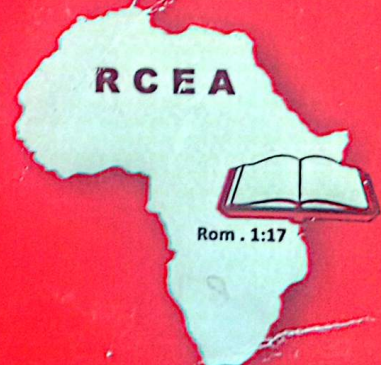


Reformed Church of East Africa

THE CHURCH CONSTITUTION



Revised Edition 2010

CONSTITUTION
OF THE
REFORMED CHURCH
OF
EAST AFRICA

Eldoret - Kenya

16th November 2010

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PREAMBLE

“We the Members of Reformed Church of East Africa -

Acknowledging our sacred duty to spread the gospel of Jesus
Christ;

Believing in the power of the Holy Spirit to guide us in fulfilling the
sacred duty.

Inspired by the motivation of our founders;

Determined to positively influence the society through action;

Hereby enact and give this constitution to ourselves and to our
Posterity.”

Ratified by the 47th Synod of RCEA this 16th day November, 2010 in the year of our Lord

ARTICLE 1

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE CHURCH

- 1) There is hereby established a church to be known as "*The Reformed Church of East Africa*" hereinafter referred to as "*RCEA*" or "*the Church*"
- 2) The Church consists of all the reformed congregations hitherto under the jurisdiction of The General Synod of the Reformed Church of East Africa together with all congregations which may hereafter be founded through the work of the Reformed Church of East Africa.
- 3) The church shall exercise jurisdiction over all Ministers, Evangelists and congregations under its fellowship and all the work hitherto established under the umbrella of the General Synod of the Reformed Church of East Africa. The geographical jurisdiction of the Church shall be as contained in the church order.
- 4) The church shall be incorporated as a Society under the Societies Act, Chapter 108 of the Laws of Kenya save that for purposes of transacting and ownership of property, the church shall be incorporated as a Trust under the Trustees (Perpetual Succession) Act, Chapter 164 of the Laws of Kenya.

ARTICLE 2

FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE CHURCH

- 1) The church is part of the Holy Universal Apostolic Church and adheres to the following doctrines:
 - i) *Worshipping one God, Almighty, all-wise, and all-loving, in the Trinity, of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, the same in substance, equal in power and glory;*
 - ii) *Adoring God the Father, infinite in majesty, of whom are all things;*
 - iii) *Confessing our Lord Jesus Christ, the Eternal Son, made very man for our salvation;*
 - iv) *Glorifying in His Cross and Resurrection;*
 - v) *Owing obedience to Christ as the Head of His Church;*
 - vi) *Trusting in the promised renewal and guidance of the Holy Spirit;*
 - vii) *Proclaiming the forgiveness of sins and acceptance with God through faith in Christ, and the gift of eternal life; and*
 - viii) *Labouring for the advancement of the Kingdom of God throughout the world.*
- 2) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the church shall be governed in accordance with and in conformity to the doctrines laid down under Schedule III to this constitution.
- 3) Subject to this constitution, the General Synod shall have powers to legislate and adjudicate on all matters of doctrine, worship, governance, and discipline including the right to determine all questions concerning membership and offices of the church membership of the courts and the mode of election of office-bearers.

ARTICLE 3

GOVERNANCE

Presbyterian Government

- 1) The governance of the church is Presbyterian which the Church acknowledges as agreeable to the word of God and is vested in the courts of the Church.

The Courts of the Church

- 2) The church shall be governed through the courts of the Church namely; Local Church Councils being the Courts of the Church for the local congregations, the Parish Councils being the Courts of the Parishes, the Presbytery Councils being the Courts of the Presbyteries, and the General Synod being the supreme Council and Court of the whole Church through its Synodical meetings.

Rules of the Councils Made By the General Synod

- 3) The rules governing the composition, powers and the duties, the methods, procedure and the frequency of the meetings of the Courts, the formation of all Courts and their relationship to one another shall be laid down by the General Synod and clearly outlined in the Church order.

The church and Other Entities

- 4) The relationship between the Church and other entities not specifically provided for under this constitution shall be determined by the general synod with the advice of the relevant committee. The General Synod is vested with authority to determine the nature of such relationship provided that:

- i) The relationship does not alter the integrity and identity of the Church as espoused in Article I
- ii) The fundamental principles of the Church as enshrined in this constitution are not compromised.
- 5) The General Synod and its executive organs are entitled to protect the integrity of the church against actions by other entities that contravene this constitution to the extent that is incompatible with the spirit of Articles I and II.

ARTICLE 4
MEMBERSHIP TO THE CHURCH MINISTRY

1) Membership to the church ministry is acquired through any of the following three routes:

- i) *Ordination*
- ii) *Commissioning*
- iii) *Induction*

Ordination

2) Ordination is conducted through a public ceremony by admission to ministerial functions of the church characterised by prayer, imposition of hands by teachers of the word and recognition of authority of the ordained to the ministry of the word.

3) The following persons shall be eligible for ordination:

- i) Ministers
- ii) Elders
- iii) Deacons/Deaconess

Commissioning

4) Commissioning is command to preach the gospel grounded in Jesus' universal authority and based on the teaching of the book of Matthew 28:18-20). It is a charge to evangelism of the nations, which must be followed by baptism and teaching, as fulfilment of God's purpose.

5) The following persons shall be eligible for commissioning:

- i) Evangelist
- ii) Missionaries
- iii) Professor of theology

Induction

6) Induction refers to the act of admitting a person or persons to assume office as office bearer(s) through a suitable ceremony.

7) Induction applies to;

- i) Church Employees
- ii) Committees
- iii) Office Bearers

ARTICLE 5

THE CHURCH OFFICES

1) The Ministry of The Church is vested in the following offices;

- i) Ministers
- ii) Elders
- iii) Deacons/Deaconess
- iv) Evangelists

Tasks of a Minister

2) The main tasks of a Minister are:

- i) To preach and teach the word of God;
- ii) To administer the sacraments and ceremonies of the church
- iii) To shepherd the congregations
- iv) To admonish the congregations
- v) To solemnize and perform marriages according to the marriage law of this church
- vi) To give leadership in the ministry of the parish placed to oversee
- vii) To give pastoral care

viii) To guard the Church Constitution and Doctrines

ix) To participate in the government of the Church

x) To provide other professional services where a minister is qualified

Requirements for ordination as a minister

3) A person shall be ordained as a Minister of The Church if that person:

- i) Is a Member of the Church
- ii) Has a good reputation
- iii) Testifies to be called by God to this Ministry
- iv) Married, only of a monogamous marriage, formerly solemnized in a Church ceremony
- v) Has followed theological, pastoral and professional training and passed up to standards set by The General Synod.
- vi) Is trustworthy and able to handle finances
- vii) Is accepted by The General Synod for ordination to be a Minister

Terms of a minister's calling, posting, discipline and retirement

4) The terms of a minister's calling, posting, discipline and retirement are spelled out in the Church order.

Office of the Evangelist

- 5) Evangelists are chosen and set apart for office and discharge of their function in accordance with regulations set forth in the church order of this Constitution.

The Tasks of an Evangelist

- 6) The main tasks of the Evangelists are:-
 - i) To preach and teach the word of God
 - ii) To evangelize the unbelievers and the un-reached
 - iii) To teach the “*Katekisma*” and other church doctrines
 - iv) To educate the Elders and Deacons/deaconesses
 - v) To conduct pastoral programmes in the church sponsored schools
 - vi) To shepherd the congregations
 - vii) To admonish the congregations
 - viii) To give pastoral care
 - ix) To guard the Church Constitution and Doctrines
 - x) To participate in the government of the Church

The Terms of Election, Discipline and Retirement

- 7) The terms of the Evangelist's appointment, discipline and retirement are laid down in the Church order

The Office of the Elder

- 8) Elders are chosen and set apart for office and discharge of their function in accordance with regulations set forth in the church order of this Constitution. Elder retains the state of being an elder throughout life. An elder is therefore not expected to change from being an elder to any other ministry. Where an ordained elder moves from one congregation to another, he retains the status of an elder.

