

# **NORDIC CHINESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH CONSTITUTION**

## **CHAPTER I - NAME, PURPOSE AND STRUCTURE**

### **1.1. NAME**

- 1.1.1. The English NAME of the Society shall be:  
NORDIC CHINESE CHRISTIAN CHURCH  
(hereafter referred to as “this Church”)

### **1.2. PURPOSE**

- 1.2.1. The NORDIC CHINESE CHRISTAIN CHURCH is formed by a number of the Chinese churches in Nordic with the purposes of: demonstrating the unity in Christ in working together in God’s ministry; providing a spiritual home for the Nordic Chinese Christians for mutual fellowship; maintaining a united witness in having Jesus Christ as the Head of the Church; following His Great Commission to preach the Full Gospel; and nurturing the spiritual life of the believers.
- 1.2.2. The Church is inter-denominational, crossing culture, tradition and language differences, nurturing brothers and sisters to love one another in mutual encouragement and spiritual growth.
- 1.2.3. Member churches must maintain close contact in order to strengthen the relationship of the Nordic Chinese overseas Christians working together to preach the Gospel effectively.

### **1.3. MISSION STATEMENT**

- 1.3.1. This Church, being united in Christ, shall seek to use the joint resources of member gospel churches to: evaluate and promote joint ministries; train and nurture the spiritual life of deacons and fellow workers; and as the Spirit leads to develop strategically the work of the Gospel both in Nordic and globally.

### **1.4. STRUCTURE**

- 1.4.1. Member of this Church shall consist of the gospel churches and fellowships in Nordic cities, (i.e. Norway’s Oslo, Stavanger, Sweden’s Gothenburg, Stockholm, Malmo, Uppsala, Finland’s Helsinki,) as well as other fellowships, Bible study groups and home groups that meet regularly in other cities.
- 1.4.2. Each member church or fellowship is independent in its finances, administration and development.
- 1.4.3. The Joint Council is the organization that manages this Church (reference the Nordic Chinese Christian Joint Council Constitution).

#### 1.4.4. The Joint Pastoral Fellowship

1.4.4.1. This is made up of all the pastors, preachers and elders of the member churches.

1.4.4.2. To ensure the purity of this Church's faith, to keep this Church's unity in Christ and to love one another. In the event that member churches/fellowships are unable to resolve by themselves problems regarding this Church's faith and Christian conducts, upon the agreement of 50 per cent of the deacons/fellowship committees, pastors and preachers of the member churches/fellowships, they can request the joint pastoral council to deal with the offending elder, deacons/committee member, pastor, preacher or member of the member Church/Fellowship on matters concerning his/her conduct and Faith. With the agreement of the member church/fellowship's deacons' board/fellowship committee, and together with them, the Joint Pastoral Council shall carry out such church discipline as decided by the Joint Pastoral Council.

1.4.4.3. To provide pastoral care for member church without a pastor.

1.4.4.4. To suggest, plan and implement the spiritual direction and practice in all the joint ministries of this Church.

1.4.4.5. To arrange Holy Sacrament and Preaching in all the joint events of this Church.

1.4.4.6. To examine and ordain the pastors of the member church.

1.4.4.7. To maintain the relationship, pastoral care and help amongst the pastoral staff of member churches.

1.4.4.8. The joint pastoral fellowship shall consist of a chairperson, a secretary, each with a term of two years. They are to be elected amongst the members themselves. The chairperson shall call meetings when and as necessary.

## 2. CHAPTER II – STATEMENT OF FAITH

2.1. We believe: The Scriptures, both Old and New Testaments, to be the inspired Word of God, without error in the original writings, the complete revelation of His will for the salvation of men, and the divine and final authority for Christian life and faith.

