

# **The By-Laws of The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Religion Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church**

**In the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, Amen!**

We, followers of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Religion residing in Philadelphia, PA and its surrounding areas, who have left our country, Ethiopia, for various reasons, cognizant of the fact that it is our religious obligation to organize Prayer services, to gather in the name of the Lord, the One who leads us and protects us wherever we go, who is omnipresent, to call His name and praise Him wherever we are, it has been years since we collaboratively invested our money, knowledge and strength and purchased the building for Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church, a place where we can learn the Words of God, call His name and worship Him. This place of worship is open for all followers of the Orthodox Tewahdo faith irrespective of race and language as God's House is open for all who have the same faith.

It is known that Debre Gent Kidus Ammanuel Church was established in 1996 and has been providing services to worshipers in Philadelphia and the surrounding areas. Due to the increased number of worshipers and their financial and material support, we were able to move out from a rented space and purchase our own church building in June 1999. The church was blessed and opened in a warm ceremony and has continued its services since September 19, 1999.

Taking into consideration the level of growth of our church and the desire to improve and strengthen the various spiritual services provided to the worshipers, these By-Laws were initially prepared in 2000.

Considering that it is timely and appropriate to improve and strengthen the administrative structure by reviewing the By-Laws, a By-Laws Reviewing Committee was established by the General Assembly of Parishioners. After reviewing the By-Laws of various Ethiopian Orthodox churches in North America and comparing them with that of the By-Laws of Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church the Committee presented these improved By-Laws.

After extensive discussions in consecutive meetings, these improved By-Laws were approved by the General Assembly of Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church Parishioners on August 18, 2012.

Praise God!!!

## **Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Religion Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church By-Laws**

### **Article 1. Debre Genet Kidus Amanuel Church**

a. The church established under these by-Laws shall be called the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Religion Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church. The Church is a duly incorporated entity under the Laws and Regulations of the State of Pennsylvania.

b. The main office of Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel church is located in Philadelphia, PA. The current address is:

**Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Religion Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church**  
**6825-33 Greenway Avenue**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19142 (or)**

**Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Religion Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church**  
**P.O. Box 38590**  
**Philadelphia, PA 19104**

c. The Seal of Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church shall be circular in form and shall bear a cross with both Amharic and English inscriptions.

d. The fiscal year of the Church shall be January 1 through December 31st of each year.

**Article 2. Mission**

a. Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Orthodox Tewahdo church is organized for the purpose of religious worship and prayer in accordance with the teachings of orthodox Christianity, as practiced by the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church for centuries.

b. The Church is organized under Section 501 (c) (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954, and registered to operate tax free with ID No. 23-2860452.

**Article 3. Relationship with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Church**

a. Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church shall be a spiritual unit of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo Religion.

b. Administration wise, Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel church is independent of Orthodox Tewahdo Church and as an indivisible part accepts and abides by its teachings and religious regulations with respect to faith, worship and creed of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church and shall be administered by an elected Board of Trustees in accordance with these By-Laws and the Laws of Pennsylvania. The Church shall continue to maintain its nonaligned stance that it has maintained since the establishment of the Church.

**Article 4. Duties and Responsibilities of the Church**

a. In order to accomplish its mission, the Church shall perform the following activities:

1. Conduct worship services in accordance with the Ethiopian Orthodox
2. Provide liturgy, baptism, marriage, burial rites and counseling services in accordance with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo believes, customs and practices.
3. Provide educational programs that would enhance worshipper's knowledge about Ethiopian Tewahdo Religion scriptures, history, culture and holy books. songs and sacred hymns.
4. Prepare educational programs that will include teaching Geez, church
5. Cooperate with sister churches in the region– Egyptian, Indian, Armenian and Soryan Orthodox churches – in the effort to strengthen the evangelical objectives of Orthodox churches.

a. Tewahdo faith, discipline and culture.

b. The Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel church shall have all the general powers enumerated in the Non-Profit Corporation Law, Proclamation No. 86-569, for the attainment of its organizational objectives including the power to sign contracts and solicit contributions and donations.

c. As a Non-Profit organization, the Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church is prohibited from participating in political activities.

d. Board of Trustees with the exception of the representative of the Clergy, who receives allowances for his priestly services, shall not receive, directly or indirectly any salary or compensation for their work on the Board as officers or in any other capacity. A Board member shall be reimbursed for out of pocket expenses related to church services upon submitting an invoice.