Tasks of an Elder

- 9) The main tasks of the Elder are to:
 - i) Assist the Pastor in the pastor's work
 - ii) Take care for the Pastors and Evangelists welfare
 - iii) Supervise the congregation with fellow Elders
 - iv) Give pastoral care with the 'Elder' district placed to oversee
 - v) Facilitate the implementation of Parish policies and plans
 - vi) Protect the congregation from unbiblical teachings contrary to the church doctrine.
 - vii) Participate in the government of the church

The Terms of Election, Discipline and Retirement

- 10) The terms of election, discipline and retirement are spelled out in the Church order.

Diaconal office

- 11) Members of the diaconal office are chosen and set apart for office and discharge of their functions in accordance with regulations set forth in the church order of this Constitution.

Tasks of the Diaconal Office

- 12) The main tasks of the Diaconal office are:-
 - i) To assist the Pastor in pastoral work
 - ii) To deal with the social and spiritual needs of all within the bounds of the Local church.
 - iii) To take care for the properties of the church, together with the Elders
 - iv) To participate in the government of the Church
 - v) If married, only to a monogamous marriage solemnized in a church ceremony

The Terms of Election, Discipline and Retirement

- 13) The terms of the election, discipline and retirement are laid down in the Church order.

Relationship between offices

- 14) These offices differ from each other only in mandate and task, not in dignity and honour.

ARTICLE 6

RECOGNISED UNITS OF THE CHURCH

- 1) The following are recognised as fundamental units of the church:
 - i) Professors of Theology
 - ii) Women
 - iii) Youth
 - iv) Sunday School

Professors of Theology

- 2) Professors of theology are appointed to offer services to the church on theological issues including but not limited to training seminary students for the ministry of the word and expounding the word of God and vindicating sound doctrines against heresies and error.
- 3) Professors of theology are chosen and set apart for office and discharge of their function in accordance with regulations set forth in the church order of this Constitution.
- 4) The main tasks of the Professor of Theology are:
 - i) To preach and teach the word of God
 - ii) To teach students at institutions of higher learning the subjects the professor is specialized in.

- iii) To advise the Church on theological and doctrinal issues

The terms of the professor's appointment, calling, discipline and retirement

- 5) The terms of the professor's appointment, calling, discipline and retirement are laid down in the Church order.

Women Ministry

- 6) It is Fellowship of RCEA women from local level to national level. At the national level, it is coordinated by a coordinator appointed by the executive.
- 7) The main tasks of women ministry

- i) To pray for the church, the clergy and laity in the discharge of their functions
- ii) Preach the word of God for the edification of the Christ's Kingdom
- iii) To foster Christian fellowship among RCEA women
- iv) To study God's word in bible study forums and conferences
- v) To set a good example to teenage girls and guidance to grow in Christian faith
- vi) To represent RCEA women in relevant forums nationally and internationally.
- vii) Work together with the church committees in enhancing the church's wellbeing and cleanliness, taking care of the church grounds
- viii) Engage in group income generating activities for the advancement of the welfare of women and the church in general.

The terms of the women ministry appointment/elections, discipline and retirement

8) The terms of the women ministry appointment/elections, discipline and retirement are laid down in the Church order.

Youth Ministry

9) Youth Ministry is Fellowship of the church to the youth from local level to national level. At the national level, it is coordinated by a coordinator appointed by the executive.

10) The youth ministry shall be categories in ages as follows:

- i) Junior youth (13-19 years);
- ii) Senior youth (20-35 years);

11) Youth shall be awarded certificates on graduation from one level to the next the levels being categorized as follows:

- i) Sunday school to junior youth (at Age 13 or higher)
- ii) junior youth to senior youth (Age 20 or higher)

12) The main tasks of youth ministry shall be:

- i) To identify and promote youth talent in music, drama, sports, business and technology.
- ii) To improve the physical, mental, spiritual, social and economic life of the youth.
- iii) To pray for the church; the clergy and laity in the discharge of their functions
- iv) Preach the word of God for the edification of the Christ's Kingdom
- v) To foster Christian fellowship among RCEA youth
- vi) To study God's word in bible study forums and conferences

vii) To set a good example to the young and guidance to grow in Christian faith

viii) To represent RCEA youth in relevant forums such as exchange programs, youth camps, youth movements, voluntary services in the church and community nationally and internationally.

ix) Work together with the church committees in enhancing the church's wellbeing and cleanliness, taking care of the church grounds.

x) Engage in group income generating activities for the advancement of the welfare of youth and the church in general.

The terms of youth ministry appointment/elections, discipline and retirement

13) The terms of youth ministry appointment/elections, discipline and retirement are as laid down in the Church order.

Sunday School Ministry

14) Sunday school is an out of pulpit teaching ministry that caters for all ages of the congregation. Sunday school lessons are taught before or after sermons. Mainstream Sunday school shall be composing of children of ages 3-12 years.

15) Sunday school students shall graduate on passing catechism classes at age Twelve (12). The graduation shall be transition from Sunday school to junior youth.

The terms of the Sunday school ministry appointment/elections, discipline and retirement

16) The terms of the Sunday school ministry appointment/elections, discipline and retirement are laid down in the Church order.

ARTICLE 7

SUBSIDIARIES OF THE CHURCH

- 1) The subsidiaries of the church shall be referred to as preaching posts
- 2) A Preaching Post shall be established by the Church Council in any area within their jurisdiction where there are resident Christians, who are far from the existing local church. Where there are no Local Churches, a preaching post can be established under a mission area.
- 3) The practice and procedure of establishing preaching post is laid down in the Church order.

Formation of a New Local Church from a Preaching Post

- 4) A Preaching Post having proved its viability to the Parish Council and the Local Church Council which the preaching post is under, shall be considered and inaugurated as a local church council once it fulfils the condition laid out in the church order.

ARTICLE 8

THE LOCAL CHURCH

- 1) The Local Church council is the essential basis of all the organizations of the church and ideally is the expression of the universal church within the parish under which it falls.

Membership

- 2) The membership of a local church shall be open to:-
 - i) All who have been baptized with water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and
 - ii) All who accept faith and worship of the Church, and
 - iii) All who are willing to abide by the laws and customs of the Church
 - iv) Baptized members from the other churches, who are welcomed before the congregation as soon as they are conversant with the Church Doctrine
 - v) Un-baptized members of the other churches who have followed baptism class training and who are willing to be baptized by The Church
 - vi) Children of the church members who share in privileges and obligations of membership of their parents.

Tasks of Local Church Council

- 3) The Local Church is the essential basis of the organization of the church and is the anchor of holistic evangelization and care of the congregations and is responsible for:

- ...maintaining the good conduct of the worship of God in the
Sunday services, place of work and homes
- ii) Pastoral care of all its members
 - iii) Evangelization of all who live within its bounds
 - iv) Contribute its due financial and material share to the work of the whole church
 - v) Ascertaining the proper functioning of The Church ministry in its area of jurisdiction

Composition of Local Church Council

- 4) Each Local Church shall have a Local Church Council. The composition of the Local church council is outlined in the church order.

Powers and duties of Local Church Council

- 5) The powers and duties of a local church council shall be as follows:-
 - i) It shall have authority in church matters over the whole area appointed to it by the parish Council
 - ii) It shall be the court of the local church
 - iii) It shall assist the Evangelist in the arrangements for public worship
 - iv) It shall assist the Minister in the arrangements of public worship and sacraments.
 - v) It shall supervise and control Local Church Finances
 - vi) It shall approve suitable members to be ordained as elders, deacons or deaconesses
 - vii) It shall exercise disciplinary powers over the congregation and office bearers of the local church.