2.2. We believe: in one God, Creator of all things, infinitely perfect and eternally existing in three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

- 2.3. We believe: that man was created in the image of God but fell into sin and is therefore lost and only through regeneration by the Holy Spirit can salvation and spiritual life be obtained.
- 2.4. We believe: that Jesus Christ is true God and true man, having been conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He died on the cross as a sacrifice for our sins according to the Scriptures. Further, He rose bodily from the dead on the third day, ascended into heaven. One day He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and to establish His Kingdom without end. The shed blood of Jesus Christ and His resurrection provide the only ground for justification and salvation for all who believe, and only such as receive Jesus Christ are saved from sin's guilt and punishment, free from the power of sin.
- 2.5. We believe: that the Holy Spirit together with God the Father, God the Son are worshipped and honored, is the Spirit of Truth and Holiness, convict men, regenerate the believing sinner, give spiritual gifts to the believer, unite them together to build up Christ's Body, the Church.
- 2.6. We believe: that the Church is composed of all such persons who through saving faith in Jesus Christ and called out to be God's children, manifesting God's love, preaching the Good News of the Heavenly Kingdom. Jesus Christ is the Lord and Head of the Church, personally instituting the Water Baptism and Holy Communion.
- 2.7. We believe: that Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, will personally return in power and glory. On that Day, all men will be revealed before the judgment seat of Christ, believers resurrected to everlasting blessedness, unbelievers to judgment and everlasting conscious punishment. God will be King forever. Believer must be watchful for the return of the Lord, because no one knows the time of the return of Jesus Christ.

### **3. CHAPTER III – HOLY SACRAMENTS: THIS CHURCH PERFORM TWO HOLY SACRAMENTS – BAPTISM AND HOLY COMMUNION**

#### **3.1. Baptism**

3.1.1. This Church will, according to the teaching in the Bible, baptize anyone who believes in the Lord Jesus, is certain of being born again, and willing to confess his repentance in front of God and others, to demonstrate his being united with Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

3.1.2. This Church will perform baptism by total immersion. However, under special circumstances baptism by sprinkling can be performed.

3.1.3. This Church will not perform infant baptism.

#### **3.2. Holy Communion**

3.2.1. This Church follows the instruction of the Lord Jesus in observing the Holy Communion that He instituted in remembering His salvation through

the breaking of His body and the shedding of His blood, in self-examination and the waiting for His return.

3.2.2. All born-again and baptized Christians are welcome to participate in the Holy Communion.

#### **4. CHAPTER IV – MEMBERSHIP**

##### 4.1. Privileges and Duties of Member Church

4.1.1. Member churches must follow the rules set up by the joint council and the joint mission committee in sending representatives to participate and promote the ministries of this Church.

4.1.2. Fully support the ministries of this Church through prayer, financial giving and service.

##### 4.2. Application Procedures

4.2.1. Must accept the Faith, Purpose and Constitution of this Church without reservations.

4.2.2. Application must be accompanied by the resolution to join passed at the member church's AGM.

4.2.3. Application must be submitted to the joint council.

4.2.4. The application shall be examined and approved by the joint council.

4.2.5. Other Nordic Christian groups that wishes to join this Church may apply to the joint council.

#### **5. CHAPTER V – MEMBERSHIP IN THE INDIVIDUAL GOSPEL CHURCH**

##### 5.1. Member Qualification

5.1.1. Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, be born-again and have been baptized.

5.1.2. Accept the Faith, Purpose and Constitution of this Church without reservations.

5.1.3. Attend the member church's meetings regularly (The deacons' board can make exceptions under special circumstances).

##### 5.2. Responsibilities and Obligations of Members

5.2.1. The member must, by the power of the Holy Spirit, fulfill the responsibilities and obligations, please God, love God, love the church, and fulfill the duty of a Christian.

5.2.2. Pray and read the Bible, obey God's word, seek personal spiritual growth, and build a close relationship with the Lord.

- 5.2.3. Attend regularly the church's Sunday worship, worshipping the Triune God with sincerity; attend fellowship meetings and bible study group. Seek to maintain fellowship with brothers and sisters, love one another, help one another, and learn the biblical truth so that one may achieve healthy spiritual growth.
  - 5.2.4. Seek to glorify God through living according to biblical principle in one's personal life, at home, in society and in the church.
  - 5.2.5. Do one's best to, witness for the Lord, preach the Gospel, lead others into God's kingdom.
  - 5.2.6. Seek to understand the truth about trust and giving (Romans 12:1-2), participate in giving through various means such as, the use of time, spiritual gifts, material things and money, so that God's house will lack nothing.
  - 5.2.7. Follow biblical principle in submitting to the spiritual leadership of the church, live with brothers and sisters in humility, with one heart and mind to protect the unity of the church.
- 5.3. Privileges of the Member
- 5.3.1. The right to attend members' meeting. If over the age of 18, has the right to nominate and be nominated, to elect and to vote.
  - 5.3.2. If necessary, to reflect to the church's deacons/pastors personal opinions regarding the church's future direction, management and ministries.
  - 5.3.3. If a member comes across any difficulties or spiritual questions, he can approach the pastors directly for help, seeking counseling and care.
  - 5.3.4. A member can, according to Chapter 7.4 of the Constitution, request the deacons' board to call a special members' meeting and suggest items for discussion.
  - 5.3.5. If a member fails to attend the church's Sunday worship within a year and has not fulfilled the duties and obligations as a member, the deacons' board with the consent of the pastors can suspend temporarily the member's right to vote.
- 5.4. Membership Application Procedures
- 5.4.1. The applicant should first discuss with the pastor, read and understand the church's constitution, then complete an application form and submit it to the deacons' board. After the approval of the deacons' board he shall immediately become a member.

