

CHAPTER III

812. SUNDAY SCHOOL & DISCIPLESHIP MINISTRIES INTERNATIONAL (SDMI) BYLAWS

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries International (SDMI) is to carry out the Great Commission to children, youth, and adults in preparation for a lifetime of making Christlike disciples in the nations.

PURPOSE

The purpose of the Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries International is fourfold:

- A. To intentionally develop relationships with unreached people until they are Christlike disciples and making Christlike disciples.
- B. To teach the Word of God until children, youth, and adults are saved, sanctified wholly, and maturing in Christian experience.
- C. To help Christians grow spiritually involving them in evangelism, Christian education, and disciple making.
- D. To encourage children, youth, and adults to enroll in Sunday School / small groups and faithfully attend.

ARTICLE I. SDMI MEMBERSHIP

Responsibility List

Each local church should assume responsibility for reaching all unsaved persons in the community. Any group meeting weekly for a least a half hour to study biblical principles and approved curriculum shall be included in the Responsibility List reporting of the *Discipleship Ministries List* for Sunday School/Extended Ministries Responsibilities/Discipleship/Bible Study for all age groups (Lines 20-23, Annual Pastor's Report, APR).

Each teacher/leader is expected to be responsible for the spiritual welfare of those on his or her Responsibility List.

SECTION 1. Participants in the following ministries shall be included on the Responsibility List according to the following guidelines:

- a. Cradle Roll: Children under four years of age who, along with their parents, do not attend any SDMI ministry may be enrolled on the Responsibility List as Cradle Roll.
 1. The children are considered as prospects for the SDMI early childhood classes, and the parents as prospects in the corresponding adult ministries.
 2. The SDMI superintendent and the Children's Ministries International (CMI) Director, in consultation with the pastor, shall appoint a Cradle Roll director each church year who is responsible to visit and take program materials to these families.
 3. When they begin attending with some degree of regularity or reach age four, they should be transferred to the Responsibility List of the corresponding age-group class.

- b. Home Department: any person physically or vocationally unable to attend a regular SDMI ministry may be enrolled in the Home Department and listed on the Responsibility List according to the following guidelines:
 - 1. The SDMI superintendent and Adult Ministries International (AMI) Director, in consultation with the pastor, shall appoint a Home Department supervisor each church year whose responsibility is to visit and teach the Bible lesson each week.
 - 2. Those persons visited weekly and taught the Bible lesson shall be listed on the Responsibility List (Lines 20-23, APR) and included in the weekly regular SDMI attendance Lines 23a, APR).
- c. Nursing Home/Convalescent Center/Health Care Facility: Any resident confined to one of these centers who participates in a weekly study of approved curriculum sponsored by the local church may be listed on the Responsibility List (Lines 20-23, APR) and counted in the average weekly attendance (Lines 23a, APR).
- d. Church-Type Mission: Any group sponsored by the local church or district who meets weekly for at least a half hour in another location to study approved Sunday School curriculum with the goal of becoming an organized Church of the Nazarene shall be added to the Responsibility List (Lines 20-23, APR) and average weekly regular Sunday School attendance (Lines 23a, APR) of the sponsoring church by designating name/location of the new work.
 - 1. The attendance figures of any Church-Type Mission shall be listed with the regular monthly attendance report of the sponsoring church to the district and included in the monthly attendance total for the district.
 - 2. If a district or local church is promoting a group of church planting situations, these Church-Type Missions may be listed separately with their own name and location, if desired by the district.
- e. Childcare/Schools: Any group of students in a Nazarene childcare/school (birth-secondary) under the sponsorship of the local church not currently enrolled in a Nazarene SDMI ministry who actively participate in a weekly study of approved curriculum for at least a half hour shall be included on the Responsibility List (Lines 20 and 23, APR), and counted in the average weekly attendance (Lines 23a, APR).

SECTION 2. Removal of Names

Once a person is listed on the Responsibility List, the local church should actively seek to minister to that person until he or she is brought into the fellowship of that church. Removing names should be done only with the approval of the pastor when:

- a. the enrollee moves out of town.
- b. the enrollee joins another Sunday School and or church.
- c. the enrollee specifically asks to have his or her name removed.
- d. the enrollee dies.

