



CONSTITUTION
OF THE
NORTH AMERICAN COLLEGE
OF GNOSTIC BISHOPS

Preamble

We, the Gnostic Bishops of North America, do hereby form the organization known as the North American College of Gnostic Bishops for the purposes of broader communication and representation.

1. Purpose

The NACGB is hereby constituted for the purpose of creating a unified presence for the Gnostic Apostolic jurisdictions in the United States of America and Canada, providing a network of communication amongst these groups, and providing a mechanism for the resolution of disputes in accord with the honor and dignity befitting our calling.

2. Conditions of membership

Membership is restricted to the Primates or appointed delegates of those North American bodies in Apostolic Succession who self-identify as "Gnostic" (see 2.1), Individual North American Bishops who, though unaffiliated with any Jurisdiction, also hold the Apostolic Succession and self-identify as "Gnostic;" either of which must have received and accepted an invitation to join the College under the seal of the President and must not have been expelled from the College.

No jurisdiction may be a member of the College if its membership is wholly contained within the membership of another jurisdiction. National jurisdictions representing the United States or Canada on behalf of larger international jurisdictions may be admitted, however two jurisdictions may not simultaneously be members of the College if both are wholly contained within another jurisdiction.

2.1 Definition of 'Gnostic' As used by the NACGB

"For the purpose of Unity without constraint of Uniformity, and allowing for a broad freedom of personal and organizational interpretation and expression;

We, the North American College of Gnostic Bishops hold as Gnostic those bodies and individuals that acknowledge Gnosis as the 'transcendent, liberating and experiential Knowledge of Spiritual Truth' and that Salvation is obtained via its apprehension. This is to be understood as existing both within the current of mainstream religious belief and systems and beyond its confines, expressing itself primarily in myth and symbol rather than doctrine and dogma"

2.2 Definition of "Jurisdiction" as used by the NACGB

A jurisdiction shall be defined as an ecclesiastical body under direct Episcopal supervision assembled for the purpose of liturgical, sacramental, or other worshipful purposes. Initiatory or Fraternal Orders assembled for purposes other than liturgy, sacrament, or worship are specifically excepted.

3. Classes of membership

3.1 Probationary Membership.

Probationary membership may be offered to any group that meets the conditions of membership outlined in Article 2. Each Probationary member is to have one vote within the College on all matters with the exception of Invitations and Expulsions.

A probationary member may petition the College for Full Membership after 6 months of probationary status. An investigatory committee must be called by the President upon any such petition, and upon presentation of the subsequent report, a vote called. Probationary members will receive full membership upon a successful majority vote.

3.2 Full Membership

Full membership is accorded automatically to any group that has been a probationary member for a period of six months (and successfully petitioned for full membership), and to those organizations whose representatives have signed this document as founding members of the NACGB.

3.3 Advisory Membership

Advisory Membership may be offered to any jurisdiction by a vote of the Full Membership of the College. Advisory members have no vote on College matters, but may sit on Tribunals. Advisory members may not hold the Office of the President.

Any member, probationary or full, that at some point fails to conform to those conditions of membership set forth herein (with the exception of expulsion from the college), or those conditions of membership set forth in official Statements of Principle issued by the College, shall be considered to hold advisory membership from the moment at which it failed to conform.

3.4 Individual Membership

Individual non-aligned Bishops may be invited to join as individual members at the discretion of the President with the ratification of the College.

Individual members will have the same authority as Advisory members (See 3.3).

4. Administration

4.1 Officers

4.1.1 President

Any Presiding Bishop of a Full member jurisdiction may hold the Office of the President. The holder of this office serves the following duties, honors, and obligations for a two year term, with no restriction on consecutive terms, or until resignation or deposition:

- a) The President shall have the responsibility of calling and overseeing regular meetings of the College.
- b) The President shall have the responsibility of assuring the integrity of any vote taken by the College.
- c) The President shall preside over all Tribunals unless he or she excuses him or herself from this duty for reason of conflict of interest or any other reason. The President may not summon a tribunal at will
- d) No invitation to join the College, expulsion from the College, or amendment to this Constitution shall be deemed valid unless it is approved by the President.
- e) The President may not be removed from office without a unanimous vote of all members of the College (The President is excused de jure from this vote).
If the President dies in office, a new vote is to be held immediately under the overseership of the College.
- f) The President may exercise any power within the boundaries of the College as may seem to him or her fit for the furtherance of the aims of the College, in accordance with this constitution and the will and aims of the College as a whole.
- g) The President shall, no less frequently than once per year, prepare a written statement to the members of the College outlining the state of the College and of the Gnostic movement as a whole.