- viii) It shall arrange for converts to be received into the church.
- ix) It shall arrange for evangelization for the area appointed to it
- x) It shall implement decisions of synod, presbytery and parish councils
- xi) It shall have power to raise funds in such manner as the Council shall deem fit, provided that the Council shall not have power to incur liability on behalf of the parish or other RCEA offices.
- xii) It shall have power to recommend to the Parish Council that a new local church be created from its jurisdiction.
- xiii) It shall have power to establish a new Preaching Post in consultation with the Parish Council.
- xiv) It shall employ, set the terms of service, discipline and terminate the services of employees of the local church.
- xv) It shall establish such committees, as it shall deem necessary

Dissolution of Local Church Council

- 6) A local Church council may be dissolved on the following grounds:
 - i) Acting contrary to the fundamental Principles of the church as in Article 2 of the constitution
 - ii) If they defy the binding decisions of the broader council
 - iii) If they act contrary to the word of God and the Doctrines of the church
 - iv) If they are not willing to abide by the laws and customs of the church
 - v) If they misuse of Church funds and property
 - vi) Persistence wrangles and disagreements
 - vii) Failure to carry out the functions of the Local.

ARTICLE 9

THE PARISH

- 1) A Parish is a church administrative unit made up of local churches grouped together under the administration of a Parish Council through a Minister and Boundaries Committee.
- 2) The Parish shall consist of at least one but not more than five local churches.
- 3) The formation of new Parishes shall be undertaken by the General Synod in consultation with Presbyteries under whose jurisdiction the parishes affected fall.

Establishment of Parish Council

- 4) Every Parish shall have and be administered by a Parish Councils which shall consist of the following members seconded from the local church councils:
 - i) Minister
 - ii) Evangelist
 - iii) Elders
 - iv) Deacons/deaconesses
 - v) Women leaders
 - vi) Youth leaders
- 5) Every member of the Parish Council shall have an equal vote.
- 6) The composition of the Parish Council is outlined in the church order save that the General Synod shall have powers to sanction departure from the rule of equality of numbers among the Parish Councils when it shall deem fit.

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- iii) Oversees the Minister's work, the Evangelist, other Parish employees, local churches, church advisers and the congregations within its bounds;
- iv) Recommends students to join theological training;
- v) Receives theological students to preach in their local churches;
- vi) Facilitates ordinations of ministers, ordination of elders and ordination of deacons and deaconesses, and admit them to their charges in accordance with regulations of the General Synod and in consultation with the presbytery council;
- vii) Implement resolutions of the General Synod applicable to the Parish;
- viii) Oversee the running of institutions and programmes within the jurisdiction of the Parish

- ix) Heads of Departments/Programmes
 - x) 1 representative of people with special needs (persons with disabilities)
- 5). The Heads of Departments/Programmes serving the church within the Presbytery shall be ex-officio members of the Presbytery Council and shall have no vote.

Executive Committee of the Presbyteries

- 6) Every Presbyterian Council shall have an executive committee which shall consist of the following members:
- i) Moderator
 - ii) Deputy Moderator
 - iii) Secretary
 - iv) Deputy Secretary
 - v) Treasurer
 - vi) 1 Evangelist
 - vii) 2 Installed Elders
 - viii) 1 Deacon/Deaconess
 - ix) 1 women's Leader
 - x) 1 Youth Leader
 - xi) 1 representative of people with special needs (persons with disabilities)
- 7). The Moderator, Deputy Moderator, Secretary, Deputy Secretary and the Treasurer shall be the office bearers of the Presbytery Council.
- 8). The Presbytery Moderator shall: -
- a) Be the Chairperson of both the Presbyterian Council and its executive committee

- b) Be an Ordained Minister from the Presbytery Council or residing within the Presbytery boundary.
- 9) The Presbytery Secretary shall:-
- i) Be elected from among Ministers or ordained elders who are members of the Presbytery Council.
 - ii) Be the secretary to the presbytery;
- 10) The Presbytery Treasurer shall be elected from among the ordained elders, Deacon/Deaconess who are the members of the Presbytery Council.
- 11) The Deputy Presbytery Moderator shall:-
- i) Be the deputy-chairperson of the Council and executive committee
 - ii) Be an Ordained Minister from the Presbytery Council or residing within the Presbytery bounds;
- 12) The Deputy Presbytery Secretary shall:-
- i) Be elected from among Ministers or ordained elders who are members of the presbytery council.
 - ii) Be the deputy-secretary to the presbytery.

Qualifications of officers of Presbytery

- 13) The qualifications of Presbytery Moderators, Secretaries their Deacons and the Treasurer are as set out in the church order.

- 14) The composition of delegates of Presbyteries to the general synod is explained in the church order.
- 15) The Presbytery shall have the following departments among others:
- i) Women
 - ii) Youth
 - iii) Sunday School
 - iv) Education
 - v) Development

Presbytery Committees

- 16) The Presbytery Council shall perform its functions through Presbytery Committees to be formed on need basis.

Duties of a Presbytery Council

- 17) The Presbytery Council shall perform the following duties:
- i) To see that the word of God is preached in purity within its bounds, that the sacraments are rightly administered and the pastoral oversight is maintained.
 - ii) To maintain the agreed usage of the order of public worship and the administration of sacraments
 - iii) To elect the office bearers and executive committee of the general synod
 - iv) To give support, where possible, to students in training for the ministry

- v) Facilitate ordination of suitably qualified persons for the ministry of the word and sacrament
- vi) To implement the decisions of The General Synod
- vii) To encourage church extension and to provide for the adjustment to review parish boundaries when necessary
- viii) To secure, maintain, care for church finances and other property (moveable or immovable) under The Church ownership or jurisdiction
- ix) Agent of church trustee
- x) To ensure that annual statistical returns including cess are forwarded to The General Synod Office not later than 30th September of each year
- xi) To receive quarterly reports of the Parish Councils under Her jurisdiction
- xii) To receive, deploy and supervise church workers allocated by the General Synod
- xiii) To oversee the conduct and discharge of ministers' professional duties within its area of jurisdiction
- xiv) To review the decisions of the parish councils and to deal with matters brought before it by the parish councils
- xv) To guard the church's property from damage or improper usage
- xvi) To establish and inaugurate new parishes
- xvii) It is the responsibility of the presbytery to see that conditions required for the formation of a new parish council are met to secure the approval of the Synod
- xviii) When approval is given, to constitute the new parish council at a service of public worship presided over by the Moderator of the Presbytery

- xix) It is the responsibility of the presbytery in consultation with the General Synod to make any adjustments to the parishes under its supervision, which may be made necessary by changing circumstances in the area of the pastorate. In doing so, it shall consult the parish council concerned and the Constitution and Boundaries review committee.

Powers of Presbytery Council

- 18) The Presbytery council may –
- i) Hire or fire presbytery employees;
 - ii) Review the decisions and actions of Parish Councils;
 - iii) Discharge responsibility as a result of reference by the parish committee on which it may be in doubt, or it may instruct that records of any of these bodies be produced for examination, and has the right to take action on any subject matter - to its authority- which may arise on an examination of those records;
 - iv) Recommends theological students for ordination to the General Synod Moderator;
 - v) Recommend suitable candidates to the General Synod for the position of Church trustees

Autonomy of Presbytery

- 19) The Presbytery shall be autonomous and shall have decision making powers subject only to the decisions of the General Synod or the Executive Committee of the General Synod.
- 20) Such autonomy shall be in respect of:–
- i) Raising and borrowing of funds
 - ii) Calling and sending of missionaries

- iii) Establishing and maintaining fraternal relationship
- iv) Recommending church workers for training and award of scholarships
- v) Inviting fraternal guests to its Annual Synod

ARTICLE 10A

TRANSITION OF PRESBYTERY TO REGIONAL SYNOD

- 1) The General Synod shall have powers to create regional synods from presbyteries as it deems fit.
- 2) A regional synod shall be composed of a cluster of presbyteries from a defined geographical region.
- 3) The transition of presbyteries to regional synods shall be as explained in the church order.

ARTICLE 11

THE GENERAL SYNOD

- 1) The General Synod is the assembly that brings together all the Presbyteries of the church through elected delegates.