#### **Article 5. Membership**

Any person over the age of 18 who believes in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ in accordance with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo doctrine and who fulfills the following requisites shall become a member of Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church.

- a. Participate regularly in the church.
- b. Willingness to provide services to fulfill the mission of the Church
- c. Support the growth and development of the Church.
- d. Willingness to pay \$20 for family and \$10 individual membership dues as set
- e. Accept, respect and abide by the Church's By-Laws.

#### **Article 6. Members Rights and Obligations**

1. Accept and follow these By-Laws.
2. Elect and be elected to the Board of Trustees.
3. Members of the Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church shall have the right requested by the General Assembly of Parishioners.
4. Members of Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church shall receive, free of charge, services offered by the Church. However, this policy does not restrict them from willingly donating whatever they can afford for services rendered.
5. Any member of Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church shall have the right to give their opinions and comment on issues presented for decision by the General Assembly. However, in order to cast their ballot, members should have paid membership dues without interruption for consecutive 6 months prior to the election.

#### **Article 7. Termination and Restoration of Membership**

- a. A member may be terminated from membership for violation of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo religion teachings, law, dogma and faith, for engaging in unethical behavior and persistence in his/her conduct even after advised and counseled by the Church Fathers and/or the Board of Trustees.
- b. A member who fails to pay his/her membership dues for over three months after receiving a written reminder to pay his/her dues shall be terminated from membership.

c. A member who is terminated according to section (a) and (b) above may be restored to membership upon correcting the circumstances for termination.

d. If a member is terminated due to one of the reasons stated in section 7(a) above, the member on his own initiative can present his/her case to the church's spiritual leaders and if it is confirmed by the spiritual leaders that the issue is corrected and recommend restoration to membership, the member shall be allowed to restore his/her membership.

e. If a member is terminated because of the reason stated in section 7(b) above, he/she can be allowed to restore his/her membership upon paying the dues since membership was terminated.

f. A member shall be terminated only after the reasons for termination has been explained to him/her and given his/her due process rights.

g. A terminated or resigned member shall forfeit all dues paid or contributions made and shall not request reimbursement of such payments.

### **Article 8.1. Duties and Powers of the Board of Trustees**

The Board of Trustees is accountable to the General Assembly of Parishioners and shall have the following powers and duties:

a. Oversee the implementation of the duties listed in Article 4 Section (a).

b. Assure that the By-Laws are properly executed.

c. Assure that resolutions made by a general assembly of Parishioners are

d. Oversee that all moveable and non-moveable properties and wealth of properly implemented the church are registered and kept in the name of the Church.

e. Prepare the annual budget for approval by the General Assembly of Parishioners and oversee its implementation.

f. Prepare long term and short term plans for the growth of the church and present such for approval by the General Assembly of Parishioners, when approved, follow up their implementations.

g. Enter into contracts, sue and respond if sued on behalf of the church. However, if the contract cost exceeds \$10,000, the Board shall obtain prior approval from the General Assembly of Parishioners.

The Board of Trustees cannot sell, exchange or use as collateral to borrow money the property registered in the name of the Church. In the event it becomes necessary to sell, to exchange or use the property as collateral, the Board shall submit an agenda for discussion at least 30 days prior to the meeting of the General Assembly of Parishioners. Any decision becomes binding only if it is supported by 3/4 (three-fourths) of the membership.

h. Receive gifts donated to the Church and assure that they are properly registered.

i. Initiate the establishment of sub-committees as needed and give guidelines and oversee their implementation.

j. Recruit paid or non-paid additional priests or deacons when the need is observed by the Board of Trustees or requested by the Council of the Clergy. The Board of Trustees shall have the responsibility of hiring other employees as needed.

k. Except for those related to the secrets of the church and priesthood, the Board of Trustees shall counsel or discipline priests or deacons for poor job performance or lack of discipline. If the discipline to be imposed is termination, the Board's decision shall be supported by a 2/3 majority.