4.1.2 Other officers

Other officers may be appointed or deposed by the President at will without amendment to this constitution.

4.2 Procedures

4.2.1 Voting

Each probationary or full member of the College shall have one vote on all matters brought before the College (excepting those outlined in section 3.1).

All matters (excepting those outlined in section 4.1.1.E) will be decided by a 2/3 majority of voting members of the College. Failure to meet a 2/3 majority will result in the nullification of the proposal.

Votes may be taken in person, by electronic poll, or made as an electronic document (provided signature is present) and submitted to the President in person, or electronic means.

Votes may be accepted by proxy by delivering a sealed ballot (conforming to the above) to the Delegate to hold the proxy vote. All proxies must be members of the College. All members shall agree to be bound by any legitimate vote of the College.

4.2.1.1 At any time prior to the first vote being cast on business conducted before the College, any voting member of the College may request that the vote be secret. Such requests will be honoured immediately. No open ballot shall be held over the objection of any voting member of the College. Any attempt to obtain information regarding the votes cast by any jurisdiction without the prior consent of the jurisdiction in question, or any divulgement of information regarding the votes cast by any jurisdiction without the prior consent of the jurisdiction in question shall be treated as a violation of the sanctity of the Seal of the Confessional and dealt with appropriately.

4.2.2 The College

The College shall conduct its business no less often than twice per year. Meetings may be scheduled at the will of the President. It is not necessary for Delegates to meet physically to conduct business.

No later than 21 days before the meeting, all Delegates must be notified of the meeting by telephone, electronic mail or post.

No later than 14 days before the meeting, all Delegates must be presented with a printed or electronic agenda and list of proposals to be brought to a vote.

At this time, Delegates will have 7 days to submit statements on the agenda and proposals to the President.

No earlier than 7 days before the meeting, all Delegates must receive printed or electronic copies of all submitted statements from Delegates and official ballots for voting on proposals.

Ballots may be delivered by post, or electronic means, to the President, but must be received by the date of the official meeting of the College.

No later than 3 days after the College meeting, the results of any balloting will be made available to all Delegates.

The President must receive agenda items and proposals in sufficient time to be included in the agenda and list of proposals.

The President may call emergency meetings at any time, but actions taken in emergency session must be ratified at the next regular meeting. Invitations to join the College, Expulsions from the College, elections of the President, and ratifications of emergency measures may not be conducted in emergency session.

4.2.3 Tribunals

Tribunals may be summoned for the resolution of disputes between member jurisdictions, or for the resolution of other disputes as deemed fit by the College.

A tribunal will be convened by vote of the College. A tribunal may be called to mediate an intra-jurisdictional dispute, provided that all parties agree to this mediation. Tribunals shall consist of the President, one appointee of the President, and one Full Member agreed upon by the contesting parties.

If the President is excused by choice from the Tribunal, it will consist of two members chosen by vote of the College and one member agreed upon by the contesting parties. The conditions under which a tribunal shall meet and make its decisions shall be at the discretion of the members, however, its decision shall be reached by a vote of the members of the Tribunal.

The decision of a Tribunal shall be deemed binding by the contesting parties.

Any member of the College (full, advisory, probationary or individual) may sit on Tribunal.

4.2.4 The Holy Synod

A Holy Synod, composed of all Bishops of all full member jurisdictions of the College may be called for any purpose by a vote of the College. Its mandate and principles shall be determined by the College and stated in the Writ of Convention of the Synod.

4.2.5 Advisory Council

The Advisory Council of the NACGB shall exist as an appendant body of the College and is subject to its authority and oversight.

The Advisory Council shall be assembled with the aim of assisting the College in adequately addressing issues of import to member jurisdictions and representing the views and positions of non-Episcopal members of member jurisdictions.

The Advisory Council shall conduct business according to its own procedures, all of which shall be subject to review and veto by the College at any time. The College, in the person of the President, shall be notified of any change in procedures approved by the Advisory Council.

4.2.5.1 Membership

The Advisory Council shall consist of not more than three delegates from each Probationary or Full member of the College.

It is recommended, though not required, that the three delegates consist of one representative from the laity, and one representative each from the priestly and diaconal orders.

Delegates shall be appointed to the Advisory Council according to the canons, rules, procedures and bylaws of individual jurisdictions.

4.2.5.2 Officers

The advisory council shall elect, by majority vote, a Chairperson to represent the council before the College.