ARTICLE II. SDMI ATTENDANCE

The purpose of counting SDMI attendance in the local church is to measure the effectiveness of that church's effort to make Christlike disciples. All SDMI efforts should lead every person to become a disciple of Christ, a member of the church, and a disciple maker.

Attendance counts for SDMI ministries occurring on weekdays should be counted in the following Sunday's attendance.

Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries International attendance is divided into two categories: regular Sunday School Sessions (Line 24, APR) and Discipleship Groups (Small/Cell Groups) (Line 24a, APR). These categories shall be counted each week by the local church according to the guidelines listed below and in Article I. Section 1 above.

The global Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries International department needs monthly reports of the **Responsibility List** and average *weekly Discipleship Ministries* (Sunday School and Discipleship Groups – Small / Cell Groups) from each district in order to compile an accurate record of SDMI growth within the denomination each year (Lines 23 and 23a, APR).

SECTION 1. Regular Sunday School Session. A regular Sunday School session shall be defined as an organized group of people who meet each week at a specified time and place. The purpose of this meeting is to make disciples through studying biblical principles, using Sunday School curriculum for at least a half hour. This will constitute the regular Sunday School weekly attendance (Line 24, APR).

- a. Attendance counts shall be closed no later than the halfway point of the regular Sunday School session. This shall also apply to unified/combined services, those occasions when the regular Sunday School session does not meet due to a special worship service.
- b. An enrollee in a local Sunday School shall be considered present in his or her local Sunday School when attending on that Sunday a local, zone, district, region, or general church-sponsored function such as a retreat, assembly, camp meeting, etc., as long as he or she is not counted in another local Sunday School where he or she is attending. Such functions shall include at least a half hour of study of biblical principles.
- c. All regular Sunday School sessions shall be used in determining the average attendance for the year and that attendance shall be reported monthly to the district. For most churches, the number of Sunday School sessions held will be 52. The District SDMI Board, in consultation with the district superintendent, shall determine any valid exceptions.
- d. Attendance counts (Lines 20a-23a, APR) from Home Department, Nursing Home/Convalescent Center/Health Care Facility, Church-Type Missions, Nazarene Childcare/Schools (birth-secondary), may be included in the average weekly regular Sunday School attendance according to the guidelines in Article I, Section 1

SECTION 2. Discipleship Groups (Small/Cell Groups). The attendance of all Discipleship Groups (Small/Cell Groups) (Line 24a, APR) shall be defined as persons involved in a study of biblical principles for at least a half hour, but not otherwise meeting the criteria of a regular Sunday School Session (see Article II, Section 1).

- a. A local church having more than one type of discipleship ministry group should combine weekly attendance figures and report a single monthly average.

- b. Since discipleship ministries can begin or end any time during the church year, the yearly average should be determined by dividing accumulative figures by the number of weeks the ministries were conducted.

ARTICLE III. SUNDAY SCHOOL CLASSES AND DEPARTMENTS

SECTION 1. The Sunday School shall be divided into classes for children and youth on the basis of age or school grade. For adults the classes should be determined by common interests, mission, or topic.

SECTION 2. When the number of classes within the children's, youth, or adult age-groups increase, attention should be given to departmentalization with a supervisor appointed by the SDMI Board.

SECTION 3. The duties of the department supervisor shall be to:

- a. coordinate the work of the teachers/leaders within the department.
- b. conduct departmental meetings when necessary.
- c. insure that each teacher/leader within the department has the necessary approved curriculum, additional resources, and equipment available when needed.
- d. be responsible for ordering all necessary curriculum and materials for the department.
- e. work with the corresponding age-group director of the SDMI Board to promote Sunday School attendance and growth and implement any special campaigns.
- f. present training needs of the department's teachers/leaders to the corresponding age-group director for presentation to the SDMI Board.
- g. keep accurate responsibility lists and attendance records for the department and see that all absentees and prospects on the Responsibility Lists are contacted regularly.
- h. work with the teachers/leaders in the department to see that the entire area is attractive and conducive to learning.
- i. be responsible for the securing of substitute teachers/leaders within the department.

ARTICLE IV. SUNDAY SCHOOL/SMALL GROUPS TEACHERS/LEADERS

SECTION 1. The department supervisors and teachers/leaders shall be appointed annually according to *Manual* 145.8.

