

ARTICLES OF AGREEMENT & BY-LAWS for NETHERLANDS BETHEL MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

ARTICLE I - NAME

The organization shall be known as “Netherlands Bethel Missionary Baptist Church.”

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

Section 1. Purpose Defined

The purpose of this mission shall be to carry out the Lord's will, which involves the propagation of the Gospel in the world.

- a. By the clear proclamation of God's Word, through words, song, and writing.
- b. By the establishment, building up, and support of a Bible-believing congregation; English as well as Filipino-speaking congregation.
- c. Through the strengthening of the current Bible-believing congregation.
- d. By spreading the Gospel in the community around us, with emphasis on the Filipino and English-speaking fellow citizens, however, without excluding Dutch citizens.
- e. By assisting churches and missions of the same faith with the purpose of spreading the Gospel throughout the world.

Section 2. Purpose Fulfilled

The purpose will be fulfilled through a combination of the following:

- a. Worship services and Bible studies,
- b. Holy Communion and biblical baptism,
- c. Fellowship meetings for adults and youth,
- d. Personal visits and testimonies,
- e. Visits by revival preachers.

Section 3. Purpose Supported

1. The purpose shall be supported by voluntary collections, given or sent from individual churches and organizations to the church's fund.
2. Money held in the church's fund will be used to pay the church's expenses and bills incurred by the same, and shall not be held liable for debts or bills incurred by the pastor or members without special permission from the church.
3. The fund's assets will only be disbursed upon the following authorization from the church:
 - a. Pay rent or mortgage for meeting premises.
 - b. Pay official fees and taxes to local authorities as determined by Danish law.

- c. The church pays the pastor's salary and other expenses attributable to the pastoral office.
- d. Pay for Christian literature and other necessities to be used to aid in the performance of church duties.
- e. Pay for special assistance (legal counsel and missionary work).
- f. Pay for support for missionary work locally, nationally, or globally.

ARTICLE III - ORGANIZATION

Section 1. Cooperation

The church organization consists of baptized believers. The organization is not subject to any other doctrines than that which is written in Article II - support for the church. We acknowledge our desire for mutual counsel and cooperation with other churches of the same doctrine.

Section 2. Purpose

We shall be compatible with independent fundamental Baptist churches, and with the American Baptist Association, for the purpose of cultivating fellowship and carrying out missionary work.

ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1. Qualifications

1. Membership is open to all individual persons who openly profess faith in Jesus Christ regardless of age, gender, race, color, and nationality or ethnic background.
2. Requirements for membership will be the following:
 - a. Acknowledging Jesus Christ as their personal Savior and requesting baptism or
 - b. Transfer from another church through a letter of transfer. Letters of transfer are received from Baptist churches of the same doctrine and teachings (a questionnaire will be sent to the church where the respective member was affiliated), or
 - c. Transfer by declaration in the event that a recommended letter is not obtainable or acceptable, the person must provide a declaration of their doctrine and proof of proper biblical baptism by a Baptist church of the same faith and teachings, testimony of the person's conversion given by acquaintances, or
 - d. Renewal on the basis that the person has been excluded but has acknowledged their sin and has shown their humility by asking for forgiveness.

Section 2. Duties of Members

The church members agree without reservation:

- a. To uphold the doctrinal statement as described in the bylaws.
- b. To strive for the unity of the church by the following: regular church attendance, prayer, personal testimonies, and regular financial support.
- c. To respect and appreciate their pastor, intercede for him, and assist him in carrying out the work of the church.
- d. To withdraw quietly in case of disagreement about the church's doctrines or inability to harmonize with others, and not seek to divide the fellowship.

Section 3. Dismissal of Members

Members may be dismissed from membership by the following:

a. Voluntary.