- a) The Chairperson shall serve a two year term, with no restriction on consecutive terms, or until resignation or deposition.
- b) The Chairperson may not be removed from office without a unanimous vote of all members of the Advisory Council (The Chairperson is excused de jure from this vote) or majority vote of the College.
- c) If the Chairperson dies in office, a new vote is to be held immediately under the overseership of the Advisory Council.
- d) The Chairperson shall hold the same prerogatives as a Probationary member of the College.

The Advisory Council may create additional officership positions for its own administration according to its own rules.

No officer or member other than the Chairperson will have a vote or voice before the College.

Members other than the chairperson may be invited by the President to speak before the College but will have no vote or other formal function, but serve as advisory consultants only.

4.2.5.3 Powers of the Advisory Council

4.2.5.3.1

Representation

The Advisory Council shall be represented before the College according to the principles set forth in Sec. 4.2.5.2

The Advisory Council in the person of its Chairperson shall have the authority to recommend matters for discussion before the College pursuant to Sec 4.2.2.

Individual members of the Advisory Council may represent themselves as such according to the canons, rules, procedures and bylaws of individual jurisdictions.

4.2.5.3.1

Limitations on Powers of the Advisory Council

The Advisory Council shall have no authority to speak on behalf of the College or to make public statements on its own behalf.

The Advisory Council shall have no authority in matters of doctrine, liturgy or internal administration over any individual member jurisdiction.

The Advisory Council shall have no authority to appoint officers to individual member jurisdictions, nor to ordain or consecrate deacons, priests or bishops.

4.2.6 Standing Committees

a) The Constitutional Review Committee

No later than one month after the beginning of his or her term in office, the President shall nominate three members of the college to serve as a Constitutional Review Committee. Each nominee shall be subject to the ratification of the College. The members of the Constitutional Review Committee shall serve a term contemporaneous with the term of the President. The President may not sit on the Constitutional Review Committee.

1. Powers of the Constitutional Review Committee

1. The Constitutional Review Committee shall deliberate and render a decision on any constitutional question submitted to it by a vote of the College. The decisions of the Constitutional Review Committee shall be considered binding on the whole of the College unless overturned by a subsequent decision of the Constitutional Review Committee.

2. The Constitutional Review Committee may formally request to take up a constitutional question, and such requests must appear on the agenda of the next meeting of the College. Such requests are not subject to review by the President.

3. The Constitutional Review Committee shall have no power to render decisions on matters not pertaining to Constitutional interpretation.

4. The Constitutional Review Committee shall have no power to amend the Constitution in any way.

2. Removal from office

1. A member of The Constitutional Review Committee shall be considered removed from office if the member jurisdiction he or she represents shall be expelled from the College.

2. A member of the Constitutional Review Committee may be removed from office by a unanimous vote of the College. The member in question is excused de jure from such a vote.

3. No later than one month after any vacancy occurs within the Constitutional Review Committee, the President shall nominate a new member to fill that vacancy.

4. Powers of the College

4.3. Statements of Principle

The College may make, from time to time, general statements of principle in order to make clear what are the aims and purpose of the College. These in no way are meant to supersede or nullify the individual doctrinal systems of individual member jurisdictions.

4.3. Resolution of Disputes

The College may appoint tribunals to oversee the resolution of disputes as provided for in Section 4.2.3

4.3. Representation

The President or his appointed emissary may act to represent the Gnostic Apostolic communion in North America to ecumenical, political, or scholarly conventions and may speak on behalf of the College. Member jurisdictions have the right to represent themselves as members of the College for their individual purposes.

4.4 Limitations on the power of the College.

The College shall have no authority in matters of doctrine, liturgy or internal administration over any individual member jurisdiction outside of the specific powers granted herein . The College may, however, vote to expel a member jurisdiction which it feels is no longer by virtue of its doctrine, liturgy or administration, in sympathy with the aims and concerns of the College. This shall represent the furthest extent of the punitive power of the College

The College shall have no authority to appoint officers to individual member jurisdictions, nor to ordain or consecrate deacons, priests or bishops.

5. Amendments

This constitution may be amended by a vote of the College and ratification by the President.

6. Resignation

6.1 Delegate Resignation

Any member delegate may resign from the College simply by notifying the present President.

6.2 Member Jurisdiction Resignation

Official notice of withdrawal from the college by a member jurisdiction must be sufficiently authoritative in the eyes of the President. Resignation by a member jurisdiction will be accepted only when the President is duly convinced of the legitimacy of the resignation.

7. Ratification

We, the undersigned, the founding jurisdictions of the NACGB having granted authority and liberty to our Delegates, agree to be bound by this constitution:

We, the undersigned, having accepted the invitation of the President to become members of the NACGB, and having granted authority and liberty so to do to our Delegates, agree to be bound by this constitution: