



Community of Christ

CHRIST'S MISSION, OUR MISSION

## August 2025 Update on Referred Resolutions from the 2025 World Conference

At the 2025 World Conference, four resolutions were referred to the First Presidency based on Standing Rule 18 which stated:

18. The final legislative session of the World Conference will be adjourned as close as possible to 3:30 PM (time in Independence, Missouri USA) Friday, 6 June 2025 in order to address a variety of factors affecting many delegates such as scheduled travel plans. Any business pending or submitted but never brought before the conference for consideration at that time will be referred to the First Presidency for consideration and any action they deem appropriate.

The four resolutions were:

1. G-6 Threat of Confiscation of Monies in the AIP Accounts, from the Cedar Valley Nauvoo USA Mission Center
2. G-7 Unilateral Authority Not Given by Church Membership, from the Cedar Valley Nauvoo USA Mission Center
3. G-8 Bicentennial Doctrine and Covenants from the Midlands USA Mission Center
4. G-9 Divine Insights Calling Us! from the Midlands USA Mission Center

### Items G-6 and G-7

As was explained at the 2025 World Conference, the church's parliamentary authority, the current edition of Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, states that "No main motion is in order that conflicts with the corporate charter, constitution, or bylaws . . . ; and to the extent that procedural rules applicable to the organization or assembly are prescribed by federal, state, or local law, no main motion is in order that conflicts with such rules." (RONR, 12th edition; p. 185) In the case of the church, this principle would apply to scripture as well.

If there had been adequate time to call up items G-6 and G-7, the chair would have ruled that Items G-6 and G-7 were not in order based on the church's parliamentary authority. Presidents Bunda Chibwe and Janné Grover were able to meet with some people from the Cedar Valley Nauvoo USA Mission Center during the June 2025 reunion held at the Nauvoo Campground. During this reunion information was shared and questions answered regarding the sale of historic sites and assets. Bunda and Janné also had the opportunity to listen to concerns and feelings of frustration, anger, and disappointment.

Item G-6, to one extent or another, conflicts with several World Conference Resolutions, especially WCR 915 and WCR 1264. For example, World Conference Resolution 915 states, "That the Presiding Bishopric shall assume and is hereby directed to assume full responsibility to see that the finances of the church are used strictly in and for the faithful performance of such responsibility, and it shall be held

answerable to the church in World Conference assembled” and the Bylaws express the principle that, “. . . for the good of all, properly selected leaders must be allowed to do their work without undue interference, subject always to the provisions made to cover special situations.”

Item G-7 conflicts with existing polity and principles as established in the Bylaws as well as in World Conference Resolutions. Specifically, the Bylaws identify the Presiding Bishopric as “the chief financial officers and trustees of the church” and, as such, they “are responsible for the administration of the temporal affairs of the whole church.” And World Conference Resolution 903 establishes the principle that all investments made in the interests of the church shall be considered . . . “under the supervision of the World Church officers provided for in the law having jurisdiction in such matters.” Section 129:8f establishes a principle that, “The church has been directed to accede to the rendition of the Bishopric with respect to the temporal law.”

Although the resolutions were out of order as written, the First Presidency and Presiding Bishopric acknowledge the concerns and frustrations that led to their creation. World church leaders understand that some members and friends do not support the authority given to the Presiding Bishopric in scripture and other governing documents. Nevertheless, that authority is provided with the trust that they will use that authority in the best interest of the church and its mission.

Regarding Item G-6, the decision by the Presiding Bishopric to temporarily place a hold on a portion of investment account balance—not including endowment accounts—was made in response to an extraordinary situation. This action served as a contingency plan to ensure the church could meet a one-time retirement funding legal obligation and a moral commitment to those who devoted their lives in service to the church if other funding options fell short.

