

Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece



By-law of Debre Mihret St. Amanuel Church in
Copenhagen, Denmark



**Under the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church
Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece**

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Copenhagen, Denmark**

Revised for 3rd round in August, 2023

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Preface

Ethiopia has lived by Tradition with the worship of God. The period referred to as the "Period of Tradition" ranges from Adam to Moses. During this period, the descendants of Noah's son brought their father Noah's faith to Ethiopia when they entered, showing that Ethiopia firmly adhered to the worship of God. The one who came to the land of Ethiopia (Africa) and blessed Ethiopia through his offspring is Ham. There are significant evidence for this. For instance, Moses marrying an Ethiopian woman (Numbers 12), Queen Sheba's journey to Jerusalem (1 Kings 10:10-12), and the Greek philosopher Herodotus' statement, "The customs of the Ethiopians are like God's. They sanctify the vast field for pilgrims, they make offerings, they do not eat whatever the traveler eats, and evil is abhorred in their country." Herodotus testifies that Ethiopians lived by the law and believed in the God of Abraham and practiced good deeds like Abraham. Therefore, these and many historical examples truly indicate that Ethiopia has lived by the law and by the worship of God.

The transition of Ethiopia from paganism to the Old Testament was based on Queen Sheba's journey to Jerusalem. As described in 1 Kings 10:1-13 and also in Matthew 12:42, the relationship between Queen Sheba and King Solomon led to Queen Sheba giving birth to Solomon's firstborn Menelik. This led to a deep-rooted bond in terms of culture, religion, and language between the two countries. Moreover, with the Ark of the Covenant and the Levite priests coming to Ethiopia with Menelik, the son of Sheba, it demonstrates Ethiopia's firm establishment in the Old Testament religion and tradition. The evidence for this includes the rituals of the Ark assembly, the celebration of the original Sabbath, fasting, distinguishing clean and unclean animals, ceremonies of joy and sorrow, and the variety of hymnal and liturgical instruments.

According to Acts 8:26-40, the Ethiopian eunuch, an official of the queen, was baptized by Saint Philip around 34 AD and took Christianity back to Ethiopia. In the 4th century (330 AD), through Saint Frumentius, also known as Abba Selama, the papal and Christian doctrine arrived in Ethiopia. At that time, the two local rulers, Abreha and Atsbeha (also known as Ezana and Saizana), were converted by this

archbishop and spread the faith to other parts of Ethiopia. Consequently, with the will of the rulers, Christianity spread rapidly and widely throughout the country; by 350 AD, Christianity became the national religion of Ethiopia.

Moreover, the Nine Saints from the territories of Rome and Byzantium came to Ethiopia in 451 AD after rejecting the Council of Chalcedon, and they introduced the Orthodox Tewahedo faith. They made significant contributions to Christianity.

Additionally, Saint Yared (in 305 AD) contributed the Ge'ez, Izil, and Araray hymns to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which were divinely revealed to him. Subsequent Ethiopian generations established monastic centers, training schools, ordained priests for the parishes, and prepared kings and leaders for national leadership, ensuring the church's longevity. For 1400 years, the church's archbishops were appointed from the Coptic Church in Egypt, totaling 110. However, since 1951, the church started appointing Ethiopian archbishops, including Abune Basalios (1951 – 1963), Abune Tewophilos (1963 - 1967), Abune Tekle Haimanot (1968 – 1980), Abune Merkorios (1980 -), Abune Paulos (1984 -). Currently, His Holiness Abune Mathias has been leading the church since 2005.

The faith of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church is in one God. God is unity and trinity. The Holy Trinity is three in name, in person, in deed and one in essence, in divinity, in existence, in will. Three in name:- Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Three in deed:- the Father is the begetter the Son is begotten the Holy Spirit is the one who proceeds. Three in person:- the Father has a perfect person the Son has a perfect person the Holy Spirit has a perfect person. Even though we say the Trinity are three in name, in deed and in person; the three are one in essence, in divinity, in existence and in will; we do not mean three Gods but one God. While the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit exist in their own perfect person, they are one in existence.

The Son who is one of the Trinity from heaven and taking up flesh and rational soul from the Holy Virgin Mary. Without separation of His Divinity from His humanity and His humanity from His Divinity, He became one person, one nature without change, without confusion, without separation and without division. “He is one Son and one Christ before and after His Incarnation”, as our Church believes. Based on the decrees of the Council of Nicaea (325), the Council of Constantinople (381), the Council of Ephesus (431), our Church's foundational faith is declared as follows in the Creed:

“We believe in one God, the Father Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is seen and unseen. Before the world was created, the Son, begotten of the Father, coexisted with Him. We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the true God from true God, begotten not made, consubstantial with the Father, through Him all things were made, both in heaven and on earth. For us and for our salvation, he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary, and became fully human. For our sake, he was crucified under Pontius Pilate, he suffered, died, was buried, and on the third day rose from the dead, as written in the Holy Scriptures. He ascended into heaven and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end. We also believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord and giver of life, who proceeds from the Father. We worship and glorify Him together with the Father and the Son. He spoke through the prophets. We believe in one holy, apostolic Church that surpasses all. We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins. We look forward to the resurrection of the dead and the life of the world to come”.

The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in Copenhagen, Denmark, came into being because of the devout Ethiopian students' intense desire for religious services as they pursued higher

education in Denmark. In the beginning, the students used to gather in “*Tsiwa Mahiber*” literally meaning a small religious association in the name of God where the forum was used for bible study. After practicing their religion in that way for some time, they formed a bigger association working together with non-student faithful Ethiopian residents in Denmark. The formation of this association necessitated the drafting of internal rules and regulations (hereafter called the by-law) which was one of the requirements to obtain legal recognition by the Royal Danish government. After the initial by-law was used for some time, the 2nd revision has been made in July 2015 and used until August 2023. The initial by-law was in effect for a certain duration before its revision in July 2015, which lasted until August 2023. In October 2019, the Holy Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, based in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, realigned the local church's diocese from the EOTC Diocese of Northwest Europe to the EOTC Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece. To reflect this change and to further enrich the spiritual offerings for its members, while also incorporating recent decisions and canonical updates from the Holy Synod in Addis Ababa, the 3rd version of the By-Law was approved by the General Assembly of Debre Mihret St. Amanuel Church Parishioners on August 5, 2023.

In May 2009, after electing the parish council members, the Debre Mihret St. Amanuel Church in Copenhagen, Denmark began working on its first by-law. By then, the responsibility of preparing the by-law was given to the newly elected parish council. Accordingly, the parish council prepared the first internal rules and regulations draft in the Danish language. The document was finally presented to the church faithful (general assembly) for approval. Subsequently, it was unanimously agreed upon among the believers that it had been accepted for implementation as of May 12, 2009. Following this, there was a need to address the questions raised by the concerned office of the Danish government. The church's by-law was again unanimously approved by the general assembly held in Copenhagen on July 04, 2010. The by-law was then re-submitted, and finally, a letter of recognition for the church was obtained on Sept. 24, 2010. In October 2011, the Danish version was translated into the Amharic language because some of our church members do not understand the Danish language.

