



KERALA ECUMENICAL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

DALLAS–FORT WORTH

BYLAWS & PROGRAM GUIDELINES

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PART I — GOVERNANCE BYLAWS

1. Preamble and Objectives of KECF

1.1 Preamble

The Episcopal Christian churches of Kerala origin in the Dallas–Fort Worth region joined together to grow in Christian faith and friendship through a fellowship known as the Kerala Ecumenical Christian Fellowship (KECF) of Dallas. KECF shall promote unity, mutual respect, peace, love, cooperation, harmony, and Christian fellowship among its member churches, while respecting the doctrine and ecclesiastical authority of each member church. To avoid misunderstandings or controversy, KECF shall not discuss faith-based or related issues at its functions, forums, or meetings.

1.2 Aim and Objectives

- a) To grow in faith and maintain unity and harmony among the member churches.
- b) To foster and promote Kerala Christian culture among the member churches.
- c) To share the Christian heritage and religious values of the member churches.
- d) To conduct ecumenical Christmas carol programs, conventions, and other religious activities and meetings that promote peace and harmony and provide spiritual nourishment to members of KECF member churches.

2. Membership

2.1 Membership Eligibility

- a) Membership in KECF shall be open to all Episcopal churches of Kerala origin established in the Dallas–Fort Worth region that have been organized and approved by the hierarchy of their respective denomination.
- b) Member churches shall have a place of worship in the Dallas–Fort Worth area and promote Christian faith and values through Sunday worship, Sunday school classes, and other religious activities.

2.2 Admission of New Member Churches

- a) Applications for membership shall be submitted to the KECF Executive Committee with proof of approval by the applicant church's hierarchy or a letter from its bishop or denominational hierarchy appointing clergy to that church.
- b) The Executive Committee shall review each membership application. If the Committee approves the application, it shall submit it to the General Body for consideration at a General Body meeting.
- c) Final approval of membership shall be decided by a simple majority vote at a General Body meeting.

2.3 Annual Membership Dues

- a) Annual membership dues shall be set at the Annual General Body Meeting of KECF.
- b) Each member church shall pay its dues every year to maintain active membership in KECF.
- c) The annual membership fee shall be \$250 per member church per year.

3. Executive Committee, Officers, and Meetings

3.1 Executive Committee Composition

- a) The KECF Executive Committee shall consist of twenty-one (21) members: seven (7) clergy representatives and fourteen (14) laity representatives/advisors.
- b) The Executive Committee members shall be elected by secret ballot during the Annual General Body Meeting in accordance with the following composition, including the outgoing General Secretary and Treasurer. The automatic succession and hosting-church appointments specified in these bylaws shall continue to apply.

No.	Position	Designation / Representation
01	President	President of the hosting church
02	Vice President	Immediate past president of KECF
03	General Secretary	Laity from any member church
04	Treasurer	Current treasurer of the hosting church
05	Choir Coordinator	Laity from any member church
06	Youth Coordinator	Laity from any member church
07	Committee Member	Clergy from any member church
08	Committee Member	Clergy from any member church
09	Committee Member	Clergy from any member church
10	Committee Member	Clergy from any member church
11	Committee Member	Clergy from any member church
12	Committee Member	Laity from any member church
13	Committee Member	Laity from any member church
14	Committee Member	Laity from any member church
15	Committee Member	Laity from any member church
16	Committee Member	Laity from any member church
17	Committee Member	Laity from any member church
18	Committee Member	Laity from any member church
19	Committee Member	Laity from any member church

No.	Position	Designation / Representation
20	Committee Member	Outgoing KECF General Secretary
21	Committee Member	Outgoing KECF Treasurer

Composition note: Clergy representatives comprise positions 01, 02, and 07–11 (7 members). Laity representatives/advisors comprise positions 03–06 and 12–21 (14 members). Total: 21 members.

c) The Executive Committee may fill vacant Committee positions with members from KECF member churches.

d) The President and Treasurer of the hosting church shall automatically become the President and Treasurer of KECF for that year. A subcommittee may also be formed from the hosting church to coordinate the year's activities.

e) Clergy elected to the Executive Committee shall be active clergy with responsibilities in the administration of a member church and shall not be retired priests. They shall participate in all KECF activities and meetings but shall not have voting rights on the Executive Committee.

f) A layperson elected to the Executive Committee shall be an active member of a KECF member church.