Formation

- 2) The General Synod is the continuity of the RCEA Synod in existence since the adaptation of the church name "Reformed Church of East Africa" in 1963 (see Preamble); including all binding resolutions and reforms on its own structure.

Membership and Composition

- 3) The General Synod shall comprise of:-
 - i) The Presbytery Council office bearers under article 10 (7);
 - ii) Delegates from the Presbyteries;
 - iii) The Moderator
 - iv) The General Secretary
 - v) The Honorary Treasurer
 - vi) Professor of Theology who shall have no voting powers;
 - vii) Non-voting guests shall be invited by the Executive Committee;

ARTICLE 11A

THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

- 1) The General Synod shall have an Executive Committee which shall be the executive organ responsible for the execution and the implementation of the decisions and resolutions of the General Synod and to act on behalf of the General Synod as provided for in this constitution, the regulations made thereto and the church order.

Composition of the Executive Committee

- 2) The Executive Committee shall be composed of members appointed by a full sitting of the General Synod provided that the Moderator, Deputy Moderator, General Secretary, Deputy General Secretary and Honorary Treasurer shall be members of the Executive Committee with voting powers and the Moderator shall in addition have a casting vote.
- 3) In addition to the members referred to under article 11A (2) above, the following other members shall compose the Executive Committee:
 - i) 4 pastors
 - ii) 3 elders
 - iii) 1 deacon
 - iv) 1 deaconess
 - v) 2 evangelists
 - vi) Honorary treasurer
 - vii) Women representative
 - viii) Youth representative
 - ix) Person with disability

- 4) Heads of Departments or Program Officers may be co-opted into the Executive Committee for specific sitting as need arises save that they shall have no voting powers.
- 5) The Moderator of the General Synod shall be the Moderator of the Executive Committee
- 6) The practice and procedure of the electing Executive Committee is as provided for under article 13.
- 7) The duties and task of the Executive Committee are as follows:
 - i) Serve the entire church in assisting the needy church members, inspiring and training members of the Courts and Councils, Committees and employees of RCEA
 - ii) Facilitate General Synod Council to propagate the Gospel within the fundamental principles of the church as laid down in the Constitution, Article 2
 - iii) Implement resolutions and Acts of The General Synod
 - iv) To create departments and programmes in order to serve the church in the discharge of her holistic ministry subject to the General Synod approval
 - v) Appoint qualified, experienced and professional Departmental or Program Officers to relevant jobs that they have been trained for, subject to Synod review and approval.
 - vi) Demote, terminate, or take other necessary disciplinary actions against Departmental or Program Officers, subject to review and approval of The General Synod.
 - vii) To review the appointment and termination of service of Heads of Departments or Programmes

- viii) Assist the Departmental or Program Officers to relevant jobs that they have been trained.
- ix) Appoint and monitor the works and functioning of committees and programs through the General Secretary as empowered by The General Synod
- x) Sets procedures for the management of the funds and properties of the church
- xi) Make proposals to The General Synod on matters affecting RCEA and prepare the General Synod Agendas.
- xii) Draft long term working development plans to be approved by The General Synod
- xiii) Receive and discuss reports of Departmental Committees
- xiv) Approve departmental budgets, capital investment and such other budgets, as The General Synod Committee shall deem necessary from time to time.
- xv) Shall report what it has carried out in the calendar year to The General Synod Council
- xvi) Shall represent RCEA in National and International forums
- xvii) Perform such other functions as are set out in this Constitution in implanting the above tasks

Officer Bearers of the Executive Council

8) The following shall comprise the office bearers of the Executive Council of the General Synod namely:

- i) Moderator
- ii) General Secretary
- iii) Honorary Treasurer
- iv) Deputy Moderator
- v) Deputy General Secretary

9) *Duties of the office bearers of the General Synod*

- i) The office bearers of the General Synod shall discuss any agenda prepared by the Moderator and General Secretary regarding the affairs of the Church
- ii) The office bearers shall prepare the agenda for the Executive Committee and implement its decisions.

ii) Be Secretary to the General Synod and Executive Committee;

The Honorary Treasurer

Qualifications

- 4) A person shall be qualified to be appointed as the Honorary Treasurer if—
 - i) He is a qualified accountant or holds any other such related qualifications as may be approved by the General Synod;
 - ii) He is a member of the RCEA;
 - iii) He has not been charged and/or convicted of any offence involving fraud, abuse of office, financial impropriety or any other economic crime;
- 5) The following shall be the responsibilities of the Honorary Treasurer—

Responsibilities

- 1) Accountable to the Executive Committee and the General Synod in financial matters
- 2) Adviser to the Executive and the General Synod
 - i) Financial position of the RCEA
 - ii) Raising of loans, overdrafts, banking facilities, aid and grants of whatever nature
 - iii) Procurement and placement of insurance for the RCEA's property both moveable and immovable

- iv) Supervision of accounts
- v) Liaising with sponsors
- vi) To carry out continuous financial education to office bearers and members
- 3) Shall be the secretary to finance and planning committee
- 4) Shall initiate and lead in resource mobilization and effective and efficient use of the same
- 5) Shall be a member of the Executive committee
- 6) The practice and procedure of election, duties and functions of the Honorary Treasurer are more particularly laid down in the Church order.

3) Deputy Moderator

- i) The Deputy Moderator shall have a deliberate vote
- ii) The Deputy Moderator shall assume the duties of the Moderator in the His absence.
- iii) The Deputy Moderator shall carry out any other duties assigned by the Executive or The General Synod from time to time
- iv) Shall be a member of the Executive Committee

4) *The Deputy General Secretary*

- i) The Deputy General Secretary shall deputize for the General Secretary and shall perform such duties, as the General Secretary shall delegate;
- ii) The Deputy General Secretary shall act in the position of General Secretary during the absence of the General Secretary;
- iii) The Deputy General Secretary shall have a deliberate vote in The General Synod and in the Executive Committee;
- iv) The Deputy General Secretary will carry out any other duties as may be assigned by the Executive or The General Synod from time to time;
- v) Shall be a member of the Executive Committee

9) The practice and procedure of election, duties and functions of the Moderator and the Deputy are laid down in the Church order.

10) The practice and procedure of election, duties and functions of the General Secretary and the Deputy are laid down in the Church order.

ARTICLE 110
SUBCOMMITTEES

- 1) The Executive Committee shall from time to time review the need arises provided that such committee are reviewed and approved by the General Synod within six months of their establishment.
- 2) The terms, functions and mandates of such committees shall be presented to The General Synod and must be in line with the vision and mission of the RCEA.
- 3) The Executive Committee shall establish Departments/Programs and appoint advisory committees in charge thereof as need arises.
- 4) The Committees shall be composed of 7 voting members
- 5) In the first meeting, the committees shall elect the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer from among the members (The head of the program or Department shall be secretary to the committee unless otherwise specified)
- 6) The Head of the Department shall be a well qualified and professionally trained person in that particular Department or Program
- 7) The Treasurer shall at least have a basic understanding of accounts
- 8) The Committee shall have power to recommend to the Executive Committee suspension, discipline and termination of service of its employees.
- 9) Demotion, termination of service and other disciplinary action of the Head of Departments shall be carried out by the Executive Committee. Appeal on decisions of Executive Committee shall be directed to The General Synod
- 10) The Secretary of the Department or Program is the Accounting officer.

ARTICLE 11D

SYNODICAL COMMITTEES

Appointment to Synodical Committees

- 1) The Presbyteries shall propose and forward nominees to the General Synod through the Electoral Commission for appointment to Synodical committees
- 2) The General Synod shall then appoint members of Synodical Committees from among candidates so forwarded by the Presbyteries.
- 3) In appointing new Synodical Committee members, the General Synod shall ensure that a third of the members continue in office to ensure smooth transition.
- 4) Members of Synodical committees shall be co-opted into the General Synod.