The church's by-law was updated and accepted in a general meeting in June 2015. On August 5, 2023, the 3rd version of the by-law was prepared and approved, adding new decisions and changes from the Holy Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahido Church.

On March 21, 2010, during the church's affiliation with the Northwest Europe Diocese of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church, His Eminence Abune Enthons, the diocese's archbishop, officiated the inaugural liturgy service. Later, Komos Abba Zemichael led the liturgy services and introduced the Ark of the Covenant named St. Medhanealem, which remained until 2013. His Eminence Abune Enthons also presented the church in Copenhagen with the Ark of the Covenant named Debre Mihret St. Amanuel Church. Its liturgy day was celebrated on January 06, 2013. This Ark was entrusted to the Copenhagen church, overseen by Komos Abba Zemichael, who also assumed responsibilities for its safekeeping. On that same day, he received the honorary title of Melake Mihret Komos Abba Zemichael.

We praise our Lord for He has helped us prepare this important document known as the by-law.

Parish council of St. Amanuel Church in Copenhagen, Denmark, under the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece.

Introduction

This church that serves the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo believers residing in Copenhagen and its immediate environs, was founded by fellow fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters intending to conserve and pass onto their children the orders & teachings (Dogma and Canon) of the church, ethical aspects, culture and their language describing their identity. Therefore, by the righteousness of God and His saints' prayer, the "Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in Denmark" was established in Copenhagen for the first time in May 2009.

After the establishment of the church, members of the church were highly devoted and supportive and worked hand in hand to overcome the challenges faced at different stages of the church's development. We honestly believe that God has helped all the members to be that determined and committed to the continuation of the church to date. Therefore, as King Solomon said "There is time for everything". Our church was renamed as "Debre Mihret St. Amanuel Church in Copenhagen, Denmark, under the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece" on January 6, 2013, based on the *qala awadi* of the EOTC.

Accordingly, for our church to obtain legal recognition and operate as per the Church's *qala awadi* as well as Denmark's legal framework, the church parish council had given priority to revise and publish the revised version. The revised version and the corresponding changes made are presented in this document.

This by-law was prepared based on the *qala awadi* (3rd edition, 1998) of the EOTC. The by-law was prepared by the Copenhagen Debre-Mihret St. Amanuel Church Parish council and its use is limited to only this church. The by-law is also in accordance with the legal framework of doctrine and canon of the EOTC as well as the rule of Danish government. It is prepared to help the clergy and the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo faithful to form their own organization and establish religious church parish council and obtain all the services thereof offered by the church.

We thank God for He has helped us produce this revised version of the by-law.

Chapter 1: General Information

Article 1: Short Title

This by-law for our local church was updated and presented in alignment with the modified *Qala-awadi* from 1991 E.C, following guidelines from the EOTC Holy Synod located in Addis Ababa, with the aim of fortifying the church's administration. Hereafter, this document will be referred to as the "By-law of Debre Mihret St. Amanuel Church in Copenhagen, Denmark, Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece".

A. Name of the local church

The local church is: Debre Mihret St. Amanuel Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church.

B. The address of the local church will be:

For correspondence:

The St. **Amanuel** Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church in Denmark

C/O Zemichael Deressa Seboka

Ryparken 170, st, tv

2100 København Ø, Denmark

Tlf./fax: +45 52 84 76 24

E-mail: secretary@tewahedo.dk or cordinator@tewahedo.dk

Webpage: www.tewahedo.dk

NB: Any letter sent to the church by this address will immediately be sent to the chairman and the Secretary of the local church's parish council. But it is possible that the above address can be changed by the decision of the church's parish council.

Article 2: Definitions

1. The term **local** in "local church" refers to the area where followers of the religion reside. Since the church have its own Arch of the Covenant, the term local in this document include all members of the church residing in Denmark.
2. "**The Parish General Assembly**" refers to registered members of the local church including the clergy, members of the Sunday school and the believers who have the right to elect and to

be elected as a member of the parish council and have the readiness to serve the church financially and in all other areas where the church demands their service.

3. “**The parish council**” refers to an executive committee elected by the parish general assembly and the priest assigned by Diocese’s Archbishop. The priest shall serve, as chairperson of the administration for the local church.
4. “**Administrator of the Parish church**” refers to the head/administrator of the local church who is always selected and assigned by Diocese Archbishop.
5. “**Synod**” refers to the official Holy synod found in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia which includes the patriarch and other Archbishops’ assembly.
6. “**Qale Awadi**” refers to a set of rules and regulations of the EOTC produced by the directives given from the EOTC Holy Synod to strengthen the unity and administration of the church.

Chapter 2: The local church’s parish council legislations

Article 3: The principle of establishing parish council for the local church

1. The church is a non-profit organization established to provide only religious services.
2. The church has no connection with political parties and ethnic favoritism.
3. The chief administrator of the local church is a monk or a priest ordained according to the canon of the EOTC.
4. The church shall be administered by the parish council.
5. This local church is established based on the rules and regulations drawn from the *Qale-awadi* of the EOTC.
6. In case some issues not covered by the existing by-law arise due to church services expansion, decision will be made based on the *Qale-awadi* of the EOTC Synod.
7. The parish council be established according to the *Qale-awadi* of the local church and where the believers are present and where the church service is provided.
8. It is possible that two nearby local churches are administered by one unified parish council provided that an agreement is reached between the two churches.

Article 4: The local church's parish council objectives

1. To enable all believers understand the dogma, canon and teachings of the EOTC.
2. To conserve and pass on to the next generation the unique identity of the “Apostolic”, “One”, “Holy” and “Universal” EOTC.
3. To expand the horizon of our church services in order that the believers will have good spiritual knowledge, stick to their religion, pray to God, practice repentance, obtain God's blessing and enter the kingdom of God.
4. To provide consulting and guidance to children, youth, and adult to cultivate a profound spiritual and moral insight, stay committed to their faith, engage in devout prayer, practice repentance, attain God's blessings, foster values of love and loyalty, show care for their nation, and ultimately be welcomed into the kingdom of God.
5. To enable the believers get registered as members of the local church, to participate in different affairs of the church and contribute what they can.
6. To enable the local church be self sufficient by fulfilling administrative and service goals.
7. To enable Ethiopian children born to the believers family and living in Denmark learn their family's culture, language, education, etc. by integrating it with Danish culture, education etc.
8. To support and strengthen the local church's spiritual service given to the believers during different social events (happiness, mourn, sickness, etc.).

Article 5: The duties of the Parish Spiritual Council

The parish council shall undertake the following activities in order to execute and give directions to let others execute the goals outlined in Article 4.