3.2 Selection and Terms of Office

a) An Executive Committee shall be elected every year by secret ballot during the Annual General Body Meeting of the KECF in January. Elections for KECF office bearers and Executive Committee positions shall be conducted by secret ballot, subject to the automatic succession and hosting-church appointments specified in these bylaws.

b) The term of the Executive Committee shall be one year. Committee members may be re-elected with the approval of a majority at a General Body meeting.

c) The Executive Committee shall conduct KECF's annual activities, including the World Day of Prayer, Three-Day Ecumenical Convention, Women's Forum Meeting, Youth Convention, Christmas and New Year Celebrations, and any other approved joint activities under the KECF Dallas banner.

Hosting Church Rotation

a) The Annual General Body Meeting shall elect a hosting parish each year to coordinate KECF's annual activities.

b) The hosting church may select venues and speakers for KECF functions, subject to the approval of that year's Executive Committee.

c) Every effort shall be made to give all member churches the opportunity to host KECF events on a rotating basis.

3.3 Duties and Responsibilities of Officers

Duties of the President

- a) The President shall oversee all KECF activities, including presiding over General Body meetings, Executive Committee meetings, and related functions.
- b) The President shall represent KECF in community affairs, in the news media, and at community meetings.

Duties of the Vice President

- a) The immediate past President of KECF shall automatically assume the position of Vice President for the incoming year, unless the officeholder leaves Texas or the country.
- b) The Vice President shall oversee KECF activities together with the President or, in the President's absence, with the Executive Committee.
- c) If the Vice President is transferred or replaced during the year, the replacement clergy member shall assume the position of KECF Vice President.
- d) If no replacement is appointed following such a transfer or replacement, the Executive Committee shall designate a clergy member to perform the duties of the vacant position.

Duties of the General Secretary

- a) The General Secretary shall maintain all KECF records and convene committee meetings in consultation with the President.
- b) The General Secretary shall record and maintain the minutes of all Executive Committee and General Body meetings in the English language.
- c) The General Secretary shall prepare and present reports and minutes at KECF meetings, including the Annual General Body Meeting.
- d) The General Secretary shall notify all member churches and their representatives of KECF activities and request their full participation and cooperation in conducting those activities under the KECF banner.
- e) The General Secretary shall assume the responsibilities of the President or Vice President in their absence.
- f) The General Secretary shall coordinate and conduct KECF activities during the year, including arranging the stage or podium, making announcements, and coordinating with Executive Committee members during functions.
- g) The General Secretary shall hand over all KECF records to the incoming General Secretary within thirty (30) calendar days of the election each year.

Duties of the Treasurer

- a) The Treasurer shall maintain KECF's financial records and accounts, collect membership dues from member churches, and present the accounts at Executive Committee and General Body meetings.
- b) Member churches shall make checks for membership dues or contributions payable to the hosting church. The Treasurer shall maintain separate records of KECF funds held by the hosting church.

- c) The Treasurer shall present financial reports at both the Half-Yearly General Body Meeting and the Annual General Body Meeting, including a detailed annual income and expense statement at the Annual General Body Meeting.
- d) The Treasurer shall keep all KECF inventory items in their custody and hand them over to the incoming Treasurer within thirty (30) calendar days of the election each year.
- e) The Treasurer shall hand over the account balance to the incoming Treasurer at the Annual General Body Meeting of KECF.

Duties of the Youth Coordinator

- a) The Youth Coordinator shall coordinate youth activities under the KECF banner with the permission and approval of the Executive Committee.
- b) The Youth Coordinator shall seek assistance from young people in member churches to coordinate programs, including the annual Youth Convention, with the approval of the Executive Committee.
- c) The Youth Coordinator shall nominate individuals and submit their names to the Executive Committee for the formation of subcommittees.

Duties of the Choir Coordinator

- a) The Choir Coordinator shall coordinate the choir for KECF activities during the year.
- b) The Choir Coordinator shall form a choir consisting of members of KECF member churches, preferably members of their respective church choirs.
- c) The Executive Committee shall oversee choir activities under the leadership of the Choir Coordinator.
- d) The Choir Coordinator shall coordinate choir activities, including practices, song selection, and the invitation and participation of musicians, with the approval of the Executive Committee.
- e) Payments to musicians and choir equipment rentals shall be approved by the Executive Committee.

Duties of Executive Committee Members

- a) Executive Committee members shall diligently attend all Executive Committee meetings, programs, and other KECF activities. Each Committee member shall communicate with member churches about KECF activities during the year.
- b) Executive Committee members shall coordinate KECF functions, distribute documents or flyers, collect membership dues from member churches, and carry out other responsibilities assigned by the Executive Committee.

3.4 Executive Committee Meetings

- a) Executive Committee meetings may proceed regardless of attendance. No quorum or minimum attendance threshold shall apply to Executive Committee meetings or decisions.
- b) The General Secretary shall notify Executive Committee members of the time, date, and venue of meetings through electronic media.