1. Any member wishing to withdraw from the church shall submit a written notification to the Pastor and the members, stating their desire to withdraw.
2. The letter shall include the member's full name, date of withdrawal, and reason (if they choose to provide it).
3. Upon receipt of the letter, the church leadership may meet with the member to offer spiritual guidance and prayer.
4. If the member is transferring to another Baptist church, a Letter of Transfer may be issued upon request, stating that they left the church in good standing.
5. Once the withdrawal has been processed, their name will be removed from the church's membership list.
6. Any member who joins a non-Baptist church will be subject to exclusion from membership. This action will be carried out by a majority vote of the church at a regular business meeting. The member will receive written notice prior to the vote and will be given the opportunity for clarification or conversation if desired. Such a decision reflects the church's commitment to doctrinal unity and the distinctives of the Missionary Baptist faith.

b. Exclusion - Any member who is guilty of serious misconduct and violates the church covenant, without heeding the counsel of the pastor and members (this in accordance with Matthew 18:15-17), may be excluded from membership by a majority vote at a regular business meeting, however, the member must receive written notice before such steps can be taken.

c. Death.

d. Inactivity. After 3 months of absence of a member, the church shall make a reasonable attempt to communicate by letter, inquiring about their current and future membership. At the end of six months of absence without receiving a response regarding their wishes, the member may be excluded by a vote of the church.

Section 4. Disciplining of Members

1. All members of the church are subject to rules of discipline and are understood to accept the final decision of the church in matters concerning discipline.
2. There are 2 primary reasons for the church to administer discipline to church members, up to and including exclusion. (1 Timothy 5:20, 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 1:13, 2:15).
 - a. To keep the church's moral path clean.
 - b. To uphold the church's doctrines.
3. There are 3 degrees of offenses that will result in discipline.
 - a. For personal offenses, three biblical steps to re-establish fellowship in personal offenses must be followed by the offended party (Matthew 18:15-17; 5:23,24; 6:15; Luke 17:3,4; Ephesians 4:30-32).
 - b. For public offenses, when a member behaves unworthily in public, this must be treated as a threat to the church's existence and purpose (1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6).
 - c. For offenses against doctrines, a member who teaches or advocates false doctrines after the second admonition shall be excluded by a vote of the members (Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10).
4. In cases concerning the discipline of an appointed pastor of the church, a council consisting of specially appointed members of the supporting church, as long as the church remains a mission, is represented by person or by letter. The church shall ensure the congregation's counsel before taking any form of decision (1 Timothy 5:19).

ARTICLE V - OFFICES AND THEIR DUTIES

A. Offices shall be limited to members of the church. This does not exclude the selection of an outside pastor who is not a member of the church at the time of the call of his election.

B. All leaders shall be subject to the following rules:

1. To faithfully participate in all activities of the church and attend all worship services regularly, to the best of one's ability (Hebrews 10:25).
2. To give regular financial support as stated in Scripture (1 Corinthians 8:7-9; Hebrews 1-10; 2 Corinthians 9:6-8).
3. To have a desire to fulfill the office.
4. To set a good example as a good Christian in his daily conduct (1 John 2:6).

5. To actively participate in visiting and winning souls for Jesus, privately and through organized church programs (Matthew 28:18-20, Proverbs 11:30).

Section 1. Pastor

1. The qualifications and duties pertaining to the pastor are stated in the Holy Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:7-9; 1 Peter 5:1-5).
 - a. He shall be the chief authority in the church, responsible for all worship services and ordinances, subject to the governing by-laws.
 - b. He shall also be the discussion leader at all business meetings (except when his calling, dismissal, or discipline is involved) and an advisor to all committees and departments of his work.
 - c. He shall dedicate his time and energy to the welfare of the church. He shall be responsible for ensuring that a qualified person takes over his duties in his absence.
2. The calling and selection of a pastor (missionary-pastor) shall be in accordance with the church members.

Section 2. Deacon

1. The qualifications of the deacon are written in the Holy Scriptures (1 Timothy 3:8-13; Acts 6:1-7).
 - a. The deacon shall be responsible for lighter tasks in the church, subject to the prescribed rules of the church and the pastor.
 - b. The deacon shall, unless otherwise determined, ensure the performance of the ordinances.
 - c. The deacon shall assist the pastor, according to his instructions, in the office.
2. The deacon shall be elected by the church and perform the aforementioned duties. All candidates shall participate in deacon training with the pastor.

Section 3. Treasurer and Assistant

1. The duties of a treasurer are as follows:
 - a. He shall receive, disburse all money and other valuables belonging to the church as prescribed by the church, with the following exceptions:
 1. Special Sunday school mission projects.
 2. Money collected through aid organizations.
 - b. He shall keep a daily account directed towards regular and annual business meetings of

the church. All reports prepared by the treasurer are the property of the church and shall be open for inspection.

c. He shall hand over all prepared reports to the treasurer who is elected to succeed him.