1. Preach the gospel to the church followers and guide the members according to the evangelical teachings.
2. Work to conserve the church's faith and orders within the laws of the church.
3. Make sure the administration and services of the local church are led in accordance with the rules and regulations of the ‘*Qale-awadi*’ prepared by the EOTC Synod.

4. Enable the church to be self-sufficient by managing and keeping the church's money and other properties in accordance with rules and regulations.
5. Fulfill the inputs (searching a place (church building) to be used as a church, fulfill other materials required to provide church services, etc) necessary for the church to carry out its mission.
6. Coordinate the members of the local church to pay the monthly contribution and other supports as per the rules and regulations of the EOTC.
7. Make known the amount of money the local church members should pay and ensure that the money is registered as church income in accordance with the by-law.
8. In accordance with the EOTC rules and regulations, it shall provide the services of Mass celebration and other prayer rituals (order of matrimony , order of baptism, order of unction of the sick, order of penance, order of prayer when Christians pass away, etc.)
9. It shall establish a special clergy council that will look into issues that might be raised in the church and other religious and secrets of church affairs.
10. It shall, through the clergy council, settle issues and complaints raised by couples married with vows, order of matrimony and with Holy Communion; it also settles cases of issues related ordination and different matters that affect and concerns the church. If the issue is beyond its authority, it shall finally be brought to the attention of the Archbishop.
11. Without deviating from the rules and regulations contained in this document, it shall, in the name of the church:
 - a) Make contractual deals
 - b) Sue and be sued
 - c) Proportional to what is needed to do the work; movable and immovable property can be rented from and rented out by making contracts.
 - d) Receive presents and establish income generating development activities.
 - e) If found necessary, it can borrow money for developmental activities of the church.
12. In any contacts that the church makes with a third party, a document shall be signed by at least three of its parish council members of whom one signature must be that of the chairman or that of the vice chairman of the current parish council.
13. The members of the church are not accountable and obliged as individuals for anything that

the church does. Equally, the church is not responsible for the members of the church for things they do as individuals outside the constitution.

14. If a need arises to go into a contractual agreement regarding some immovable properties or matters of high value, the parish council shall secure permission and get directives from the Archbishop of the parish.
15. Based on regular reports from the office of the parish council as well as the property and financial report from the parish council audit and inspection section, the parish council shall pass the appropriate decision.
16. If there is a need to construct or buy a church building, a construction committee or purchasing committee shall be established. The members of this committee shall be presented to the General Assembly for approval of their membership.
17. Any church income shall be deposited in an account opened only in the church's name.
18. Payments executed online via net bank from an account opened in the name of the church should be as follows:
 - a. For regular parish council expenses, payments must be legally approved by the joint signatures of the church administrator and the vice chairman of the parish council.
 - b. If the church is to buy a building or construct a building, the church administrator and the chairman (the vice-chairman when delegated by the chairman during his absence) of the construction committee can sign on an expense voucher and get the work done.
19. Without deviating from the basic principles and goals of the church by-law stipulated in this document, it can prepare a working plan for the church which will be implemented if approved by the general assembly.
20. Establish different service sections by establishing, organizing and giving proper guidance to various service sections such as the clergy council, Sunday school, children and youth group, etc.
21. Protect the elderly, the young and the children from the evil and make sure that the teachings they receive at church and the songs they sing is strictly in agreement with the tradition, and teachings of the EOTC; and follow up and control that their deeds are within the discipline of the church rules.
22. It shall establish an office for the church's parish council and other activities.

23. According to the church's by-law, and directives and plans, it shall prepare the different terms of reference for the different tasks and follows up its implementation.
24. It shall closely examine and approve, modify or reject decisions taken by the different working committees of the parish.
25. It can establish spiritual connections with sister churches in different areas.
26. If, for different reasons, one or more parish council member(s) leave (s) his/her position, he /she shall be replaced by another person from the waiting list.
27. Moreover the church's' parish council has the obligation of implementing the following
 - a. Conducts its meeting once per month.
 - b. Manages and controls the day to day administrative and financial activities. It also prepares a half-year (June and January) financial report.
 - c. As per the *qale-awadi* and depending on the church concrete situation, it shall prepare a report on its performance and financial expenditures in its quarterly meetings and in a last meeting to be held one month before parish administrative council finishes its office period.
 - d. Present an annual financial report at the June general meeting.
28. It shall facilitate the invitation of one preacher and one spiritual singer from the EOTC Head Office for the annual evangelical event where the gospel of God is preached to the believers to strengthen their belief.
29. In general, it shall respect and let others respect the EOTC main *qale-awadi* and the rules and regulations contained in this document.
30. The parish council of the church shall be accountable to the parish general assembly.

Chapter 3: The local church's parish spiritual council

Article 6: The local church's parish spiritual council

1. The church's general assembly

It refers to a general religious assembly where the chairman (chief administrator) of the local church, the clergy and those registered members of the local church are present.

2. The parish council

It refers to a parish spiritual administrative council (Executive Committee) or the local church's administrative council chaired by the chief administrator of the local church.

3. Other service sections of the parish council

It refers to the different service sections of the local church's parish and other spiritual and social services.

Article 7: The criteria for membership in the local church

A. The priests of the local church

1. Those who are ordained as priests and deacons according to the EOTC dogma and canon and serving the church shall have the status of ordinary membership.
2. It shall be ascertained that those serving in liturgy have received their priesthood and deaconship from a known Archbishop of the EOTC.
3. The clergy of the church must be known by, the diocese Archbishop and must be obedient to the Archbishop.
4. The clergy must serve according to the EOTC dogma and canon.
5. The clergy must be one who is/will not part of any political movement.

B. The administrator priest of the local church

1. One who fulfills the criteria for the clergy mentioned above; and, moreover:
2. One who is assigned as the parish administrator by the EOTC Ecclesiastical office (*Teklay Bete-Kihnet*) or the diocese Archbishop.
3. Or He must be a clergy who is elected by the congregation as the church's administrator and whose election and title is approved by the diocese Archbishop.
4. The local church's administrator priest shall work as the chairman of the parish spiritual council/executive committee.

C. The members of the local church

1. Anyone baptized according to the EOTC dogma and canon shall have a regular membership; and anyone who is not baptized yet, but under education, can have temporary membership.

2. Anyone residing in Denmark and is over 18 years of age and is follower of the EOTC belief can be a regular member of the church.
3. Those under the age of 18 years old can be registered under their parent/s as members of the church.
4. To be registered as a member, it can be done by consulting the parish council executive committee, or send a written application and by filling membership form. Based on this, he or she shall be registered and receive a membership card.
5. The local church's parish council, if it has a satisfactory reason, can refuse membership request by a person or a body.
6. Orthodox Tewahedo Christians who reside outside Denmark but who want to support the church in accordance with the Orthodox Tewahedo church dogma and canon can be non-regular members.
7. A member or a guest to the local church must conduct worship services in accordance with the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo church.
8. A member may voluntarily resign or may be removed by the church if they do not fulfill membership obligations, engage in activities inconsistent with the principles of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo faith, or fail to adhere to guidance provided by the church administrator and the Administration Board.
9. A member leaving voluntarily or removed by the church for disciplinary reasons, shall have no right to claim any property of the church. All past and present donations to the church become property of the church which is under Holy Synod of the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church headquartered in Addis Ababa.