Qualifications for appointment to Synodical Committees

- 5) For appointment to any Synodical Committee, the following basic qualifications shall apply:
 - i) Member of RCEA
 - ii) A Committed Christian
 - iii) A Person of integrity
 - iv) Conversant with church laws, doctrine and structure
 - v) Should have served the church successfully in other capacities
 - vi) Ordained elder, deacon/deaconess or clergy

Constitution of the Reformed Church of East Africa

THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

- 1) The board of trustee shall be charged with holding and safeguarding church property both movable and immovable.

Composition

- 2) Members of the Board of Trustees shall be not be less than three (3) and not more than seven (7) and shall be elected by the General Synod.

Qualifications of Members of Board of Trustee

- 3) For a person to be eligible for lection to the Board of Trustees, the person shall be:
- i) A member of RCEA;
 - ii) A Committed Christian;
 - iii) A Person of integrity;
 - iv) Conversant with national land laws;
 - v) Ordained elder, deacon/deaconess or clergy;

- 4) Tasks of Board of Trustee shall include the following:

- i) Where RCEA deems appropriate to hold land or interests in land or any other movable/immovable property, such holdings or interests shall be vested in the Registered Trustees of Reformed Church of East Africa, a body incorporated under the Trustee Perpetual Succession Act (Cap 164) laws of Kenya; subject to prior reference to The General Synod or its Executive Committee therein obtaining a special resolution to raise loans from banks or other financial institutions by mortgaging or charging the said holdings or interests held by them;

- ii) The Board of Trustees shall establish sub-committees of the board at the presbytery level;

- iii) In all matters related to acquisition or disposal of movable/immovable property, the trustees shall act in consultation with the Finance Committee and under the direction of The General Synod;

- iv) The Board of Trustees shall maintain register and inventory of all title to RCEA property at all levels;

- v) Advise the general secretariat of the church in compliance with taxati national land policies, land laws and property laws;

Terms of office of Board of Trustees

- 5) Trustees shall hold office for five (5) years and shall be eligible election for a final second term.

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of the Reformed Church of East Africa

FINANCE AND PLANNING COMMITTEE

- 1) The Financing and Planning Committee shall provide expertise in planning, sourcing for and managing financial resources, and to ensure that church activities run with efficiency, are sustainable and professionally managed.

Establishment

- 2) The Finance and Planning Committee shall be appointed by the Executive Committee.

Composition

- 3) Finance and Planning Committee shall Comprise of Seven Members to be constituted by the RCEA Executive Committee from among the Nominees of Presbyteries through RCEA Electoral Commission. The Honorary Treasurer shall be the Secretary of the Committee.

Qualifications

- 4) To be eligible for membership of this committee, the following qualifications shall apply:
 - i) Professional qualification in a field of study approved by the General Synod;
 - ii) Relevant experience in a field relating to financial management;

ARTICLE 14

TASKS FINANCE & PLANNING COMMITTEE

- 5) *Approval of Budgets*

The Finance and Planning Committee shall review all the Departmental and Programme budgets and forward them with its considerations to the Executive Committee for final approval.

- 6) *Drafting Budgets*

The Finance and Planning Committee through the General Secretariat shall participate in drafting budgets of the Parishes and Presbyteries, while educating church members at all levels how to exploit the resources in order to finance the running of the Parishes, Presbyteries and The General Synod.

- 7) *Advice*

The Finance and Planning Committee shall lead and advise the Church on resource mobilization.

- 8) *Policies*

The Finance and Planning Committee shall make Finance Policies for the Church to be reviewed and approved by the Executive Committee periodically.

- 9) *Review of Salaries*

The Finance and Planning Committee shall from time to time review salaries of church employees in line with current standards of living, academic qualifications, experience, professional qualifications and responsibilities.

ARTICLE 15

MEETINGS

General Guidelines for Meetings

a) Notice for Meetings

- i) To convene a meeting, a written notice of not less than two weeks (14 days) shall be issued by the Secretary of the relevant Council or Committee.
- ii) The notice convening any meeting shall be accompanied by the agenda, venue and time save that it is recommended that venues for meetings shall be within church premises.
- iii) Other means of communication may be used provided that a written notice is provided before the meeting commences

b) Quorum

- i) Unless otherwise provided, the quorum for any meeting where the number of voting Members is even shall be one more than a half of the voting Members.
- ii) Unless otherwise provided, the quorum for any meeting where the number of voting is odd, shall be one half of the aggregate of the voting Members added by one
- iii) An apology for not attending shall not constitute attendance at any meeting.

12) The Finance and Planning Committee shall establish enough schemes for employees and keep them well informed of the progress of these schemes in liaison with Staffing and Training Committee.

Control

The Finance and Planning Committee shall control finances and other assets and advise the Executive Committee about the position of finance of the Church.

Terms of office

The Committee shall have a term of office of five (4) years.

14)

15)

A member shall hold office for five (4) years but shall be eligible for re-election for a second term

16)

The right of appointment to fill any vacancy occurring through the death, retirement, incapacitation, resignation or removal of any member(s) shall be vested in The RCEA Executive.

17)

On appointment of new members, the Executive Committee shall ensure that a third of members continue in office to ensure smooth transition.

c) **Chairing Of Meetings**

- i) In the absence of the chairperson (or the vice-chairperson or deputy chairperson), members shall appoint one member to chair the meeting.

d) **Decisions**

- i) Ordinarily, all decisions in meetings shall be reached by consensus after thorough deliberations.

- ii) Where a consensus is not arrived at, decisions shall be made by simple majority of voting Members.

- iii) Unless otherwise provided, voting shall be by secret ballot

e) ***Ex-Officio Members***

- i) The Moderator or Deputy, the General Secretary or Deputy; and Honorary Treasurer or the Honorary Treasurer's appointee shall be ex-officio members of any Synodical Committees and/or councils, unless otherwise provided. Unless otherwise provided, the number of ex-officio members shall not be more than 1/3 of the voting members in any meeting.

d) General Synod

- i) The General Synod shall meet once in two years; on the third week of November.
- ii) In the event that the General Synod does not meet as required in (i) above, the General Synod office bearers must convene a General Synod within one month from the required time
- iii) In the event that the General Synod meeting does not materialize as specified in (ii) above, half plus one of the full delegates of constituent presbyteries can organize and hold a General Synod

a) Presbytery Council Transition to Regional Synod

i) Order of meetings

When Regional Synod shall be established under this constitution, the order of Presbytery meetings shall be as follows:

- 1) **Meetings of the first calendar year;**
 - a) First meeting shall be presbytery council meeting, which shall be convened annually thereafter.
 - b) Second meeting as presbytery synod, which shall be convened once every two years.

2) Meetings of the second calendar year;

- a) First meeting shall be presbytery council (see 1)a] above and for preparation for Regional Synod)
- b) Second meeting shall be Regional Synod, which shall be held once every

two years.

- 3) Meetings of the fourth calendar year
In the fourth calendar year, the second meeting shall be for General Synod, which shall be held after every four years.

Committee Meetings

a) Meetings of the executive committee

- i) The Executive Committee shall meet at least once every three months
- ii) Meetings shall be called by the General Secretary, in consultation with the Moderator, by way of notice of not less than 14 days. A meeting shall proceed if there is quorum of voting members.
- iii) A special meeting shall be called if more than half the voting members shall request for it in writing with a seven day notice.
- iv) Rules governing the Executive Committee shall be approved and amended by The General Synod.
- v) The Executive Committee shall make sure that all Committees shall continue with their work, unless they are revoked by The General Synod

b) Meetings of Synodical Committees

- i) Synodical Committee meetings shall be held as often as need arise
- ii) All decisions of Synodical committees shall be by simple majority whenever there is no consensus.
- iii) All Committee members are entitled to vote
- iv) The Chairperson shall have a casting vote.

ARTICLE 17

ELECTIONS

Terms of office

- i) All courts of the church shall be constituted through elections after every fourth year.
- ii) Terms of office of all office bearers shall be four years
- iii) Any official elected during any by-elections within the four year term shall be deemed to have served a full term by the conclusion of that term.
- iv) The above provisions apply to all courts of the church.