If the offense committed concerns confidential issues relating to the church or priesthood, the case shall be reviewed by the Council of the Clergy before a priest or a Deacon is fired. After the reason for firing is explained in detail to the priest or deacon and is still in disagreement, the case shall be referred to the Advisory Council established in accordance with these By-Laws for a hearing.

l. Prepare and submit financial and operational activities reports at the biannual general meeting of the Assembly of Parishioners. Call a general meeting of members at least once a year and give a report on financial and general operations matters.

m. Issue guidelines necessary to implement these By-Laws and assure that they are put into action.

n. The Board of Trustees shall prepare a work plan and guide line for priests and deacons. The plan shall include payment of stipends, leaves of absences and payment of other necessary expenses.

#### **Article 8. 2. Eligibility to serve on the Board of Trustees:**

a. At least six months residency in Pennsylvania and its surrounding areas.

b. Baptized in accordance with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo procedures

c. 18 years or older and ability to read and write.

d. Payment of membership dues to Debre Genet Ammanuel Church for at least and being a diligent member and follower of the church for six consecutive months.

#### **Article 8.3. Number of members on the Board of Trustees**

a. The Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel Church shall have no more than eleven and no less than seven members on the Board of Trustees.

b. The number of members of the Board of Trustees may be decreased or increased by a decision of the general meeting of the Assembly of Parishioners as needed.

c. The Board of Trustees cannot decrease or increase the number of the members without the approval of the General Assembly of Parishioners.

d. A member of the Board of Trustees can be removed from membership on the Board only after the case is presented to and approved by the Assembly of Parishioners.

e. The priest who is elected by the Council of the Clergy shall be a member of the Board of Trustees. He shall serve for two years as the other members of the Board of Trustees and can be re-elected for another two years when approved by the Council of the Clergy. However, he has to retire one term before being re-elected for another term.

**Article 9.** Except for the priest elected by the Council of the Clergy, the representative of Sunday school and Mrs. Yeshi Dadi, who is allowed to serve permanently as a Founding Member, all members of the Board of Trustees shall be elected in the following way:

**a. Nominating Committee**

1. A five-member Nominating Committee shall be elected at the general meeting Chairperson and Secretary amongst themselves and establish working guidelines.
2. The Nominating Committee shall be established three months (90 days) prior to the election of the Board of Trustees.
3. Election of Board of Trustees to replace those who have completed their terms shall be conducted on the last Sunday in January.
4. The Nominating Committee shall solicit recommendations from the parishioners for qualified candidates to serve on the Board of Trustees. The Nominating Committee shall inform ahead of time that recommendation period for nomination shall last only for one month. The Nominating Committee can ask the general Assembly of Parishioners to extend the time if the Committee cannot accomplish the nomination within this time.
5. Two weeks after the nomination deadline, the Nominating Committee shall present the list of nominated individuals to the parishioners. The nominated individuals shall briefly introduce themselves or the Nominating Committee shall give brief description of the nominees on Election Day.
6. If a nominated member who has expressed his willingness to serve if elected cannot be present at the election meeting for various reasons, the Nominating Committee shall give a brief introduction of the nominee and if he becomes a winner his absence from the meeting shall not preclude him from being elected.
7. Nominees who received the highest votes at the general meeting of the Assembly of Parishioners shall be selected to serve on the Board of Trustees. Nominees who received votes next to the elected members shall be kept as reserves based on the number of votes they received.
8. The Nominating Committee assures that transfer of responsibilities between the outgoing and incoming Trustees is done within one month after election.

**b. Terms of Board of Trustees**

The term of the Board of Trustees shall be for two years. A member can be elected for another term. However, the member shall retire for at least one election cycle before running for another term after serving two consecutive terms.

**c. Separation from the Board of Trustees**

Any member of the Board of Trustees who cannot continue to serve for any reason can resign by submitting a written notice to the Board of Trustees.

of the Assembly of Parishioners. The Nominating Committee shall elect a

**d. Termination from the Board of Trustees**

A member of the Board of Trustees shall be terminated from membership for the following reasons:

1. Failure to fulfill his/her membership obligations in Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel church as stated in Article 5 of these By-Laws.
2. Performing activities contrary to Debre Genet Kidus Ammanuel's existence including:
  - a. Attempting to divide parishioners by politics, race and other reasons
  - b. Getting convicted of a crime that would affect the existence of the church.
  - c. Repeatedly performing activities that disrupt the work of the Board of Trustees.
  - d. Inappropriately wasting or collaborating in wasting the Church's funds and wealth.
- e. A member of the Board of Trustees shall have the right to be informed of the reasons for termination and shall have the right to present his defense before he/she is terminated from the Board.