Article 8: The local church's parish general assembly and its performance

1. The Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece, in accordance with the ***Qale-Awadi*** of establishing a parish, this EOTC in Denmark, the Copenhagen Debre Mihret St. Amanuel general assembly shall be established with the permission/ blessing of the diocese Archbishop.

2. The general assembly will consist of members including priests, deacons and registered members of the local church over the age of 18. The general assembly is accountable to the diocese Archbishop, the highest authority of the diocese.
3. Before a general assembly is held, the clergy and the registered members of the church shall be informed about the need to have a general meeting by the local church's administrator priest and other concerned bodies.
4. In the general assembly where the administrator priest is the chairman, members are expected to work together based on love, common spirit and understanding, peacefully. Issues that require voting will be decided based on a higher vote score.

Article 9: The local church's parish council/ executive committee/

A. Structure of the parish executive committee

1. Members of the parish council shall be elected from the registered members of the general assembly and should be over 18 years of age.
2. The parish council shall have between 5 (Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, Finance head and Cashier) or 7 (Chairman, Vice-chairman, Secretary, Finance head, Cashier and two additional parish council members) ordinary members and 2 on waiting list/reserve list. The two additional parish council members may/may not hold a section but they have equal voting power as the other members of the parish council. The elected ordinary members of the parish council shall be two or three from the clergy and one representing the Sunday school and three or four among the registered members of the local church, all in all 5 or 7 ordinary members and two reserves.
3. The vice chairman shall not be less than 30 and not more than 70 years of age.
4. The other posts shall be filled by the remaining parish council members through voting in the presence of the electoral committee.
5. A member of the parish council is elected for a period of three years and depending on the merit of his service, he/she can be elected for another term. However, a member can hold post in the parish council for two consecutive terms. But, with a break of three years in between, he can be elected as a member of the parish council.

6. A parish council's meeting can be called provided two or three members of the parish council ask for a meeting.
7. For any decision of the parish council to be valid and legal, there must be three members of the parish council (including the chairman) out of five members and only four members (including the chairman) from seven members. A decision is passed according to a majority vote of those present and the minutes shall be signed by all members present at the meeting. Any decision passed shall be in compliance with the dogma and canon of the EOTC and shall not in any way contradict the church's by-law.
8. **Members with the right to vote and/or be elected**
 - a. Includes those mentioned in article 7 as ordinary members (the church priests, deacons and registered members of the local church).
 - b. Includes those registered by the parish council and have a church membership card.
 - c. Includes those who have contributed what is expected from them (at least paid the minimum monthly membership fee) mentioned in the by-law.
 - d. Voting can be done either by raising a hand or casting a ballot.
 - e. Non-regular members, as defined in article 7, have the right to speak and suggest ideas in general assembly, but have no right of electing and being elected. These non-regular members can contribute and serve the church in their capacity as priests, deacons or believers. All non-regular members should also be followers of the Orthodox Tewahedo religion.
 - f. Members who have significant leadership role in different political parties have the right to elect and vote; however, they cannot be elected as members of the spiritual parish council /executive committee/.
 - g. Parish members nominated for the Parish council are expected to fulfill the following
 1. Those who are participating in the Holy Communion, and
 2. Those who shall fulfill the requirements to be a member as stated in this by-law. In addition, they should be role models in their spiritual life, ethics and thoughtfulness.Furthermore, it should be those who have been known to respect church laws and are at least able to write and read.

9. If there is an issue at the general assembly which creates controversy, it shall be settled by a majority vote of those with the right to vote.
10. An election committee will be established to manage the voting procedure through election that will consist of individuals representing the priests, registered members of the church and the Sunday school - all in all not less than three and not more than five. The members of the election committee shall fulfill the requirement to be a member as stated in this by-law. In addition, they should be role models in their spiritual life, ethics and thoughtfulness. Furthermore, it should be those who have been known to respect church laws and are at least able to write and read.

B. The election process

1. In accordance with the current by-law, one month before a general election takes place,, the old parish council shall present a report to the general assembly about its accomplishments, work plans, properties, financial status, etc. Alternatively, the financial report can be sent attached to the letter of invitation for a general meeting so that members who have questions on the financial report can forward their questions to the parish council 14 days before the general meeting.
2. The election committee, in accordance with the by-law, shall present the new candidates for the parish administration council (executive committee) and the result of the election will be determined by votes of general assembly members.
3. In accordance with the by-law and upon nomination by the parish council, the general assembly shall elect heads of different sections from the newly elected members (except those assigned on permanent basis) of the parish council in the presence of the election committee.

C. Power of General Assembly

1. The parish's church finance and property, total income and expenses shall be audited by an accountant at the end of the budget year or any other time if necessary.
2. The financial and property report as well as achievements shall be presented by the parish council of the church. Any controversial issue shall be settled by majority vote.
3. The local church's general assembly shall consist of the following agenda: election of an election committee, the church's annual work and financial report shall be presented by the chairman or vice chairman of the parish council, the church's annual plan shall be presented for approval, membership fee shall be determined, bring up for discussion if there are any additional issues raised by regular members, bring up any other point for discussion (any other business), election committee will lead the election of the members of the parish spiritual council and approval of the division of labor among them, election committee shall present the division of labor to the General Assembly, election committee shall lead the handing over of all duties and responsibilities from the old parish council to the newly elected council.
4. The parish's general assembly shall allocate the local church's annual budget; it will decide the amount of monthly contribution by members and will approve the church's financial report.
5. The general assembly shall take place once a year at the end of June.
6. The call for the general meeting shall be in writing and with notification of 14 to 30 days. The written invitation shall contain the time, venue, agenda of the meeting, and the parish council's address.
7. For an extraordinary meeting to take place, either the parish council has to approve of its necessity or one-fourth ($\frac{1}{4}$) of the parish members have to come up with their request for a meeting in writing including the points of discussion. The parish council has 14 days to respond from the day of receiving the request and another 14 to 30 days to call for a meeting of all members.
8. The general assembly's accountability is ultimately to the Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece.