SECTION 2. While the ideal is for each teacher/leader to serve for the entire year, in certain circumstances it may be advisable to appoint teachers/leaders for a shorter term.

SECTION 3. The SDMI Board shall have the right to declare the office of any officer or teacher/leader vacant in cases of proven unsound doctrine, imprudent conduct, or neglect of duty.

SECTION 4. All teachers/leaders and substitutes should:

- a. attend workers' meetings regularly.
- b. contact each person on the Responsibility List regularly.
- c. avail themselves of all training opportunities provided.

- d. provide fellowship opportunities for the class/group periodically.
- e. be responsible for seeing that the teaching area is attractive and conducive to learning.
- f. prepare an effective lesson each week.
- g. be alert to opportunities for presenting the gospel with an invitation to receive Christ.

ARTICLE V. SUNDAY SCHOOL/SMALL GROUPS LEADERSHIP RESPONSIBILITIES

SECTION 1. The local SDMI superintendent shall be elected each year according to *Manual* 113.9-13.10 and 127. The duties of the SDMI superintendent shall be to:

- a. superintend the SDMI under the direction of the pastor.
- b. represent SDMI at the church board meeting.
- c. plan regular meetings for teachers/leaders.
- d. provide training opportunities for present and prospective teachers/leaders.
- e. communicate the SDMI Responsibility List and attendance growth emphasis to all workers.
- f. report the SDMI statistics to the designated zone, district, or field office monthly.
- g. encourage attendance at zone, district, field, regional, and global SDMI functions.

SECTION 2. The duties of the age-group directors are outlined in *Manual* 147.1-147.9; 148.2.

SECTION 3. The SDMI Board shall elect a person to keep the SDMI records. He or she shall keep an accurate record, of the Responsibility List, attendance, visitors, and other statistics as may be required for all SDMI ministries.

SECTION 4. Where appropriate, the SDMI Board shall elect a treasurer to keep an accurate account of all moneys raised by SDMI each week and authorize the disbursement according to the direction of the board. A monthly report shall be given to the SDMI superintendent.

SECTION 5. Where appropriate, the SDMI Board shall appoint a person to be responsible for ordering the SDMI curriculum and other resources requested by the age-group directors and/or department supervisors. The appointee shall distribute to the appropriate age-group director all information received from Nazarene Publishing House and prepare the order after approval of the superintendent and pastor.

ARTICLE VI. SDMI ADMINISTRATION AND SUPERVISION

SECTION 1. The SDMI is under the care of the pastor, amenable to the local church board, under the general supervision of the SDMI Board and the immediate leadership of the superintendent and age-group directors.

SECTION 2. If a church who has employed a director of Christian education wishes to elect that person as SDMI superintendent, the procedure is as follows:

- a. the local church nominating committee would recommend to the annual church meeting that no superintendent be elected for the coming church year, and the associate will serve as superintendent.
- b. the congregation should affirm the decision by majority vote.

- c. the associate will become the SDMI superintendent and will attend church board meetings to discuss Christian education interests but will not be a voting member, *Manual* 160.4.

The same procedure should be followed for employed associates who serve as the Children's Ministries International (CMI) or Adult Ministries International (AMI) directors.

It shall be understood that these are temporary arrangements, and that all possible effort should be made to train and resource local lay leaders for these positions as soon as possible.

SECTION 3. When a pastor to children, youth, or adults is employed in a church, the pastor, in consultation with the church board, the SDMI Board, or NYI Council, assigns the responsibility for children, youth, and adults to the age-level pastors. In that case, the pastor to children, youth, or adults carries out some of the duties otherwise designated to a local CMI director, NYI president, or AMI director. However, the importance of the local CMI director, NYI president, or AMI director remains to provide vital lay leadership, support, and representation for local children's, youth, and adult ministries. The pastor, pastors to children, youth, and adults, and the SDMI Board or NYI Council work together to define the roles and responsibilities of the three positions and how they work together for the benefit of the church's age-related ministries.

ARTICLE VII. SDMI CONVENTIONS

SECTION 1. District Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries International Convention. It is important that each district plan a District SDMI Convention annually in order to provide inspiration, motivation, and training for all SDMI workers. The promotion of Sunday School & Small Group Disciple making ministries should be a highlight of each convention.