**f. Vacancies**

A vacancy on the Board of Trustees may occur as a result of one of the following: resignation of a Board member, termination from Board membership, death of a Board member and when the General Assembly of Parishioners decides to increase the number of the Board of Trustees. When a vacancy occurs as a result of one of the above conditions, members kept on reserve according to the number of votes they garnered from the last election shall be asked to fill the position until the end of the unexpired term. If they are willing to serve, they will receive a confirmation letter from the Board of Trustees and an announcement will be made to the Assembly of Parishioners. If the vacancy created is for more than two positions or the remainder term is more than one month and nominees on reserve from the last election are not willing to serve, there shall be an emergency election.

**Article 10- Board of Trustees Meetings**

1. Meeting Place

Meetings of the Board of Trustees shall be held in the city of Philadelphia. When necessary and when technological capacity permits, members who cannot be present in person will participate by phone.

2. Regular and Emergency Meetings

The Board of Trustees shall hold monthly regular meetings. An emergency meeting may be called if requested by the Chairperson or five members of the Board of Trustees. The Chairperson of the Board of Trustees shall open and preside over the meeting. The reason for the meeting shall be explained to the members in advance.

3. Quorum

As long as it is not contrary to the Laws of Pennsylvania, a quorum shall be a simple majority (50% + 1) of members of the Board of Trustees. A meeting shall be postponed for lack of quorum. However, if quorum is not attained at the following meeting, the necessary decision shall be made with those present at the meeting.

4. Minutes

The Secretary of the Board of Trustees shall prepare and submit minutes of the Board of Trustees' meetings. The minutes shall be read at the next meeting. Any amendments or changes to the minutes shall be included in the minutes of the day. All minutes shall be signed by the Chairperson and the Secretary.

#### 5. Majority Vote Decisions

All decisions of the Board of Trustees shall be made by a majority vote.

### **Article 11. Duties and Responsibilities of the Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee shall be accountable to the Board of Trustees and shall have the following responsibilities:

1. A 5-member Executive Committee shall be responsible for the day today operation of the church.
2. Shall prepare and submit the yearly budget, plan and programs of the Church to the Board of Trustees for confirmation and submit the confirmed plan to the Assembly of Parishioners for approval and ensure its implementation.
3. Shall give guidelines to the different departments established by the Board of Trustees, coordinate their tasks and responsibilities, and follow up their timely submission of reports.
4. Supervise that the church's financial and property records are properly kept.
5. Ensure that donations from various sources are properly collected and deposited in the bank.
6. Submit operational activities report to the Board of Trustees twice a year.
7. Members of the Executive Committee shall be sworn in at one of the Board of Trustees' meeting to faithfully serve the Church. They shall receive blessings from the church's spiritual father.
8. The Executive Committee shall consist of the Chairperson, Vice Chairperson, Secretary, Treasurer and Accountant.

### **Article 12. The Council of the Clergy**

“And Jesus came and spoke unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them.” Mathew 28:18

The Council of the Clergy reports to the Board of Trustees and shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Supervise the proper execution of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo religion faith and worship service, assure that the liturgy, preaching of the Gospel and the general spiritual services are conducted in accordance to our true religion.
2. Submit a request to the Board of Trustees for the purchase of ecclesiastical objects and vestments.



3. Ensure that pledges, alms and gifts are kept properly and report every six months to the Board of Trustees for decision on those that the Church does not plan to put in use.
4. In collaboration with the Education Department, will encourage Priests to provide gospel education to their children of confession in order to protect them from heresy habit and activities.
5. Oversee that the administrator, vicar, guard, deacons, choir, preachers and other church servers are performing assigned duties in a timely manner.
6. Assure that spiritual services are given to all parishioners indiscriminately in accordance with the church law.
7. Remind priests that it is their responsibility to preach, baptize, offer holy communion, listen to confessions and in general help believers to be firm in their religion.
8. Remind priests that it is their obligation, as much as possible, to visit and comfort those who are sick, in difficulty and in grief.
9. Encourage members to bring their children on Sundays and major holidays so that they can learn about their religion; encourage parishioners to become members of the church, and those who are members to diligently fulfill their membership obligations.
10. When requested by those who are not followers of the Ethiopian Tewahedo religion to learn the faith and ordinance and become Christians, assure that they receive religious education from the priests and be baptized.
11. The Council of the Clergy bears responsibility for the spiritual services and activities of the Sunday school. The Council of the Clergy shall organize the youth and teach them the general procedure of the church so that they are

equipped to become priests, deacons and provide other spiritual services.