Article 10: Election Committee's tasks and its implementation

1. The election committee shall have a given time to assess and propose candidates.
2. It will scrutinize the candidates, prepare the election implementation strategy, and present it to the parish clergy and regular registered members of the general assembly.
3. It will ensure that each voter fulfills the criteria for membership as stated in the by-law.
4. It will ensure that the voters have enough knowledge about the candidates' background prior to election.
5. It will decide on whether the election will be by counting of hands or voting cards.
6. If the general assembly does not approve of any of the candidates presented by the election committee, it will make sure that new ones are suggested by the assembly to be nominated for election.
7. Once voting is concluded, the election committee will count the votes in the presence of the voters at the assembly hall and include in the minutes the candidates with the most votes and help assign the elected to the different posts of the parish council. Finally, the committee members will place their signature on the minutes and present it to the chairman of the assembly who is the administrator of the church.
8. The church administrator shall approve the minutes presented to him by the election committee and pass it to the diocese for its implementation.

Article 11: Approval of the elected members and their office term

1. Approval and dismissal of the elected members

- a. The election undertaken at the parish level shall be approved by the Archbishop of the diocese. If the Archbishop finds the election inappropriate, he can either make some improvement or dismiss the whole after examining the case in the council.
 - b. If church money is misused or any other serious problems occur after the parish council members have resumed their responsibilities, the diocese has the power to scrutinize the matter at its administration meeting and dismiss the responsible individuals.
2. An elected member (priest/ regular registered member) can stay in office for a period of three years and can be elected for a second term. After the second term, he /she cannot be proposed unless there is a lapse of one election period.

3. The election of new parish council members shall take place a month before the end of the period of the former parish council members, and the new parish council members shall take their posts after the end of the previous parish council's period.

4. Substitution of parish council members

If a parish council member, for different reasons and prior to the end of his period, withdraw from membership, he will be replaced by another one who got the next highest votes in the previous election. If there is no such person, a new election will be undertaken for this purpose. The substitute's period of office shall be until the next ordinary election.

Article 12: The parish church administrator's (chairman's) power and duties

To fulfill and achieve the stated goals in this by-law the parish church's administrator shall have the following authority and duties:

1. The administrator of the church, in accordance with the *qale-awadi* of EOTC and the by-law derived from the *qale-awadi*, shall act as the chief executive (manager) of the church. He shall, therefore, be responsible for the general assembly and parish council's task implementation in particular, and the parish church's overall administration in general.
2. He shall manage the church administration and its staff in accordance with existing and forthcoming by-law and EOTC Synod directives.
3. He shall inform the church members about the next parish council members election plan and also make sure that the parish clergy and regular registered members are well informed about it to participate in the election.
4. He shall monitor and coordinate properly and strictly the establishment and expansion of different service sections (i.e. evangelical section, education, clergy service, Sunday school, welfare and social services, etc) within the parish council in accordance with the by-law.
5. He shall make sure that all the church members are properly registered, and formalities regarding baptism, marriage and death registration are being followed properly.
6. He shall keep an eye on the parish church regular registered members and their children to remain within the Orthodox Tewahedo belief and deeds. The priests in general and soul fathers in particular will be encouraged and given directives to do their best in this endeavor.

7. He shall follow up that the church income is collected properly and all movable and immovable properties of the church are kept properly, and use of these properties are made as per the decision of the parish council's decisions.
8. With the approved annual budget allocation and including the money the church has collected from different sources, he will see to it that proper expenditure is executed.
9. In accordance with the parish church's by-law and when the draft by-law is approved by the parish council, he together with the vice chairman can enter into and sign bilateral agreements in the name of the church.
10. He can call the parish council for a meeting; he controls and makes sure decisions taken by the parish council are implemented and ensures their execution.
11. He shall present the list of candidates for the parish spiritual council, chief secretary and heads of different sections to the concerned office for approval.
12. On behalf of the parish spiritual council, the administrator shall present a report to the parish general assembly about the status of the priests and regular registered members, those who serve in the church, the money and other church assets as well as the performances of different committees. He shall submit bi-annual report about all the decisions made at such a meeting to the concerned higher body.
13. Other than what is mentioned above and in accordance with the directives based on this by-law, he shall execute all decisions made. He has also the power to let others execute decisions.
14. The administrator cannot make decisions on his own about matters related to employment, salary increment, promotion and transfer, without the prior parish council's decision and without the knowledge and approval of a higher body.

Article 13: About the parish church council's vice chairman

1. In the absence of the church administrator, the vice-chairman will act on behalf of the church administrator.
2. If the vice chairman has no authority of priesthood, he shall have no access to matters dealing with the mysteries/sacraments of the church.
3. The vice-chairman is accountable to the church's administrator.

4. Depending on his ability and capacity, he can join one of the working groups that the church administrator might have arranged, and work either as a chairman or just a member of one of these working groups.

Chapter 4: Office term of the parish council and other sections and subsections of the parish council

Article 14: Establishment of the office of the parish council and other sections and subsections within the parish council; election of section heads, and period of service

1. For the parish spiritual council/ to fulfill its responsibilities and duties, stated in this by-law, it shall establish the following:
 - a. Office of the parish council (Chairman, Vice-chairman and secretary)
 - b. Finance section (Finance head and Cashier).
 - c. Sub-sections including the clergy service, Sunday school, plan and development, property and store and Audit and Inspection).
2. It is possible that the authority and responsibility of managing two or three non-contradictory sections mentioned above be given to one person in charge. Depending on the situation, committees can be established for those that require a committee.
3. The secretary, vice-chairman, finance head, cashier and property and store man, shall be individuals of good character, capability and work experience who will be assigned by the parish council to be approved by the general spiritual assembly.
4. Aside from the paid office holders, volunteer office holders elected shall hold their posts for a period as defined in the by-law. Therefore, the assignment of individuals other than paid office holders will take place after the election of the parish council members.
5. All the sections already established and those that will be established in the future are accountable to the church administrator.

Article 15: Authority and duties of the chief secretary of the parish council

1. The secretary is accountable to the administrator of the church. He shall closely follow up all secretarial, financial and property management as well as monitor the performance of different service sections and sub-sections.
2. He/she shall register and issue membership card to the church's priests and regular registered members.
3. He/she makes sure that all relevant information (Christian name, father and mother's name of the baptized, Godfather's or mother's name, place of birth, and date of birth) name is registered when a child/an adult is baptized in the church and when couples are married in the church. He also makes sure that baptism and marriage certificates are offered to the concerned individuals at the right time.
4. He/she shall be responsible for the seal of the church and stamp any letters signed by the administrator or the vice chairman and send the letters to the concerned person or to their addresses.
5. He/she shall prepare and present to the general assembly, by means of the church' administrator, a report on the performance of the church, its financial situation together with the budget allocated for the following year.
6. He/she shall avail himself in parish council meetings and shall take minutes. He has the responsibility of making sure that he/she and other members of the parish council have signed the minutes of the parish council.
7. He/she shall consult the church administrator and the parish council whenever there arises religious issues and other spiritual and social matters that require a close examination.
8. He/she shall control that the priests and other staff of the church are doing their jobs as expected and inform about this to the administrator regularly.
9. He shall present a quarterly report to the parish council on the condition of the parish church members and the clergy, finance and property issues, the accomplishments of the activities of the different sections.
10. He shall carry out any church task given to him from the church administrator.
11. He shall prepare the agenda for the parish council in collaboration with the chairman and the vice-chairman of the parish council.
12. He will control and keep safely important documents and minutes of the parish church.