2. The treasurer and his assistant are both elected by the members of the church.

Section 4. Secretary

1. The duties of the secretary are as follows:

a. He shall keep a summary of the church's activities and report the same as also required by the church.

b. He shall keep a register of members' names and addresses, with dates and manner of admission, discipline, offices to which one is elected, and transfers.

c. He shall keep statistics on changes and the number of memberships annually.

d. He shall handle all correspondence relating to the church and concerning the following:

1. Transfer of membership.

2. Correspondence with members.

2. The secretary will be elected by a vote of the members.

Section 5. Sunday School Superintendent

1. The Sunday School Superintendent shall have overall supervision of the Sunday school.

a. He shall ensure that all Sunday school classes have a teacher.

b. He shall be responsible for ordering literature and teaching aids.

c. He shall cooperate with the pastor to establish an overall goal for the Sunday school program.

2. The Sunday School Superintendent is elected by the members. In the event that the office is vacant, the pastor will take care of delegating the prescribed duties until the office is filled.

Section 6. Teachers and Leaders

1. Teachers and leaders will be elected by the church as needed.

2. Recommendations may come from the pastor or the church, and elections will be held at the annual Business Meeting by the members.

Section 7. Music Leader

1. The music leader shall choose music for the congregation to sing and inform the co-organist in advance for each service.
2. The music leader shall encourage special music within the congregation.
3. The music leader shall be responsible for coordinating the music in cooperation with the pastor.

ARTICLE VI - MEETINGS

Section 1. Worship Service Meetings

Unless otherwise determined, worship service shall be held every Sunday, and in any case, there shall be Bible study and prayer meeting at least once weekly. Special services such as revival meetings will be determined as needed by the church.

Section 2. Holy Communion

Holy Communion shall be observed by the church members who practice fellowship when and as often as it will be decided by the members at the organized business meeting.

Section 3. Business Meetings

At any regular meeting for worship without special notice, decisions can be made regarding the reception or transfer of members, in accordance with Article IV.

- a. A regular Business Meeting shall be held only once a month. The time and date will be determined by the pastor, treasurer, secretary, and shall be announced at least 2 worship services before the meeting.
- b. The annual Business Meeting shall take place in August each year. At the meeting, information about the annual accounts and annual report will be provided. Plans for the Sunday school will be presented, election of teachers and promotion of students. Goals for the coming year will be set.
- c. Each member has equal voting rights. It is required that all heads of households participate in the voting. A child's vote requires adult assistance, when possible. The majority wins.
- d. Rules of Order: The rules for business proceedings are as follows:
 1. Prayers.
 2. Minutes of the meeting.
 3. Financial report (treasurer).
 4. Announcements.
 5. Unfinished business.
 6. New business initiatives.
 7. Adjournment of the meeting.

All questions regarding business procedure shall be decided in accordance with the usual rules contained in "Robert's Rules of Order."

- e. The pastor shall be the moderator at every business meeting of the church, with the exception of what is written in Article V, Section 1.

ARTICLE VII - DISSOLUTION OF THE CHURCH

In the event of the dissolution of the Church, no part of the Church's property, assets, or funds may benefit or be distributed to any individual, member, leader, or other private person. Upon dissolution, all assets belonging to Netherlands Bethel Missionary Baptist Church, after payment or provision for payment of all debts and liabilities, shall be transferred to another church or religious organization with similar faith and church order, which is organized and operated exclusively for religious purposes and which is located in Netherlands or in a member state of the European Union (EU) or the European Economic Area (EEA), as decided by a majority of the remaining members or the Church leadership at the time of dissolution.

The receiving church or organization must be a non-profit entity according to applicable national legislation and must adhere to the doctrinal and ecclesiastical principles that are consistent with this Church.

ARTICLE VIII – AMENDMENTS

These bylaws may be amended by a majority vote of the members present at any legally convened church meeting. Proposals for amendments must be submitted in writing and communicated to the congregation at least one week before the meeting. Amendments take effect immediately upon approval, unless otherwise specified.