- c) Binding decisions shall require a simple majority of valid votes cast by voting members present, unless these bylaws require a higher threshold.
Decisions properly adopted under this rule bind Executive Committee members and member churches within KECF's authority.
- d) The General Secretary shall notify the presidents of member churches of Executive Committee decisions through electronic media within ten (10) working days of the meeting.

Subcommittees

- a) The Executive Committee shall appoint subcommittees with appropriate representation from member churches as needed.
- b) The Executive Committee shall be part of each such subcommittee and shall dissolve it upon completion of its assigned task.

4. General Body, Representation, and Meetings

4.1 General Body Composition and Representation

- A) All official clergy of member churches shall be members of the KECF General Body and may participate in General Body meetings with voting rights.
- B) Episcopal clergy who do not hold administrative positions in member churches may participate in General Body meetings without voting rights.
- C) Each member church shall choose two representatives at the beginning of the year and provide their details to the General Secretary or an Executive Committee member for inclusion in KECF correspondence. These elected representatives shall represent their churches at General Body meetings with voting rights. Additional members may attend General Body or Executive Committee meetings as observers without voting rights.

4.2 General Body Meetings

- a) KECF shall convene the Annual General Body Meeting in January to elect the hosting church and Executive Committee members who will coordinate KECF activities for that year. Elections for office bearers and Executive Committee positions shall be conducted by secret ballot.
- b) KECF shall convene the Half-Yearly General Body Meeting in June or July each year to review the year's activities and accounts.
- c) The Executive Committee may call a Special General Body Meeting when necessary, with two weeks' notice to member churches.
- d) General Body quorum: A quorum for binding decisions consists of eligible voting representation from at least 51% of the member churches. A church counts as represented if at least one authorized voting clergy member or elected parish representative is present. Once quorum is established, each eligible voting individual retains the vote assigned under this section. Meetings without quorum may discuss business but may not take binding decisions.

4.3 Voting Rights and Decision-Making

Official clergy and two elected representatives of each member parish retain the voting rights specified above. Ordinary decisions require a simple majority of valid votes cast at a meeting with quorum, unless these bylaws specify a higher threshold.

5. Financial Administration and Leadership Handover

5.1 Financial Administration

- a) Annual membership dues from member churches shall be made payable to the hosting church.
- b) KECF shall not maintain a separate bank account. KECF funds shall be held and accounted for separately by the hosting church.

5.2 Financial Reporting

- a) The Treasurer shall present financial reports at both the Half-Yearly General Body Meeting and the Annual General Body Meeting, including detailed annual income and expense accounts at the Annual General Body Meeting.

The Treasurer shall report income, expenses, account balances, and outstanding obligations at both the Half-Yearly General Body Meeting and the Annual General Body Meeting.

5.3 Financial Responsibilities

- a) The annual KECF membership fee shall be decided at the Annual General Body Meeting.
- b) The General Secretary shall notify all member churches of any changes in membership fees within two weeks of the meeting.
- c) The annual membership fee shall be \$250 per member church per year.
- d) Unpaid annual membership fees shall be carried forward to the following year as dues owed by the member church.
- e) Dues unpaid for two consecutive years shall be referred to the Annual General Body Meeting for review and resolution. A member church with unpaid dues retains membership and voting rights unless the General Body formally determines otherwise.

F. Leadership Transition and Handover

Within thirty (30) calendar days after the election, outgoing officers shall provide their successors with final financial statements, funds or balances held through the hosting church, inventory, organizational records, unresolved commitments, and a documented inventory of KECF digital assets. The inventory of digital assets shall include domain registrations, website hosting, account ownership, recovery contacts, and renewal arrangements. Credentials shall be transferred securely to custodians authorized by KECF. Domain registrations and account ownership shall remain with KECF. The existing hosting-church financial model remains unchanged.

5.4 Financial Responsibilities — Deficiencies of Funds

- a) Any shortfall in funds for KECF activities during the year shall be presented at a General Body meeting. The amount shall be divided equally among the member churches.
- b) Each member church shall pay its share within sixty (60) days of the decision.

