



EVANGELICAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, GHANA

MAJOR DECISIONS OF THE 9TH GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Preamble

In faithfulness to God the Father, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and by the empowerment of the Holy Spirit, the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, continues to affirm His guidance in every sphere of life, thought, and development—both physical and spiritual.

Gathered in solemn fellowship, the 9th General Assembly prayerfully deliberated and hereby proclaims the following decisions for the mission, growth, and witness of the Church:

Resolutions of the Assembly

1. Election of Moderator

The Rev. Dr. Lt. Col. Bliss Divine Kofi Agbeko was elected as the next Moderator of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana, to assume office on January 1, 2021.

2. Revised Constitution

The Revised Constitution of the EPCG was promulgated by substitution and became effective on August 22, 2020.

3. Moderator's Address

Receive with Appreciation the Address of the Moderator and commend it to the Presbyteries and districts for study and action.

- a. All presbyteries should take the opportunities available for training and retraining of church agents on the strategic plans and use of monitoring, tracking and reporting mechanisms.
- b. All church agents to exercise effective stewardship and engage in stewardship education constantly at all levels of the church.
- c. Sanctions and/or reprimands should be applied to pastors and congregations which deviate from the EPCG's constitutional connectional polity that links Congregations with districts, Presbyteries and the General Assemblies.
- d. Call on the entire church to intercede for a free, fair and violence-free election, before, during, and after the December 7 presidential and parliamentary elections in Ghana.
- e. In this era of COVID-19, calls on the church to exercise wisdom at all levels, follow COVID-19 protocols for as long as necessary, be prudent in managing finances, increasing education around good stewardship and those able should continue to offer Online worship services.

4. **General Assembly Executive Council Report**

Receive the General Assembly Executive Council Report with gratitude for all the work done by the GAC and instruct that for future General Assemblies,

- i. The GAC Report should include an account of how the church at various levels are implementing the Strategic Plans and implementing policies decided on in General Assemblies.
- ii. That GAC should strengthen policy implementation by ensuring that Presbytery moderators do their work of certifying the implementation of the church's policies.
- iii. The internal audit function of ensuring policies are adhered to should be enforced.
- iv. Receive the EPDRA report with thanksgiving and urges EPDRA to disseminate information on their operations to enable members of the EPCG to be fully aware of how EPDRA operates and opportunities to be part of the projects. The General Assembly also endorses all the "Way forward" sections of the EPDRA Report

5. **Aged Ministry**

That Aged ministry should be incorporated into the Church's activities, and that a day be set aside by each congregation to celebrate with the aged and the invalid in the Church to celebrate them. This is not a fundraising day. This will make the aged (defined as 70 and above) in our congregations feel involved and loved.

6. **Financial Policy Reform**

The E. P. Church adopted a new financial fund gathering policy for the church and implement it with effect from **January 1, 2021** with appropriate monitoring strategies. The current means of fulfilling financial obligations to the church based on "Assessment System" should be replaced with the percentage system. This is to ensure that the EPCG utilizes a system which reflects our polity, is fairer and makes the church at all levels more sustainable.

That a training team be appointed to train pastors, catechists, Treasurers, Accountants of Presbyteries, and other relevant church personnel in October and November 2020 in 6 locations of the country: Ho, Accra, Tamale, Kumasi, Takoradi, Hohoe

7. **Strengthening Relations with Presbyterian Church of Ghana**

That the relationship between the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana and the Presbyterian Church Ghana be strengthened to include a high level bilateral regular meeting at least once a year, joint programmes/seminars to address national issues as a contribution from Reformed perspectives, strengthen the nature of participation in General Assemblies, invitations to one another to attend one another's presbytery level synods/meetings and pulpit exchanges.

8. Gender-Based Violence Policy

The General Assembly adopts the decisions of the Bremen Mission Women's Pre-Assembly held in March 2019 in Ghana regarding Gender-based violence as follows:

- i. Denounce the acts of violence and abuse and urge that perpetrators be brought before the law.
- ii. Provide safe spaces for victims (women and children especially)
- iii. Set up telephone/internet counselling or a helpline.
- iv. Train church leaders and agents properly on gender-based violence – noting that gender-based violence is sometimes perpetrated against men also.

9. Music Policy

The General Assembly adopts the Music Policy of the Church and commend it to the Presbyteries, Districts, Parishes and Congregations for action. That where there are financial implications (e.g. hiring full time musicians), local congregations should not feel forced to do so, if they cannot afford.

10. Banking Policy

EPCG congregations and districts shall operate only with Ghana Commercial Bank, Ecobank, and Agricultural Development Bank, unless exceptions are approved by the Central Finance Committee.

11. Partnership with United Reformed Church, UK

Ratifies the Partnership Agreement between the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana and the United Reformed Church, UK to strengthen the long and strong partnership links between the two churches.

12. Medical Policy for Church Agents

The Policy document on medical bills of church agents and employees is adopted. It also covers spouses and children up to 18 years old. It includes such elements as every church agent being registered with the NHIS and also be covered by a life insurance policy with a serious illness coverage.

13. Insurance Policy

That the Church engages an insurance company to offer life insurance with health insurance components to church agents (Pastors, catechists and staff of the church head office as well as Presbytery offices).

14. Honours Day

That Honours Day is hereby established for distinguished personalities who have served the EPCG. The Honours Day is the Sunday after the E. P. Church Founders' Day.

15. Clergy Vestments Policy

The Church policy for Clergy vestments (which includes the use of stoles) as contained in the relevant document becomes the official policy with effect from January 1, 2021.

16. Funeral Practices Policy

The following related policies on funeral practices are hereby adopted:

- i. Affirm the normal burial practice of the Evangelical Presbyterian Church as burial in a grave normally in a church cemetery, a public cemetery a family cemetery or where the special permit is sought in a person's home.
- ii. Where a congregation deems it necessary to accord a member some special privilege of burial place, it should not be done in such a way that land near the church building is compromised making it difficult for future development.
- iii. Whereas there are no theological reasons to prohibit cremation, cultural challenges within Ghanaian settings make it necessary for requests for cremation to be handled with care and on a case-by-case basis. Pastors should seek the consent of their Presbytery Moderators who in some cases may need to consult the Standing Committee of the General Assembly before going ahead. In all cases, it is Christian liturgy that should be used.

17. Kekeli Hotel Development

Noted with appreciation the sustainable growth trajectory on which the Kekeli Hotel currently is and mandates the Standing Committee to study the recommendations in the Future Outlook & Policy Recommendations section of the Kekeli Hotel report and develop implementation strategies with a view to enhancing the profitability of the Kekeli Hotel.

18. Multimedia Policy

General Assembly endorses the development of the new Multimedia policy guidelines as a good initiative and commend the document to the Presbyteries and districts for study. The GAC should receive feedback in February 2021. On the basis of the feedback, the GAEC can now process a proper decision for the next General Assembly.