Acting in its fiduciary role, the Presiding Bishopric launched the Bridge of Hope project to address this responsibility. The temporary hold on minimum balances, accompanied by the option of a 0% interest loan if needed, was a precaution in case the funding goal was not reached. Thankfully, the church responded with extraordinary generosity, in the spirit of Acts 2—making it unnecessary to borrow from the local jurisdictions’ investment accounts. Importantly, throughout the hold period, the funds continued to earn interest for the benefit of account stewards of the local jurisdictions.

Though this retirement obligation was an exceptional, one-time challenge, the overwhelming response demonstrates the generous and compassionate community we are becoming in Christ. World church leaders are deeply grateful for this faithful witness. None of us know what challenges the church faces in the future, but world church leaders believe this experience will help the church navigate what may come with grace, understanding, and respect.

Regarding item G-7, we recognize that this resolution arises from deep feelings surrounding leadership’s difficult decision to sell historic properties in Kirtland and Nauvoo. We want to acknowledge the grief and concern this caused for many and the pain that still exists within the body.

The process used to make the historic sites sale decision does not represent a change in the church’s long-standing practice concerning properties owned by World Church but managed locally, such as congregational buildings, mission center facilities, and campgrounds. Decisions about those properties will continue to be made collaboratively through properly called congregation business meetings or mission center conferences, with final approval by the Presiding Bishopric.

The First Presidency and Presiding Bishopric also want to emphasize that the historic sites and assets sale enabled the church to avoid debilitating budget reductions in 2025 that would have severely impacted ministries and services including our ability to host a world conference. This difficult decision has not eliminated the church's challenges but provided time for missional and financial strategies to offset the severity of potential budget reductions in future years as early as 2030.

### **Item G-8**

After careful review and deliberation, the First Presidency has concluded that Item G-8, Bicentennial Doctrine and Covenants, will not be pursued further at this time. This decision is based on a determination that the necessary resources—financial, operational, and personnel—are not currently available to effectively implement the resolution.

The First Presidency appreciates the intent and values behind the resolution and recognizes the importance of the issues it sought to address. While this particular resolution will not move forward, the World Church Leadership Council remains committed to exploring ways to support our shared goals within the scope of our available resources.

The First Presidency affirms that understanding scripture within its full historical and cultural context is essential for responsible interpretation and faithful application. To support this, the First Presidency initiated Dale Luffman's extensive commentary on the Doctrine and Covenants, which has greatly enriched our understanding. Particular concerns regarding Section 116 have been addressed through an updated introduction, now available in three languages through Doctrine and Covenants - Section/Insert at Herald House.

The process of prioritizing church resources is guided by the Council of Twelve Apostles in collaboration with the Council of Presidents of Seventy and the World Church Leadership Council. Recently, the translation, printing, and distribution of the Doctrine and Covenants in the three primary languages of the church were completed as a foundational priority. After careful consultation, church leadership has determined that it is not feasible at this time to repeat this process for revisions to section introductions, as proposed by Item G-8, nor is this currently an identified priority. While sales from the proposed Bicentennial Doctrine and Covenants would offset some expenses, they would not fully cover the necessary production and distribution costs.

The principles and affirmations of scripture as outlined in "Scripture in Community of Christ" (Sharing in Community of Christ 4th Edition, pp. 63–67) and highlighted in the proposed resolution remain vital for the ongoing formation of disciples and priesthood members. Although producing the proposed volume is not possible at this time, we continue to honor and uphold the principles that support careful, contextual, and faithful study of scripture.

### **Item G-9**

We are sincerely grateful to a group of volunteers, including the author of Item G-9 Divine Insights Calling Us!, for offering to develop an English-language resource in response to this resolution. The First Presidency has invited the group to submit a proposal outlining what they are able to accomplish. If a mutually acceptable plan is reached, it may be possible to create this resource in English and post it for free download on the Herald House website. However, we want to acknowledge that, due to current priorities and available funding, it is not feasible to extend this effort to additional languages at this time. We deeply appreciate the creativity and commitment behind this initiative and will share further information about the English resource as it becomes available.