Article 16: The Clergy service sub-section, its task and responsibilities

1. This section refers to the local church's sacramental service. It will work by coordinating the head priest (*Qese-gebez*), chief deacon and other senior church servants.
2. To accomplish its apostolic mission, it shall conduct teachings of the apostles in a language that the community understands to increase the number of followers of the Orthodox Tewahedo religion and help them become full members of the parish church.
3. It shall control the distribution of different publications and books outside the Orthodox Tewahedo belief and make sure that they are not distributed among the followers of the church.
4. It has the responsibility of checking on those individual pretenders who claim to have good knowledge without having such a formal church education; to claim to be messengers without being one, and preach and teach without permission.
5. It shall make sure and control that the liturgy program and other spiritual services are delivered in the right way.
6. It will follow up the provision of evangelical programs after the liturgy program is completed.
7. It shall, in collaboration with the Sunday school department, facilitate training and education programs for priests assigned as confessors for the church members so that they keep them away from atheism, heresy, and bad habits.
8. It shall monitor and report to the church administrator and the office that the priests, deacons, chanter and others who serve the church do their respective job efficiently and effectively.
9. It shall ensure that all regular registered members of the local church get equal and proper religious services according to the by-law of the church.
10. It shall notify the office and the church administrator for proper measures to be taken when problems arise in the church and generally in the parish with regard to religious services and the priests' teachings and practices.
11. It shall ascertain that preaching, baptizing, conducting the liturgy, and giving confession to members who confess to help them stick to their religion and mature in their ethical behavior is the mission and responsibility of the priests. For this purpose, it shall prepare the priests to be fit for the challenges.

12. It shall be responsible for suggesting a member to be ordained as deacon, if the person has followed basic church education, recited the Psalm and has the knowledge of the five holy sacraments and one whose morals and religious inclination is testified as true by the priests and followers of the belief.
13. It shall prepare celebration plan for major holidays in cooperation with Sunday school department and present it to the parish council and ensure that the plan is implemented.
14. It shall advise the priests, deacons, chanters and others who serve the church, to keep themselves away from intoxication, shameful and bad deeds; it shall control that they do not visit unworthy places.
15. It shall teach and advise followers of the belief not to go out of the church, to walk about and make conversation during the liturgy. It shall also educate and make sure that no one whose background is unknown and priesthood not scrutinized becomes father confessor by pretending to be a priest or a monk and create problems for the church.
16. It shall give directives to the confessors to teach and encourage the followers of the belief to bring their children to the church on Sundays and on holidays so that they learn and study about the church's beliefs and principles.
17. It shall inform the Godfathers and Godmothers have the obligation to teach their Godchildren about the church's beliefs and principles. It shall also see to it that it is done in accordance with the church's dogma and canon of EOTC.

Article 17: Duties and responsibilities of the Sunday school sub-section

As per the permission obtained from the Holy Synod, and based on the church's rules and regulations, the parish church's Sunday school department shall execute the following tasks.

1. Establish and organize Sunday school of the local church; announce to parishioners to become members and active participants. It shall assign priests, deacons and teachers to participate as teachers in the Sunday school.
2. Shall prepare the schedule for the Sunday school and make sure that things go as planned.
3. Shall supervise if lessons are being given according to the curriculum, the age of the children and the youth.
4. Has the primary role of providing basic church education such as the dogma and canon of the church as well as ethics (E.g. how to behave as orthodox Tewahedo Christian).

5. Shall arrange the provision of bible studies at a convenient place and time for members of the Sunday school.
6. Supervises the proper attendance of the members and shall prepare exams to evaluate their knowledge on the courses they have attended and give feedback to them on their performance.
7. Is responsible for the timely distribution of newspapers, bulletins and special editions from the EOTC Head Office to the members of the local church.
8. Shall establish and be responsible for managing the Sunday School Library; shall do all things possible to help the parish church members make use of the library facilities, e.g. read and borrow the books.
9. Has the responsibility of providing selected books written according to a central curriculum for spiritual education purpose.
10. Shall prepare a plan where members of the Sunday school will learn about the dogma and canon of the church as well as the liturgy hymn.
11. Shall prepare a plan where members of the Sunday school learn and practice different church hymns.
12. Facilitates opportunities for the preparation of spiritual theaters and plays that will be presented on the stage after it has been approved by the parish council. It will also follow up its implementation.
13. All the money collected by showing theaters or any other activity that may generate income by the Sunday school will be collected by the cashier and deposited as the income of the parish church. For the expenses that is needed, money withdrawal request will be effected after decision is given by the parish council.
14. Shall order Sunday school uniforms in accordance with the rules and tradition of the church which will be used when the Sunday school celebrates different spiritual holidays.
15. In collaboration with the evangelical and spiritual education departments, it shall invite teachers and facilitate provision of spiritual lessons (education) to be delivered to members of the Sunday school.

Article 18: Duties and responsibilities of the planning and development sub-section

1. Designs long and short term plans for various tasks; coordinates (searches) financial, knowledge, material and labor supports from different people, associations and organizations.
2. Proposes a suitable income generating activity for the local church; and use the money obtained from sold goods to buy sacred objects, books, clothes and other materials used for the church service.
3. Coordinates the clergy, members of the church and members of the Sunday school to invest their knowledge, money (wealth), different material resources and manpower for development activities within the parish church.
4. Ensures that the income obtained from such developmental activities will be registered as income of the church on legal receipts of the parish council and be deposited in a bank account opened in the name of the parish church.
5. Delivers performance report to the parish council every quarter (three months) of the year.

Article 19: Duties and responsibilities of the Finance Department

1. Reminds and follow up members to pay the regular monthly membership fee.
2. Prepares all required financial documents and registers incomes and expenses.
3. Makes sure that income collected by the church is registered following modern accounting systems and the expenses are made in accordance with legal expense codes and checks if proper expense order documents are used before the money is withdrawn.
4. Closes the account every three months and provides reports on monthly income, expenses and the balance for each month for the parish council office.
5. Controls and maintains that the expenses of the parish church will not exceed the maximum and will not affect the financial capacity of the local church; it shall also provide confirmation on this when budget allocations are made.
6. Shall prepare next year's financial budget two months before the budget year expires and after evaluating the deposit and the monthly income; it shall then present the budget list to the parish council's administration office.
7. Shall be ready to present financial documents showing annual and monthly income and expenses for audit purposes, upon request.

