember them in your prayers to Almighty God, that by His grace, you and these newly elected officers may accomplish great things for the up building of your organization, the welfare of this congregation and the progress of the kingdom of God. Do you promise to support your officers by your hearty cooperation?

MEMBERS ANSWER: We do

INSTALLING OFFICER:

Upon this mutual assurance, I now install you as the officers of this Christian Sisters Society.

May He, who has called you into His glorious service, endow you with wisdom and strength to do His work.

Let us pray.

Heavenly Father, we thank Thee that Thou hast called us through the Church to be co-laborers with Christ in the work of Thy kingdom. Grant that these officers now entering upon their duties may obtain Thy favor, be strengthened by the Spirit and be faithful in the discharge of their duties. Reward

and bless those who have served in the past. Give unto all members willing hearts and hands, that they may accomplish the work committed unto them.

Grant us, O God, the spirit of sacrifice and service which was also in Christ Jesus; and unto Thee be all honor and glory forever.

Amen

Omitted Installation Service II (2016)

SECTION VII

A MEMORIAL SERVICE

(For those societies desiring a memorial service for deceased members, this service is based upon the triumphant assurance we share with all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. The memory of our departed sisters is all the more precious because of the common faith we shared.)

PRELUDE (This time of prayer preparation may be enriched with the playing of some hymns of faith and assurance such as: "Be Still My Soul," "I Know Whom I have Believed," "Tis So Sweet to Trust in Jesus," etc.)

NARRATOR: During the past year(s) our Heavenly Father called a number of our members to Himself in glory. Although we are saddened by the loss of these fellow-workers, we rejoice in the triumphant hope we share in Christ Jesus, our living Savior and Lord. We know that our destiny and that of our departed co-workers is in the hands of a loving Heavenly Father and we fully trust that nothing shall be able to separate us from that love God has for us in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

FIRST Reader: Our hope, like that of our departed sisters, is in Christ the Lord who declared, "I am the resurrection and the life; he that believes in Me, though he dies, yet shall he live." "I go to prepare a place for you." "Because I live, you shall live also."

SECOND READER: "Thanks be to God who gives us the victory through Jesus Christ, our Lord"!

FIRST READER: "Behold a great multitude, which no man can number, of all nations, and kindred's, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, arrayed in white robes, and palms in their hands."

SECOND READER: They are they that come out of tribulation, and they washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

FIRST READER: "They shall hunger, no more, neither thirst anymore; neither shall the sun strike upon them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them into living fountains of waters."

SECOND READER: These have lived by the promise, "Be faithful unto death, and I will give you a crown of life."

HYMN (An appropriate hymn reflecting "Faithfulness". (2016)

NARRATOR: The beloved co-workers whose memory we honor this day ran a good race and finished their course and remained faithful to the end of life. Their influence continues, however, for our lives have been richer because of their witness and faithful service to our Lord. They were indeed the "Salt of the Earth" which did not lose its saltiness; they were the "Light of the World," set on a candlestick, giving light to all who were around to see and be touched by their lives. We therefore light a candle for each of these whom now we name, that we may be reminded that the memory of their lives and their works of faith continue to illumine our lives.

(As the name of each deceased member is read, a candle on a table in front of the assembled members is lighted.)

NARRATOR: These beloved sisters have now joined that company of witnesses which surrounds us and we recall the biblical admonition: "Since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and finisher of our faith."

PRAYER "Almighty God our Heavenly Father, we offer unto Thee our praise and thanks for the lives of all Thy servants, who have shined as light of the world, We especially remember with tender and deep affection the sisters whose memory we honor today. Their witness and service have made our society stronger and more fruitful in the cause of Christ. As they have joined the great company of witnesses which surrounds us, we acknowledge our indebted gratitude to them. As they have passed to us the torch of Christian service, we pray for divine power to run the race yet before us, looking to Jesus, the pioneer and finisher of our faith.

Amen

BENEDICTION (Unison)

The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, make us perfect in every good work to do His will, working in us that which is well pleasing in His sight; through Jesus Christ to whom be glory for ever and ever.

Amen

HYMN: Closing Hymn as appropriate. (2016)

Notes