Re-Election

- i) No member of the church shall hold office for more than two consecutive terms in the same position save that a member is eligible for election to any other office of the church notwithstanding the fact that the member has served the maximum two terms in a different position.
- ii) A member is eligible for re-election to the same office after a minimum of one-term break before such election notwithstanding the fact that the said member has already served a maximum of two terms under the same position.

Vacancy

An office in any court of the church shall become vacant in any of the following instances:

- i) Mental or physical incapacity of the office holder;
- ii) Suspension of the office holder following disciplinary proceedings;

- iii) Resignation;
- iv) Death;

Period of by election

Whenever a vacancy arises in any office a by-election shall be held within three months and not more than six months of the occurrence of the vacancy.

Notice for elections

During every election year referred to under article 17 (1), the Electoral Commission shall in consultation with the General Synod give a General Elections time table to guide the election process.

Order of holding elections

The general elections time table shall provide for the holding of the elections in the following order:

- i) Local Churches (March-April)
- ii) Parishes (June-July)
- iii) Presbyteries and General Synod (September-October)
- iv) Synod Officers and Executive Committee (November) Induction

Timing of elections

Elections at each level shall be synchronised (to be held at the same time period, same date and at designated venues).

Mode of election

All elections shall be done by secret ballot

Number of Votes required for a win

- i) To be elected, a person must garner at least half plus one of the valid votes cast.
- ii) Abstentions shall not be counted as valid votes

Eligibility

Except in special cases approved by the General Synod, Parishes or Local Churches, only those members who have been admitted to the communion role of the church shall be eligible to participate in elections and may stand for election.

Church and politics

The Church recognizes active participation of her members both laity and clergy in active politics and other administrative positions traditionally not considered a place for the clergy.

Requirements for leave of absence to take part in active politics

Any member intending to participate in active politics shall be granted leave to do so provide that;

- i) S/he gives notice of such intentions to the synod office not less than 6 months in advance;
- ii) If s/he holds a substantive post, to apply for unpaid leave of absence of not less than six (6) months and not more than one year;

ARTICLE 18

DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS APPEALS AND REVIEWS

1) Objectives of church discipline

- i) The admonition and discipline of the church are spiritual in character and therefore require that they be spiritual in nature.
 - ii) The exercise of admonition and discipline does not preclude the responsibility of the believer to watch over and admonish one another in love.
 - iii) The purpose of the admonition and discipline of the church is to maintain the honour of God, to restore the sinner, and to remove offence from the Church.
 - iv) All members of the church are subject in both doctrine and life to the admonition and discipline of the church.
 - v) Commission of sins which give public offence or which are brought to the attention of the church according to the rule of Mathew 18:15-17 shall make one liable to the discipline of the church.
 - vi) Failure to perform designated church duties in the case of officials and other church office holders.
- 2) Disciplinary measures shall be applied only after adequate investigations have been made and the member involved has been afforded adequate opportunity to be heard and to present his defence.
 - 3) All disciplinary hearings shall strictly observe the rules of natural justice.
 - 4) Any member subject to disciplinary action shall be served with a summons which shall contain the particulars of the charge or charges describing in sufficient detail the offence with which the member is alleged

to have committed and informing him of the venue and time of the disciplinary hearing.

- 5) There shall be a period of not less than seven days between the date of service of the summons and the date of the disciplinary hearing.
- 6) The following acts may warrant disciplinary action against a member, church official, missionary or other church office holder:
 - i) Professing un-Christian teaching;
 - ii) Deliberate violation of the provisions of this constitution, any regulations made thereto and the church order;
 - iii) Living an un-Christian life;
 - iv) Refusal to abandon errors and wickedness after repeated and loving counsel;
 - v) Failure to respond to admonitions by the relevant court of the church;
 - vi) In the case of officials and other church office holders, financial mismanagement or misappropriation of church funds;
 - vii) In the case of evangelists, failure to live up to the required moral standards set by the church;
- 7) The following disciplinary measures shall be available to all levels of the courts of the church and may be meted to members as well as officials, missionaries and other church office holders where applicable:
 - i) Withholding the sacraments;
 - ii) Suspension from the church for a specified duration of time;
 - iii) Surcharge in case of an offence relating to the management of church funds;

- iv) Suspension or withdrawal of specified membership rights either permanently or for a specified duration of time such as the right to hold a position or vie for an elective post within the church either generally or specifically;
- v) Ex-communication;
- vi) Removal from office in case of an official or other office holder;
- vii) Termination of service in the case of church employees;

8) *Discipline of confessing members*

- i) Any errant member of the church shall be subjected to disciplinary action by the local church under whose jurisdiction the member falls and under the supervision of the Parish Pastor.
- ii) Any member who is dissatisfied with the disciplinary action taken by the local Church shall have the right of appeal to the relevant Parish Council within the same geographical jurisdiction.

9) *Discipline of Elders and deacons/deaconesses*

- i) Disciplinary action against elders or deacon/deaconess shall be taken by the parish council under whose jurisdiction they operate.
- ii) Any elder or deacon/deaconess, who is dissatisfied with the disciplinary action taken by the Parish Council shall have the right of appeal to the Presbytery Council within the same geographical jurisdiction.

10) *Discipline of Evangelists*

- i) Disciplinary action against evangelists shall be taken by the Parish Council under whose jurisdiction they operate.
- ii) An Evangelist who is dissatisfied with the disciplinary action taken by the Parish Council shall have the right of appeal to the Presbytery Council within the same geographical.

11) *Discipline of Ministers*

- i) Disciplinary action against a Minister shall be recommended by the Parish Council to the Presbytery Council under whose jurisdiction the offending Minister operates.
- ii) A minister who is dissatisfied with the disciplinary action by the Presbyterian Council shall have the right of appeal to the General Synod.
- iii) Any minister who is defrocked from office shall hand over ministerial garments and other ministry instruments to the Executive Committee and their ministerial role shall cease forthwith.

12) *Discipline of Program Officers and Departmental Heads*

- i) Disciplinary action against Program Officers or Departmental Heads shall be taken by the Executive Committee of the general synod
- ii) A Departmental Head or program officer who is dissatisfied with the disciplinary actions taken by the Executive Committee general synod shall have the right of appeal to the General Synod.

13) *Discipline of Other Church Employees*

- i) Employees who are not members of the church shall nevertheless be subject to the employment regulations and standing orders of the church.
- ii) Any employee who violates these regulations may be subjected to disciplinary proceedings as provided for under this article.
- iii) Disciplinary actions against such church employees shall be taken by the relevant committee under whose jurisdiction they are employed.

iv) An employee who is dissatisfied with the disciplinary action taken by the relevant committee shall have the right of appeal to the Executive Committee.

Discipline of Missionaries

14)

- i) Disciplinary action against a missionary shall be taken by the relevant official of the General Synod in consultation with the Executive Committee.
- ii) A Missionary who dissatisfied with any disciplinary action shall have the right of appeal to the General Synod.

Discipline of Members of the General Synod

15)

- i) Disciplinary action against any member of the Synod shall be taken by the Executive Committee of the General Synod.
- iii) A Missionary who dissatisfied with any disciplinary action shall have the right of appeal to the General Synod.

Appeals Generally

16)

- i) All appeals shall be lodged with the appellate court within fourteen days of the communication of the decision to the member under disciplinary action.
- ii) Appeals shall be in the form of a petition and shall be made in writing and presented to the secretaries of the relevant councils to which the appeal is made.
- iii) A decision made by the appellate body as specified under this article shall be final.

17) *Reviews and Pardon*

- i) A member subject to any form of disciplinary action and who shows repentance and demonstrates genuine reform may be pardoned by the disciplining authority and may have the disciplinary

action lifted wholly or substituted with a lesser penalty.

- ii) The disciplinary authorities under this article shall have powers to review and set aside and/or substitute their decisions on their own motion or upon application by any member if after the making of the decision:-

There is discovery of new and important matter or evidence which, after the exercise of due diligence, was not within the knowledge of the member under disciplinary or the disciplinary authority or could not be produced by the member at the time when the case was heard and decision given or on account of some mistake or error apparent on the face of the record or for any other sufficient reason.