6. Bylaw Amendments and Member Church Autonomy

6.1 Bylaw Amendments

- a) These bylaws shall bind member churches, their clergy, and their members during all KECF functions as a condition of continued membership in KECF.
- b) Proposed amendments to these bylaws shall be discussed at a General Body meeting. The General Body shall elect a bylaw committee to study the provisions proposed for amendment.
- c) The bylaw committee shall present its findings to the Executive Committee for approval at an Executive Committee meeting. If approved, the findings shall be presented to the General Body for a final decision.
- d) The Executive Committee shall set a date for a Special General Body Meeting, with bylaw amendments as its main agenda, to discuss the findings referred to in Section 6.1(c).
- e) The full text of proposed bylaw amendments shall be circulated to all member churches, clergy, and voting representatives at least thirty (30) calendar days before the General Body meeting at which they will be considered.
- f) An amendment shall require at least two-thirds of the valid votes cast by eligible voting members present at a duly convened General Body meeting, provided the General Body quorum is met.
- g) Amendments to the bylaws shall bind all member churches, their clergy, and their members, regardless of their attendance at the General Body meeting.

6.2 Member Church Autonomy

The ecclesiastical authority of each member church remains unchanged.

PART II — PROGRAM GUIDELINES

1. World Day of Prayer

- a) The Executive Committee, together with the World Day of Prayer Committee, shall organize and oversee the World Day of Prayer in March each year.
- b) A female coordinator from the Women's Forum of a member church shall be elected during the business session of the World Day of Prayer to coordinate the annual celebrations.
- c) The elected coordinator shall arrange speakers, a venue, and other requirements for the event, with the cooperation and approval of the Executive Committee. The coordinator shall communicate these arrangements to the President and General Secretary.
- D) The offertory collections and the \$20 per-person attendance fees shall be applied toward the expenses of the World Day of Prayer program. Any remaining balance shall be transferred to the hosting church and recorded as KECF funds.

2. Three-Day Ecumenical Convention

- a) The Executive Committee shall organize and conduct the Three-Day Ecumenical Convention on the first Friday, Saturday, and Sunday of August each year, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM.
- b) If the announced dates are inconvenient for the hosting church, the convention may be moved to another three-day weekend or its times may be changed only with the approval of the Executive Committee. Changes approved by the Executive Committee shall bind all member churches.
- c) The Executive Committee, together with the hosting church for that year, shall arrange a suitable venue and speaker for the Three-Day Ecumenical Convention.
- d) The Executive Committee shall determine the convention speaker's honorarium and maintain a standard procedure to avoid overpayment.
- e) The current speaker's honorarium is \$1,000.00 plus travel expenses within the United States. Any change to this amount shall be discussed and approved by the Executive Committee.

3. Women's Forum Meeting

- a) The Executive Committee shall organize and conduct the Women's Forum Meeting on the Saturday morning of the convention weekend, from 10:00 AM to 12:00 noon, at the convention venue.
- b) If the convention facility becomes unavailable for the Women's Forum Meeting because of unforeseen circumstances, the Executive Committee shall meet or communicate with its members to find a suitable replacement venue.
- c) Executive Committee decisions regarding replacement venues shall be final and shall bind all member churches.
- d) The Women's Forum speaker shall be the convention speaker. Any change shall be discussed and approved by the Executive Committee.

- e) If that speaker is unavailable because of unforeseen circumstances, the Executive Committee shall find a replacement.
- f) Executive Committee decisions shall bind all member churches, their clergy, and their members.

4. Youth Convention

- a) The Executive Committee, together with the Youth Coordinator, shall organize and conduct the Youth Convention on the last Saturday of August each year or on another convenient day, depending on the availability of speakers and a venue.
- b) The Executive Committee shall appoint a youth committee to coordinate the Youth Convention. The youth committee shall work under the supervision of the Executive Committee, together with youth ministers and youth representatives from member churches.
- c) Any speaker's honorarium shall be discussed and approved by the Executive Committee.

5. Christmas and New Year Celebrations

- a) The Executive Committee shall organize and conduct the Christmas and New Year program on the first Saturday of December each year. The program shall begin at 5:00 PM.
- b) This date shall not be changed except in an emergency or because of a natural calamity.
- c) Any such change shall be discussed and approved by the Executive Committee and communicated to all member churches through electronic media as soon as the information is available.
- d) The Executive Committee may appoint volunteers, security personnel, or other designated persons for the Christmas and New Year program.

5.1 Christmas and New Year Program Guidelines

5.2 Visiting Dignitaries

- a) The availability of any metropolitan, bishop, or other dignitary from a member church to attend a KECF event shall be communicated to the President, Vice President, or General Secretary in advance so that their participation may be arranged.
- b) If more than one metropolitan, bishop, or other dignitary is available, the Executive Committee shall discuss their participation and share responsibilities among them with appropriate representation.
- c) The Executive Committee's decision shall be final and shall bind all member churches, their clergy, and their members.
- d) KECF funds shall not be used for monetary contributions or gifts to such dignitaries.