12. Submit an itemized budget to the Board of Trustees.

13. Oversee that no books, documents and CDs that are not related to the scriptures and traditions of Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo religion are distributed in the church compound.

14. Assure that monks, priests and deacons do not provide services without properly verifying their monastic life or ordination.

15. Provide the necessary spiritual counseling and teaching to reconcile a husband and a wife who are married under vow or holy communion.

16. The Council of the Clergy shall submit its report to the Board of Trustees for inclusion in its bi-annual report.

#### **Article 13- Duties and Responsibilities of the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees**

1. Preside over the meetings of the Assembly of Parishioners, Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee.

2. Sign on contracts approved by the General Assembly of Parishioners or by the Board of Trustees.

3. Perform all duties, other than those related to spiritual functions of the church, in accordance with these By-Laws and other laws issued under these By-Laws.

4. The church Administrator shall sign on Birth and Marriage Certificates making sure that the name of the priest who performed the Baptism or Holy Matrimony is clearly indicated on the certificate. All other certificates issued by the Church shall be signed jointly by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the church Administrator.

5. Shall be one of the designated members to sign on checks for expenses related

to Debre Genet Kidus Amnuel Church.

6. Shall be the legal spokesperson regarding the administration of the Church.
7. Establish worship services, educational programs, youth spiritual associations and other sub-committees as deemed necessary in consultation with the Council of the Clergy and in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and these By-Laws.
8. Signs on church correspondences.

**Article 14. Duties and Responsibilities of the Vice Chairperson of the Board of Trustees**

1. Shall be accountable to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and in the absence of the Chairperson shall preside over the meetings of the Board of Trustees, the general meetings of the Assembly of Parishioners and the Executive Committee.
2. Perform all duties of the Chairperson in the absence of the Chairperson.
3. Shall perform other duties as assigned by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee.

**Article 15. Duties and Responsibilities of the Secretary of the Board of Trustees**

The Secretary of the Board of Trustees is accountable to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and shall perform the following duties: –

1. Shall keep minutes of the Board of Trustees, the Assembly of Parishioners and the Executive Committee meetings. Assure that the minutes are read and approved at the next meeting. Signs on minutes with the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
2. Assures that decisions reached by the Board of Trustees are transmitted to the 3. Keeps the Seal of the Church, important documents and records and the key to the mailbox.
4. In consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees, shall inform in appropriate departments. a timely manner all concerned, the place, date and time of regular or emergency meetings of the Assembly of Parishioners, Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee.
5. Assure that incoming or outgoing correspondences are entered into their files
6. In consultation with the Chairperson or the Vice Chairperson, prepare
7. Keep the church's Membership Registry Book; issue Membership
8. In consultation with the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and the Church and submitted to the appropriate department for decision. Assure that documents are carefully registered before or after decision.

Agendas for meetings and in collaboration with the Chairperson and the other Executive Committee members prepare annual reports.

Identification Cards in accordance with guidelines and follows up on renewal of memberships.

Administrator, prepares and duly enters in the Registry information on baptisms, marriages and deaths. Assures distribution of certificates to respective members and copies are kept in file.

9. Performs additional duties assigned by the Executive Committee.

#### **Article 16. Duties and Responsibilities of the Assistant Secretary**

Performs all duties incident to the office of the Secretary in the absence of the Secretary. In addition, shall be in charge of the record's office and perform other duties as assigned by the Board of Trustees.

#### **Article 17. Duties and Responsibilities of the Treasurer**

The Treasurer shall be accountable to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and shall have the following responsibilities: –

1. Receives all Church funds collected from members and other sources against legal receipts of the church.
2. Shall deposit all collections in a bank account opened in the name of the Church within three working days and keep the receipts and give a copy to the Accountant.
3. Keep books of income and expenditures of the church in a way convenient for
4. Keep financial documents and checks; pay expenses when approved by the audit and inspection.

Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and verified by the Accountant; co-sign on checks with authorized members of the Board of Trustees.