- iii) Applications for review shall be in the form of a petition and shall be made in writing and presented to the secretary of the relevant council that made the decision sought to be reviewed.

Suspension from office

- 18) Any Elder or Deacon/Deaconess, Evangelist, Minister or Missionary subject to disciplinary action under this article shall be suspended from office as long as the disciplinary action remains in force provided that in the case of elders, deacons and evangelists the suspension shall only take effect after approval by the Presbytery Council and in the case of a Minister, by the General Synod and in the case of a Missionary, after consultation with the supporting Missionary organization.

Powers of the General Synod to make Disciplinary Rules

- 19) The General Synod may enact further legislation to give effect to this article and in particular legislation relating to composition of disciplinary committees, disciplinary procedures, appeals, reviews, pardon, restoration and related matters and such legislation shall be contained in the church order.

ARTICLE 19

EMPLOYEES OF THE CHURCH

Employees of the General Synod

The Moderator, the General Secretary, Pastors and Evangelists shall be Employees of The General Synod

Employees of the Executive Committee

Secretaries of the Departments and Programmes (Departmental Heads) shall be employees of the Executive Committees.

Employees of the Departments and Programmes

All other staff shall be employees of the Departmental/Programs Committee under which the member of staff shall be employed

Terms of service

The terms of service for all church employees are set out in the policy manuals.

Termination of service

In the event that services of a member serving as an employee are terminated, formal documents/instruments of service (certificates, tools of service etc) shall be returned to the respective hiring authority.
The practice and procedure of discipline of church employees is as laid down in the Church order.

ARTICLE 20

ACTS OF THE GENERAL SYNOD

Publication of Resolutions of the General Synod

Any resolution of the General Synod shall be referred to as Acts and shall be published chronologically in accordance with the number of the Synod so passing the resolution i.e. "Act of the "XXX" Synod", the "XXX" representing the serial number of the General Synod in reference.

Custody of General Synod Resolutions

The General Secretariat shall be the custodian of Acts of The General Synod.

Dissemination of Resolutions

Synod resolutions should be published and disseminated to;

- i) The delegates at the last day of the General Synod
- ii) Subordinate church courts within 30 days after the conclusion of General Synod seating

Land and Immovable Properties

All land and other immovable properties acquired by or on behalf of the church before or after the coming to force of this Constitution shall be vested in the church Trustees.

ARTICLE 22

AMENDMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 1) No provision of this constitution shall be amended, alter, augment or diminish unless approved by at least two-thirds of the General Synod.
- 2) Any member wishing to propose an amendment to this constitution shall prepare and bring a motion for such amendment in writing to the respective parish or presbytery.
- 3) The parish or presbytery receiving the motion may amend or alter the same as necessary and thereafter approve or reject the same generally or in part or adjourn the same for further consultation.
- 4) If approved, the motion shall be forwarded to the General Synod which shall approve or reject the motion with or without amendments subject to article 30 (1).
- 5) Once a motion for amendment is approved by the General Synod as provided for under article 30 (1), the constitution shall stand amended accordingly.
- 6) Any provision of this constitution that contradicts biblical teachings shall be null and void to the extent of the contradiction.

ARTICLE 23

INTERPRETATION OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 1) The Church has the right to interpret any provision of this constitution and subject to the safeguards for deliberate action and legislation provided by the Church itself, to modify or add to them provided that the same are in conformity with the doctrinal underpinnings of the church and essential to its continuity and corporate life.
- 2) The interpretation given to this constitution by the General Synod shall be final and binding to all other courts of the church.
- 3) Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing, the following words shall have the meanings prescribed herewith-

'Church office holder' include the following:

- i) Moderator;
- ii) Deputy Moderator;
- iii) General Secretary;
- iv) Deputy General Secretary;
- v) Honorary Treasurer;
- vi) Officials of committees howsoever formed;
- vii) Evangelists;
- viii) Elders;
- ix) Deacon/Deaconess;
- x) Women leaders;

- x) Youth Leaders;
 - xi) Choir leaders;
 - xii) Representative of people with special needs (persons with disabilities);
 - xiii) Employees;
 - xiv) Departmental Heads;
 - xv) Program officers;
 - xvi) Missionaries
 - xvii) Any other persons howsoever elected or appointed under this constitution and any regulations made thereto or the church order for a specified role within the church;
- 3) Any decisions required to be made by any court of the church under this constitution shall be arrived at by a majority vote of the relevant council of the court duly constituted.
 - 4) Any powers required to be exercised or decisions to be made or resolutions to be passed shall unless otherwise specifically provided exercised by the General Synod.
 - 5) Any powers donated to the General Synod under this constitution shall not be delegated to any other court but may be exercised by any committee of the Synod duly constituted.
 - 6) Any reference in this constitution to "writing" or related expressions includes a reference to cable, facsimile transmission, e-mail or comparable means of communication;
 - 7) The headings in this constitution are for convenience only and shall not affect its interpretation.

ARTICLE 24 COMMENCEMENT OF THE CONSTITUTION

- 1) This constitution shall come into effect upon ratification by RCEA Synod constituted for its ratification or upon close of the Synod for the year 2010 whichever is earlier or in such other manner as shall be resolved by the General Synod.
- 2) Upon the coming into effect of this constitution all constitutions existing before the effective date shall stand repealed and this constitution shall be the supreme law of the church subject only to the bible and the constitution and the laws of Kenya and any regulation, by-law, resolution or other provision which shall contradict this constitution shall be null and void to the extend of the contradiction.

SCHEDULE I

HISTORICAL NOTE ON THE REFORMED CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

Whereas in the year 1944 the Consistory of the Dutch Reformed Church at Eldoret, in obedience to the Word of God and mindful of the needs of the African labourers on the farms of its members, established a Mission Committee in order to organize by means of this committee as its executive organ a Christian Mission the said labourers, under the Name of "Bwana Loubser Sending";

And whereas in the same year, at the invitation of the said Consistory and the said Committee, a Missionary, the Rev. B.B. Eybers, came to Kenya and took the guidance of the Mission, so instituted upon him, especially the work of training Ministers and Evangelists;

And whereas the said Mission was used by God for building up a company of believers among the said labourers through the work of its Ministers, posted at stations at Eldoret, Plateau and North of Kitale, and through the work of its Evangelists, placed on Schools on several farms of the said Members of the Dutch Reformed Church;

And whereas in the year 1959, on authority of the said Consistory and the said Committee, a form of Church Government was set up and inaugurated, under which the stations at Eldoret, Plateau and Trans-Nzoia, which congregations together now formed a church of its own, Elders were ordained, Consistories were formed for the said congregations, and a Presbytery was instituted, which Presbytery exercised jurisdiction over the said Mission Committee to carry on with the mission work;

And whereas in the year 1961 the "The Reformed Mission League" a non-profit-making mission board in the Netherlands Reformed Church, by authority of its resolution of its annual meeting on the 21st September 1960, has taken over the said Mission from the said Consistory and the said Committee, by authority of their resolution of their joint meeting on the 20th of January 1961,

with the agreement of the said Consistory of the year 1961, and since that date the said Mission has maintained a close relationship with the said Consistory;

And whereas the said Mission League had sent out in its Kenya branch several missionaries and mission workers for carrying out religious, education, medical, social and literary work, which missionaries and mission workers form together the Conference of Missionaries in the fields;

And whereas, on the annual meeting in July 1963, the said Presbytery changed its name in Synod and adopted as the name of the Church "Reformed Church of East Africa";

And whereas agreement had been reached upon a basis of union by the Reformed Church of East Africa (RCEA) and the Bwana Loubser Mission, by authority of the resolution of the meeting of its General Committee of the 5th of September, 1963, to enter the proposed union;

And whereas The General Synod of the RCEA and the Bwana Loubser Mission declared in November 1963 that they have been united as one Church and Mission and had adopted its first Constitution;

And whereas The General Synod of the RCEA governed the Church according to that Constitution, while the said mission League continued with mission work in many fields alongside the church under the guidance of the "Missionary Conference";

And whereas as from 1980 all the work, carried out by the Church and the Mission, was brought under The General Synod of the RCEA, for the management whereof The General Synod installed an Executive Committee and the Office of the Executive General Secretary;

And whereas The General Synod of the Reformed Church of East Africa of 1982, declared intention to revise the Constitution, whose completed version was adopted in 1992;

And whereas further amendment were recommended by The General Synod of 1996; whose proposals were subjected to thorough debate of the membership through its courts and committees, and in Synodical Review Committee of 1997 and in The General Synod of 1998, The Reformed Church of East Africa, confessing its complete subjection to the word of God, and the Reformed Creeds as true interpretation of the word of God and the reformed creeds as the true interpretation of this word, acknowledging Christ as the only head of His Church, and desiring to honour the apostolic injunction that in the churches all things are to be done decently and in order, (I Corinthians 14: 40).