Article 20: Duties and responsibilities of the Cashier

1. The cashier shall collect all the income on legal receipts as per the by-law of the parish church. He/she has the responsibility to control the parish church's daily income /e.g. from baptism certificate, marriage certificate, alms box, gifts, etc/ and different expenses.
2. He/she has also the responsibility of depositing the parish church's collected money in a bank at the end of each month.
3. For any expenses, he/she shall execute payments based on the order from the parish council after the responsible person responsible puts his signature on a reconciliation ledger.
4. Records income and expenses on a financial document prepared for such purposes; carefully records the income and expenses as well as the balance summary for each month and keeps them safely for future use by reconciling with the data from the finance department.
5. Unless and otherwise he/she receives order from the church administrator, he/she is not allowed to withdraw money for expenses. However, in the absence of the church administrator, he can withdraw money for known and decided expense titles when he receives order from the vice chairman.
6. Whenever money is drawn for expenses, the cashier has to make sure that the receiver's signature, CPR number and type of ID are recorded on the legal receipt. In addition to this, when the payment is made to government bodies and private companies, a document containing the signature of the company representative in charge of receiving money and containing legal seal of the company should be received to execute payment. If money is needed for additional expenses other than priest's salary, church building rents, internet service, etc., he can execute the payment of up to 15,000.00 DKK by cash or through netbank upon receiving joint signatures of the parish council chairman and one member of the parish council.
7. If it is required to withdraw an amount exceeding 15,000.00 DKK, he/she has to make sure that a unanimous decision has been made by all the parish council members and their corresponding signatures have been obtained.
8. The cashier can withdraw up to 1, 000.00 DKK monthly for different small expenses.

Article 21: Property and Store sub-section

1. Church holy items, liturgy service uniforms, holy books and different properties of the church shall be registered carefully and be guarded by a priest assigned for this purpose. A priest who holds such a position is known as qese-gebez.
2. Will be responsible for taking care of consumable and capital goods of the parish council.
3. Will handover requested consumable and capital goods after registering on a receipt prepared for such a purpose. He will also follow up whether the goods out of store in different sections are used for the intended purpose. He will also check items returned to the store before putting back them in the store.
4. Responsible for fulfilling the items that are needed to conduct the church sacraments.
5. Responsible for yearly inventory of items in the store and makes sure that the items are stored properly. He shall report the results of the yearly inventory to the parish council.

Article 22: Audit and inspection sub-section's duties and responsibilities

1. Audit and Inspection representative and acting representative shall be elected and assigned by the existing parish council members for a term of three years.
2. The audit and inspection department shall examine property, finance and leisure book of the church when deemed necessary.
3. Can attend and give opinions on meetings of the church executive committee, but does not have the right to vote.
4. Controls income and expenses of the parish church and makes sure that money is deposited every month in the bank account of the parish church.
5. Examines whether the receipts used for registering income and expenses are legitimate.
6. By comparing with the parish council's property list book, he/she shall organize the items in the hands of the store keeper into permanent and short term use. In addition, it shall control and supervise that items that are broken due to unwise use, missing, and unregistered ones are classified and documented properly.
7. Writes a quarterly report to the parish council office whether the financial accounting system and property management system in use is acceptable and correct.

8. If a problem is identified regarding the accounting system and property management, it shall report to the parish council office about the case supporting it by the signature of the person who committed the mistake.
9. Monitors if the membership fee is paid by the parish members and also make sure that income from various sources are properly registered and deposited.
10. Controls salary payment and budget usage is not exceeding the monthly and annual limit set in accordance with the church by-law.
11. Controls whether planned activities are being carried by different departments and subsections of the parish council as planned, and will provide the necessary directives to a particular group or concerned individuals, sub-sections or departments about book keeping and usage of different models.
12. Makes sure alms and vows boxes have identification codes that can help to know their number and they are kept at a known and secured place.
13. Makes sure that alms and vows boxes are sealed in the presence and joint signatures of the church administrator, finance head, and auditor, and also makes sure that they are opened in the presence of the members present when the boxes were sealed.
14. Makes sure that incomes of the church collected by different means (E.g. Coins collected during special church events and gifts or donations) are registered on legal receipts and deposited properly.
15. Exert the necessary effort to estimate the prices of different items donated in kind (e.g. gold and silver items) are legally registered as properties of the parish church.
16. In collaboration with the property and store sub-section, it carries out inventory and reports surplus or deficit findings to the parish council administration office.

Chapter 5

Article 23: Miscellaneous by-law

1. Sources of income money from the parish church and another parish church:
 - a) Vows money
 - b) From alms boxes
 - c) Gift
 - d) Monthly and annual holiday donations

- e) Holy water services and church visitors
 - f) Sunday school and other social services
 - g) Different developmental activities
 - h) Any income outside the above income titles and income from any other means for the local church shall be taken as an income of the church.
2. The above mentioned property and money will be stored and deposited in the property store and the cashier of the parish council respectively.
 3. For conducting suitable auditing, any kind of the parish church's money and property income will be collected by a legal receipt prepared by the EOTC Head office.
 4. Disregarding the church's by-law and without the recognition and getting permission of the Head Office, anybody who claims as a parish council member or an individual collecting money by a receipt not published by the main office will be accountable for his deeds. If found, such documents will not have value and immediate action will taken to stop their use. The amount of money collected using such receipts will be taken as an income of the parish church by registering it using legal receipts.
 5. The money collected in the name of the church via the parish spiritual council shall be deposited in an account opened in the name of the parish church.
 6. Any regular member of the parish church is expected to pay monthly contribution /membership fee/ as per the decision made by the general spiritual assembly. Accordingly, one family (husband, wife, children less than 18 years of age and family members with/without income) shall generally pay 100 DKK in the name of the family, while family members older than 18 years of age and unmarried ones are expected to pay a monthly fee of 50 DKK. In addition to this, every member is welcomed to contribute extra money as a gift based on his/her interest.
 7. Any individual who would like to obtain the service that the church provides is expected to contribute fully voluntarily the following minimum amount to help cover the costs that the church incurs. As per the decision of the general spiritual assembly, parish church members as well as those coming from another parish church shall pay 500 DKK for baptism certificate and 1000 DKK for marriage certificate.

Article 24: The parish church's miscellaneous expenses

The parish spiritual council money expenses will be as follows:

1. The parish church will pay to the diocese office which is based in London from its different incomes collected from members' contribution, vows, alms boxes, developmental activities and any other income generating activity after the parish council has discussed and made a decision.
2. As per the budget allocation by a higher body in the church's structure, money will be used:
 - a) To pay salary
 - b) For day to day activities (running cost)
 - c) To execute different planned activities.
3. Money will be withdrawn for any activity by the parish council's cashier only when a written statement of permission is obtained from the chairman of the parish council in accordance with money withdrawal guidelines mentioned earlier in this by-law and allowed budget.

Article 25: About those that serve the church voluntarily

1. As church service is based on the union of the clergy and the regular members of the church, it is necessary to obtain additional manpower for church service in addition to the church permanent employees. Therefore,
 - a. The clergy who work in different governmental and non-governmental offices will be assigned by the church's spiritual council to its different service sections based on their competencies, skills and preferences.
 - b. It is the rights and obligations of the regular members of the local church to serve the church voluntarily and generously in areas where the church needs their services.