- a. Ex-officio members of the District SDMI Convention shall be: the district superintendent; all pastors, assigned ordained ministers, assigned district licensed ministers, retired assigned ministers, full-time associates; district SDMI chair, district directors of CMI and AMI, district NYI president; all local SDMI superintendents, local CMI and AMI directors, local NYI presidents; elected members of the District SDMI Board; lay members of the District Advisory Board; and any Nazarene full-time professors of Christian education with membership on that district.
- b. In the annual church meeting, each local SDMI shall elect additional representatives to the Convention, equal to 25 percent of the officers and teachers/leaders of SDMI ministries.
- c. The District SDMI Board shall serve as a nominating committee to select twice the number of nominees to be elected by plurality vote. These nominees should be members of the Church of the Nazarene, actively involved in one of the ministries of SDMI, and should be selected from the various age-groups (children, youth, and adult teachers / workers). In case elected representatives cannot attend, alternate representatives shall be designated in the order of the votes received.
- d. The representatives to the District SDMI Convention may elect the district SDMI chair and the elected members of the district SDMI Board according to *Manual* 238 and representatives to the Global SDMI Convention each quadrennium.

SECTION 2. Global Sunday School & Discipleship Ministries International Convention. In connection with each General Assembly, SDMI shall observe a Global Convention. Elected

delegates (and guests) shall meet for the purpose of inspiration, motivation, and training to equip and enrich involvement in fulfilling the mission and purpose of SDMI globally.

- a. Ex-officio delegates to the Global SDMI Convention shall be: district superintendents, district SDMI chairs, district directors of CMI and AMI, professors of Christian education at Nazarene colleges, universities, and seminaries, SDMI regional coordinators, CMI and AMI regional coordinators, and directors and staff of the global SDMI department.
- b. Each district should elect four additional delegates which is the number equal to the district ex-officio members or a number up to ten percent of the organized churches on the district.
- c. The following guidelines should be adhered to in elections for the Global SDMI Convention delegates:
 1. The Nominating Committee shall be comprised of the district superintendent, district SDMI chair, and at least three others appointed by the District SDMI Board. They shall select three times the number of nominees to be elected.
 2. The District SDMI Convention shall elect an equal number of delegates and alternates from all SDMI ministries (including youth SDMI teachers/workers). Those elected should be persons who are presently and actively involved in the respective area to which they are elected. The number of alternates elected should include alternates for ex-officio members. Persons should not be elected who will serve as delegates to the Global Nazarene Missions International Convention or the Global Nazarene Youth International Convention, because the three conventions run concurrently.
 3. Delegates shall be elected by ballot in the District SDMI Convention within 16 months of the meeting of the General Assembly or within 24 months in areas where travel visas or other unusual preparations are necessary.
 4. As nearly as possible, elect an equal number of laity and clergy—50 percent laypersons and 50 percent full-time active ministers, elders, or licensed ministers. When the total number is uneven, the extra delegate shall be a layperson.
 5. Incumbent district SDMI leaders newly elected prior to and holding office at the time of the Global Convention shall be the ex-officio members of the convention.
 6. All elected and ex-officio delegates present in the District SDMI Convention shall be eligible to vote for Global SDMI Convention representatives.
 7. A plurality vote shall be sufficient for election.
 8. In case elected delegates cannot attend, alternate delegates shall be designated in the order of the votes they received.
 9. At the convening of the Global SDMI Convention, each delegate shall reside on and be a member of a Church of the Nazarene on the district he or she was elected to represent. (This is not intended to apply to those living near district boundaries where home residence may be across the district line from the place of regular church participation.)

10. If a district cannot finance the full number of delegates to the Global SDMI Convention as recommended, the District SDMI Board may elect as many persons as the district can afford to send.
11. Delegates who attend the convention should have financial assistance from the district comparable to expenses provided from the district for Nazarene Youth International and Nazarene Missions International Convention delegates.
12. If election of delegates for the Global SDMI Convention does not take place at the District SDMI Convention, delegates shall be elected at the District Assembly.

ARTICLE VIII. SDMI AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the General Board members present and voting.