5.3 Messages

- a) To manage the program's duration, there shall be only one message during the Christmas and New Year program, delivered in English, Malayalam, or a combination of both languages. The Christmas message may follow the hosting church's skit to allow time for stage cleanup.
- b) If more than one dignitary is available, the Executive Committee shall decide how to accommodate their participation. Its decisions shall bind all member churches and their members.

5.4 Scripture Readings

- a) Scripture readings during the Christmas and New Year Celebrations shall be assigned to churches that are not presenting programs, provided that their officials notify the President, Vice President, or General Secretary well in advance.
- b) If this information is not received in advance, the Executive Committee may designate individuals from member churches to read Scripture in English and Malayalam.

5.5 Presentation Duration

- a) The hosting church shall be allowed a maximum of twenty-five (25) minutes for its Christmas-related skit, which should serve as the opening program.
- b) In addition to its skit, the hosting church shall be allowed a maximum of six (6) minutes for its own song presentation. The song may be scheduled separately from the skit and need not follow the presentation sequence established for the other member churches.
- c) The hosting church shall be responsible for all decorations and stage arrangements, including placing and removing choir risers. No financial assistance shall be provided from KECF funds except for the venue and security personnel hired for the event.
- d) Each other member church shall be allowed a maximum of six (6) minutes for its presentation. This limit shall apply regardless of the number of items presented during its allotted time.

5.6 Curtain Operations

- a) The Executive Committee shall designate a person to operate the curtain during the Christmas and New Year program.
- b) The curtain shall remain open during member-church song presentations.
- c) The curtain may be opened or closed as needed for the hosting church's skit, the Christmas message, and stage setup or cleanup.

5.7 Presentation Sequence

- a) The Executive Committee shall draw lots using the names of the other member churches to determine their presentation sequence for the Christmas and New Year program. The hosting church's song presentation need not follow this sequence.
- b) The names of member churches shall appear in that sequence on all notices and publications for the year.

6. General Program Administration

6.1 Sales, Promotions, and Marketing

- a) Except for food and beverage sales expressly permitted under Section 6.4, sales and promotional activities are strictly prohibited at KECF functions. This prohibition includes the free distribution of materials, newspapers, CDs, books, or other items by churches, community organizations, businesses, or individuals.
- b) Violators shall be asked to leave the premises, or the Executive Committee shall take the necessary action to remove them from the venue.
- c) Marketing activities, including sponsorships, projected slideshows, and other materials promoting businesses other than KECF, shall not be permitted during programs.

6.2 Sponsorship and Contributions

- a) KECF shall not accept monetary contributions from individuals or businesses in exchange for promotion through sponsorships. Individuals or organizations may make voluntary contributions to KECF in cash, by check, or during the offertory at conventions or Christmas and New Year programs. Donors' names shall not be published or announced at KECF functions or in KECF publications.
- b) To avoid conflicts of interest or nepotism, KECF shall not promote or contribute funds to individuals or organizations for charitable projects or personal needs.
- c) KECF shall not be responsible for payments from KECF funds to news media, videographers, or photographers for coverage of KECF programs.

6.3 News Media, Television, and Recording

- a) Prior written permission must be obtained from the KECF General Secretary, using the prescribed application form, before recording or covering any KECF function.
- b) Subject to the prior written permission required under subsection (a), news media, including television channels, may cover the program free of charge. The responsible party shall set up its stations in the designated areas thirty (30) minutes before the function begins, in accordance with Executive Committee instructions.
- c) Recorded programs shall be used only for news-channel broadcasts that inform the public. No part of a recording shall be used for personal promotion or to generate revenue for an individual or business.
- d) A violation of Section 6.3(c) shall be considered a violation of KECF's ethics and Christian values. Individuals or companies that violate these rules shall be barred from future association with KECF or recording of KECF functions. Legal action may be taken if necessary.
- e) Any individual or company that violates Section 6.3 shall be asked to leave the premises, or the Executive Committee shall take the necessary action to remove them from the venue.

6.4 Coffee and Food Stalls

a) Outside vendors shall not sell food or beverages at KECF functions. The hosting church shall have the first right to operate a food stall, provided that only vegetarian items are sold at reasonable prices. If the hosting church is unable to operate a food stall, another KECF member church may do so with the approval of the Executive Committee. The church operating the food stall shall be responsible for cleaning the designated area. The Executive Committee shall provide free drinking water at KECF functions.

6.5 General Announcements

- a) Announcements unrelated to KECF shall not be made during KECF functions.
- b) Only KECF officials or designated persons shall make appropriate announcements to thank guests or the media as necessary during functions.

Adopted from October 25, 2026.