Article 26: The parish council's clergy and employees' rights and obligations

1. Rights

- a. It is the legal rights of the clergy and other employees who serve in the parish administration to get a payment according to their profession and their contribution.
- b. All the clergy have the rights to obtain annual and sick leave permissions.

- c. Rank adjustment and salary increment will be applied to church staff based on profession, service, service quality, honesty and their achievements.
- d. Any employee of the church will be put on pension according to the Danish pension rules. However, there is a possibility for extension of retirement age based on the recommendations from the administrator and the retirement committee.
- e. The rights mentioned above for retirement age will not include those that are employed not on permanent basis.

2. Obligations

- a. The clergy and other employees of the parish church should use their full potential to serve the church.
- b. Each clergyman has the responsibility of educating his repentance children, motivate them to register as member of the parish church, and follow them up to pay their membership fee and other gifts on time.
- c. Each clergyman and employee of the church, following the order of the church, will provide church service for the members from baptism to prayers for the dead.
- d. Each clergyman and employee has the responsibility of conserving the church's rules and orders, and should abstain from activities that have a negative consequence for the church.
- e. A clergyman should not abstain from his normal church service unless and otherwise he is sick or has a justifiable problem.

Article 27: The parish church members' rights and obligations

1. Rights

- a. Any member of the church, so long as he/she is registered as a member of the parish church and fulfills laws of the church, has the rights to get church services (e.g. liturgy, other prayers (matrimony, prayer for the sick, baptism, prayer for the dead, repentance, etc)).
- b. If an individual has evidence that he has been a member of another parish church and has been paying contributions expected of him, and is now a new member of our church, he will not be asked to make extra payment to get formal services from our parish church.

- c. If someone who has just passed away is proven by witnesses to be a follower of the EOTC, the church will carry out a funeral ceremony prayer for him free of service charge.
- d. Anyone who is the follower of the EOTC and becomes member of the parish church fulfilling the formalities, has the rights to elect and be elected as member of the parish council.
- e. If a member of the parish church who has been paying his monthly contribution loses any member of his family by death, the parish church will provide the required funeral ceremony prayer service without asking for extra payments.
- f. If an individual has been a member of the parish church and has stopped paying monthly contribution for a given period, he can ask for church services provided that he first pays the amount that he did not pay.
- g. If someone who is known to be a follower of the EOTC, but has not been registered as a member of the parish council passes away, the church will conduct prayer for the dead after the required amount of fee is fulfilled.
- h. Members can participate in church prayers, services and different church events.
- i. Members should cooperate with each other during social events at times of happiness and sadness.

2. Obligations

- a. Any member of the parish council should participate in the parish church's different activities mentally and physically and has the religious obligation of serving the church by paying monthly contribution, participating in administration, education, development activities, and social life services.
- b. Anyone who lives in the parish and is known to be a follower of the EOTC should register as a member of the parish church, pay his monthly contribution, obtain his membership ID card; get registered all his family members in the parish church. It is expected that his grown up children are registered as a member of the parish church's Sunday school and follow up their church education so as to be good Christians who respects the rules and orders of the church.
- c. Any member of the parish church should abide by the rules and orders of the church and should abstain from activities that will affect the image of the church. He should remain

loyal to orders of the church and lead his life as per the teachings of the bible and should remain as believer in the church.

- d. If a member of the local EOTC leaves his earlier parish church for some reason, he should give back his older ID card to the former parish council and obtain a letter stating that he has been a member and has been paying his monthly contribution. He then should also register at the new parish church as a member on time.
- e. An individual member of the parish church has the right to choose members of the parish council; he has also the rights to be elected and serve as a member of the parish council.
- f. An individual member of the parish church has the right to choose one priest from the clergymen of the parish church to be his repentance father.
- g. Every member must acknowledge that the church remains one and indivisible, never to be fragmented by individual or group interests.
- h. An individual member of the parish church will no more be a member of the parish church if:
 - 1. He/she submits a written statement to stop membership.
 - 2. He/she does not continue to respect the dogma and canon of the EOTC
 - 3. He/she does not respect the by-law of EOTC in Denmark.
 - 4. He/she passes away or is known that he/she has moved to another parish church.

Article 28: Disciplinary measures on members who do not abide by the by-law

The following disciplinary measures will be taken on individual members who do not abide by this bi-law:

- 1. Measures will be taken stepwise. Firstly, advice will be given. Secondly, warning will be given. Thirdly, he will receive penalties. The penalty can be in money or in the form of canon, stopping him from work for a defined period, firing or stopping his membership of the church. However, the penalty of firing or quitting his church membership will be practical after the diocese Archbishop has approved its execution.
- 2. If an individual member of the church fails to carry out his responsibility as a member of the parish church and fails to abide by the bi-law:
 - a. Advice will be given to him by his repentance father or a representative elderly father

- b. Warning and canon will be given the second time he does it.
 - c. Warning together with stopping his membership for a certain period of time will be executed.
- 3. The decision that an individual church member will be removed from the parish church's membership will be a final decision only when approved by the diocese Archbishop

Article 29: Execution Procedure

1. If there is anyone who has complaints on the decision(s) made by the parish church's council (executive committee), he/she can present his complaints stepwise to the diocese.
2. If the members of the parish council abuse the church's money or create some problems which affect the church's service, the diocese administration where the Archbishop is the chairman can look into the case and remove the members from parish council membership.
3. The financial accounting and property management systems used in the parish church must be as per the receipts published by the EOTC. Those who use other receipts will be accountable for their wrong doings. Those who also protest the execution of this bi-law (intended to protect the parish church and facilitate the spiritual and social services the clergymen offer to the church members) directly or indirectly will be removed from their membership.

Article 30: Dissolution of the parish church's service

The parish church will stop its service when:

- a) The number of parish church members become very low
- b) Due to another justifiable reason

In order to approve this, two general assembly meetings will be called and the termination of the church's service will be accepted if two third (2/3) of the parish church members are present in the meetings and termination gets a higher number of votes. The property of the parish church will not be transferred to any member. The money that remains after the parish church has paid its expenses and property of the church will be transferred to Ethiopian Orthodox Tewahedo Church Diocese of Sweden, Scandinavia, and Greece currently based in Stockholm, Sweden.

The current by-law shall be revised based on the *Qale awadi* of the EOTC's, when necessary. The by-law shall be amended solely by the general assembly. The by-law shall be revised with the highest vote, at least 2/3 of the parishioners at the meeting. The reason why this amendment is important shall be studied by the executive committee and be incorporated in the invitation paper.

Article 31: Approval and effectiveness of the By-law

This by-law is approved by the general assembly of the parish church, and the Diocese Archbishop Abune Elias. These By-laws shall be effective when registered and ratified by the Church Minster of Denmark.