5. Shall be one of those who keeps keys of the box of offerings and pledges; also for those prepared by the Executive Committee and approved by the Board of Trustees.
6. Shall pay expenses for church services against receipt when sure that they are shall keep the key of the safe box, where important documents are kept.
7. In collaboration with the Accountant, reconcile and sign on the income and
8. Shall cooperate with the members of the Board of Trustees, the Accountant expenses statement at the end of each month. and external auditors whenever they request to review the church's financial documents and files.
9. Performs other duties as assigned by the Executive Committee.

#### **Article 18. Duties and Responsibilities of the Accountant**

The Accountant shall be accountable to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and shall perform the following activities:

1. Keep records of the church's income and expenses and reconcile them with the Treasurer and report such to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.
2. Keep a record of itemized incomes from monthly membership dues, Sunday collections, from pledges, fees from various services, from fundraising activities and other donations.
3. In collaboration with the Chairperson and the Secretary of the Board of Trustees, prepare a budget and follow up its proper execution once approved by the Board of Trustees and by the General Assembly of Parishioners.
4. Assures that all monies collected in the name of the church are properly deposited in a bank account opened in the name of the Church.
5. Oversee the proper management of finances and certify that disbursements of expenditures are in accordance with authorized budget allocation approved by the Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee.
6. Ensure that bills are paid in a timely manner.
7. Shall establish an internal control system to ensure that Church funds and properties are properly maintained, also initiate and execute efficient financial and property management system.
8. Shall reconcile all bank statements in a timely manner.
9. Perform additional duties as assigned by the Board of Trustees and the Executive Committee.

#### **Article 19. Duties and Responsibilities of the Property Manager**

The Property manager is accountable to the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees and shall perform the following duties:

1. Maintain an up to date record of movable and immovable properties of the church other than ecclesiastical objects and vestments.
2. Ensure proper use of consumable goods and in consultation with the Treasurer, assure the timely replacement of those needing replacement.
3. Assure that items old or new that will not be put to use by the Church are sold; if not sellable remove them from registry and dispose them.
4. Shall supervise the physical well-being of the church's property and facilities and if he/she sees the need for maintenance present such to the Board of Trustees with recommendations.
5. Assure proper accountability of all church properties loaned out or rented.
6. Perform other duties as assigned by the Chairperson of the Board of Trustees.

#### **Article 20. Duties and Power of the Church Spiritual Administrator**

The Church's Spiritual Administrator shall be a priest and is accountable to the Board of Trustees and shall have the following responsibilities:

1. Supervise and ensure that the church's spiritual administration and services are conducted within the protocols of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo faith.
2. Supervise and ensure that priests, deacons and members of the choir are reporting on time and performing their assigned spiritual services.
3. Shall be the Chairperson of the Council of the Clergy.
4. In consultation with the Council of the Clergy, shall recommend the hiring of priests and deacons, as needed, to the Board of Trustees and once approved shall recruit priests and deacons in accordance with a criteria set by the church and present to the Board for hiring.
5. When the Spiritual Leader finds that priests and/or deacons are not meeting expectations he shall review the issue in detail and present it with recommendation to the Board of Trustees.
6. In consultation with the Council of the Clergy and prior consent from the Board of Trustees, shall invite guests for Holidays and special occasions and when invitations are received from other churches, in consultation with the Council of the Clergy, recommend to the Board of Trustees as to who should represent Debre Genet Ammanuel Church.
7. Oversee that gospel education given on Sundays and during Holidays is limited to the topic and ensure that personal opinions that are not healthy to the parishioners are avoided.
8. The Church's Spiritual Administrator or representative shall conduct opening and closing prayers at meetings of the General Assembly of Parishioners, Board of Trustees or the Executive Committee.
9. Ensure that members of the church receive appropriate baptism, marriage, memorial and other spiritual services. Prepare written guidelines regarding these services and distribute to members of the Clergy and Sunday school with a copy to the Board of Trustees.
10. Signs on Baptism and Marriage Certificates given by the Church.
11. Mobilize worshipers to prepare for election prior to election of Board of Trustees.
12. Supervise proper inventory management of the church's ecclesiastical objects and vestments; in consultation with the Board of Trustees, purchase new ones, donate to other churches or sell unusable items.
13. Take leadership in mobilizing and organizing members of the Clergy and Board of Trustees to increase the church's membership.
14. Initiate activities that could bring parishioners together with love and unity; thus will become role model for parishioners by visiting the sick; reconciling those in disagreement; comforting those who have lost loved ones; bringing back those who have pulled back from the Church for different reasons; organizing charities to help those in need; overall bring absolute peace, love and unity among the parishioners.