SCHEDULE II

VISION, MISSION AND MOTTO OF THE REFORMED CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

a) Vision:

To see all people live and share in life, the cross and resurrection of Christ

b) Mission:

RCEA is committed to lead people to Christ through Preaching the Word of God, teaching them to grow into Christ's Likeness and equips them to provide Christian Service.

Church Motto:

"Titolee"

SCHEDULE III

DOCTRINAL UNDERPINNINGS GOVERNING THE MANAGEMENT OF THE REFORMED CHURCH OF EAST AFRICA

- 2) The church receives the Old and the New Testament as the infallible word of God and as its supreme rule of faith and life and upholds the fundamental doctrines of the Catholic faith founded thereupon and its interpretation and reaching thereof adheres to the guiding principles of the protestant reformation. The church affirms and adheres to Heidelberg Catechism, Canons of Dort and Belgic Confession as the standard of confession.

- 3) The Church receives the historic confession of faith known as the Apostles Creed, the Nicene Creed and the Athanasius Creed, as a subordinate and provisional standard in its catechism known as the "Katekisma" until such time as this church shall exercise Her right to frame its own confession of faith.

- 4) The Church has the inherent right under the safeguards of deliberate action and legislation provided by the Church itself, to frame or adopt its subordinate standards to define the sense in which it understands these standards, to modify the form of expression therein, or to formulate other doctrinal statements, and define the relation thereto of its office-bearers and members, but always in agreement with the word of God and fundamental doctrines of Christian faith as set forth in these standards, of

which agreement the Church shall first judge with due regard to liberty of opinion in points which do not enter into the substance of the faith.

Holistic Ministry

The Church in the discharge of Her mission in the world, cannot confine itself solely to the preaching of the Word and administration of purely religious ordinances. Believing that it is entrusted with a ministry not only to the soul of men, but also to their bodies and minds. Following example of Her master, who went about doing good, it claims the right, as it shall see fit, to undertake educational, medical, social and literary work for the benefit of all who desire its help, and declares its willingness to cooperate with government and other agencies in promoting the mental, physical and moral welfare of the whole community.

Equality of Mankind

The Church, believing that God is the Creator of all humanity, that Christ died for all without distinction of race, tribe or colour, and that all who believe in Him, are one in Him, recognize its obligation to preach the Gospel to people of all races, tribes and colours, and affirms its resolve to recognize no barrier of race, tribe, gender or colour within its fellowship and service.

RCEA and Other Churches

The Church, believing it to be the will of Christ that His disciples shall be all One in the Father and in Him, that the world may believe that the Father has sent Him, recognizes the obligation to seek and promote union with other churches in which it finds the word of God to be purely preached, the Sacraments administered according to Christ's ordinance and discipline rightly exercised, and it has the right to unite with any such Church without loss of its identity on terms which this church finds to be consistent with Articles I and II.

The Worship of The Church

This Church in accordance with tradition of the 1st liberty:

- a) To use such forms of worship as are agreeable to the God and conducive unto edification; and
- b) In respect of forms hitherto followed, to modify them in such manner as may best meet the needs of the worshippers.

Sacraments

This Church acknowledges the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, which were instituted by Christ; and requires that they be regularly celebrated with the use of Christ's words of institution and of the elements ordained by Him.

The Government of the Church

Self Government

The Church, as part of the Universal Church, wherein the Lord Jesus Christ has appointed a government in the hands of Church Office bearers receives from Him, its Divine King and Head, and from Him alone, the right and power to legislate and to adjudicate in all matters of doctrine, worship, government, and discipline in this Church, including the right to determine all questions concerning membership and office in the church, the Constitution and membership of Her Courts, and the mode of election of Her Office-bearers.

Ministry

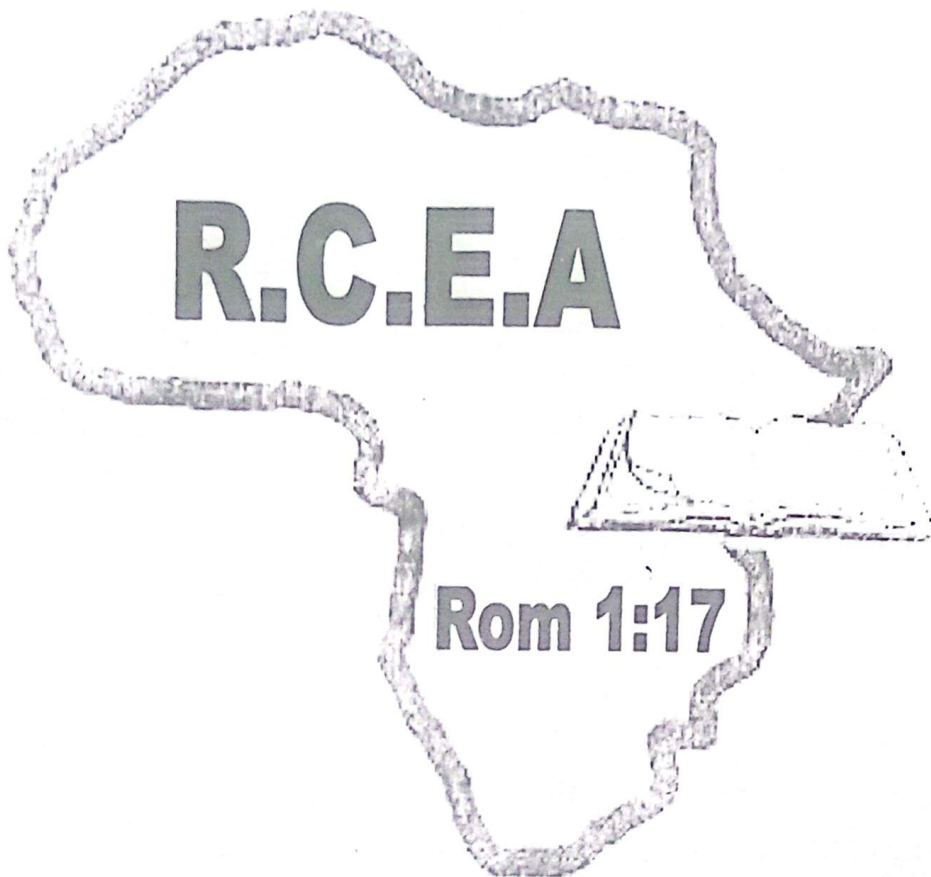
The Church receives the Ministry as the gift of the Lord Jesus Christ to His Church "for the edification of the body of Christ" as explained in Article 2.5

SCHEDULE IV

IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH

a) Church Logo

The corporate identity of RCEA in its publications shall be the outline of the map of Africa with the initials RCEA and an open bible placed in an area corresponding to the East Africa region below which shall be written the verse: Romans 1:17 and the words of The Church motto in Kiswahili: "Jitolee"



b) Standard Colours of RCEA

The standard corporate colours of RCEA shall be blue, red and green



Reformed Church of East Africa
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