#### **Article 21. Audit Committee**

Shall be accountable to the General Assembly of Parishioners and shall have the following responsibilities. The Committee shall have three members elected during a General Assembly of Parishioners.

1. The Committee shall work independently. Shall submit written financial, property and operational reports to the Board of Trustees every 6 months and once a year to the Assembly of Parishioners. Prior to the annual election, shall prepare income and expenses reports, documents in hard copy or in electronics, list of movable and non-moveable properties registered in the name of the church to be transferred to the newly elected members and follow up the transfer process.

2. Shall discuss with a member who is found guilty of mishandling financial matters, presenting reports, keeping church properties and any operational matters of the church and after having the member sign admitting his/her fault, take the issue to the Assembly of Parishioners meeting and hold the person accountable in accordance to Federal and Pennsylvania State laws.

3. Considering that the Committee's right to review financial documents and files of the church, elected members of the church shall make the necessary working cooperation.

4. The Committee shall prepare and recommend proper methods of handling the church's financial and other documents and moveable properties. Shall seek recommendations from outside professionals to improve the operation of the church.

5. The Committee shall cooperate with outside Certified Public Accountants in auditing the financial statements.

6. The Committee shall have a Chairperson and Secretary and is responsible to prepare its own working guidelines.

7. The Committee shall serve for three years. However, members of the Committee can be elected for another term.

#### **Article 22. Advisory Council**

a. A 5 member Advisory Council shall be established to review and recommend solutions to misunderstandings or conflicts that may arise between priests, Board of Trustees and parishioners. If there is disagreement in the recommendation presented by the committee, the issue shall be presented to the general meeting of the Assembly of Parishioners for final decision.

b. The General Assembly of Parishioners shall elect members of the Advisory Council.

c. The Committee shall serve for five years. However, members of the Committee may be asked to serve for another term.

d. The Advisory Council shall elect its own Chairperson and Secretary.

**Article 23.** The Board of Trustees shall establish departments such as Spiritual Education, Planning and Development and Building Repair and Renovation as deemed necessary for the development and growth of the church.

#### **Article 24. Sunday School Department**

1. Assure that the Church's laws, protocols, religious education, liturgy and The Sunday school department is accountable to the Board of Trustees and shall perform the following duties.

1. Shall consult with the Council of the Clergy with regard to spiritual matters, study of holy books are properly conducted by preparing daily and regular programs.

2. Shall prepare and present spiritual songs for the parishioners.
3. In consultation with the Council of the Clergy, shall educate the youth about the Orthodox Tewahedo Religion and teach spiritual songs based on their age group that will help develop the spiritual knowledge of the youth.
4. Oversee the availability of paintings and different educational materials
5. Shall consult with the board of Trustees and the Council of the Clergy when Sunday School students plan to organize spiritual plays for holidays or other occasions and follow up on its implementation when approved.
6. All income generated by the Sunday school students from theatrical plays, sale of cassettes and church paintings shall be deposited in the Church's account. The Sunday School shall prepare its budget and obtain the approval of the Board of Trustees.
7. When conflicts arise between the Sunday School Department and the Council of the Clergy, it shall be presented to the Board of Trustees for resolution.

#### **Article 25- Amendment and Ratification of the By-Laws**

##### 25.1 Amendment

25.1.1 These By-Laws may be amended at any time by a 2/3 affirmative vote of the General Assembly.

25.1.2 Amendment of these By-Laws may be adopted in a general meeting of the members with 2/3 of the members who are registered and have fully paid their membership fees are present.

25.1.3 Amendment of these By-Laws, with the exception of the administrative structure, shall be in accordance with the guidelines of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahdo churches.

25.1.4 Ones the need for improvement of the By-laws is approved by the majority of the membership, a By-Laws Reviewing Committee, accountable to the Assembly of Parishioners, shall be established.

##### 25.2 Ratification

25.2.1 The By-Laws shall come into force after being approved by the Assembly of Parishioners and then signed by the Board of Trustees serving at the time.

25.2.2 These By-Laws shall come into force on the day of August 18, 2012. Signed in the city of Philadelphia.