5.4.2. If a person is already a member of another church, he can be a member of this church also with the consent of his original church.

5.4.3. When a member of one of this Church's gospel church has moved and has lived in another city for two years, he can become a member of the gospel church in the latter city upon the recommendation/notice of the previous church. He only needs to complete a registration form for record keeping by the deacon board. He shall enjoy all the privileges, duties and obligations of the newly joined church.

#### 5.5. Termination of Membership

5.5.1. Should a member want to transfer his membership to another church of similar faith of this Church, he can make written request to the deacons' board for membership transfer. The deacons' board, after examining the faith of the other church, can issue letter of recommendation/certificate to the other church.

5.5.2. If a member has not attended the church's meetings regularly for no valid reason, has not fulfilled his obligations, and out of touch for three years, his membership will be automatically terminated.

5.5.3. If a member has changed his membership or moved away from Nordic, he can request the deacons' board to put his name in the church's List of Corresponding Members for communication purposes.

5.5.4. A member who violates this Church's Faith and Purpose, not following biblical truth and Christian ethics, moral conduct, fails to respond to repeated admonishing in love, the church has the authority to carry out church discipline such as, stopping the right to partake Holy Communion, the right to serve. If deem necessary, the termination of membership.

#### 5.6. Updating of Membership

5.6.1. The deacon board shall, where necessary, update the church membership once before the Annual General Meeting.

### **6. CHAPTER VI – POSITIONS AND ORGANIZATION OF THE GOSPEL CHURCH**

#### 6.1. Deacons' Board

6.1.1. The deacons' board is the gospel church's legal representative and main governing body, responsible for, the daily administration of the gospel church's affairs, planning and evaluating the church's ministries, affirming the goal, plan and direction set by the pastoral team, and setting the year's financial budget and reports.

6.1.2. The deacons' board shall consist of no less than five deacons. The pastor, preacher and elders are ex-official members. If the number of deacons is less

than five, the gospel church should seek help from the joint council in order to ensure the smooth functioning of the church.

6.1.3. The deacons' board shall consist of a chairperson, treasurer, secretary, and general affairs manager. Department and committees can be formed where necessary to assist the deacons' board in carrying out and developing the ministries of the church.

6.1.4. The deacons' board shall call meetings as needed but at least once a quarter. Board decisions should be made known to church members.

6.1.5. The deacons' board chairperson shall be elected from among the deacons. The chairperson is responsible for setting the meeting agendas, chairing the meeting, following-up on the meeting's resolutions and coordinating with the pastoral team. The chairperson is also the external representative of the gospel church.

## 6.2. Pastoral team: According to the need of the individual gospel church

6.2.1. The pastoral team provides spiritual leadership and pastoral care to the gospel church. Its main duty is to set up the direction, purpose, and plan for the church. The pastoral team will consist of the pastor, preacher, and elders. When needed, the deacons' board's chairperson and other co-workers can be enlisted to sit in the pastoral team meeting.

6.2.2. The pastoral team is responsible to preach the Word of God, keep watch over the believers, and share in the teaching and pastoral care of the believers.

6.2.3. The pastoral team is responsible in protect the purity of the faith, keeping the unity and brotherly/sisterly love of the church.

6.2.4. Interview membership applicants, and make recommendation to the deacon board for acceptance.

6.2.5. The chairperson of the pastoral team shall be the pastor/preacher of the church. He shall call a meeting as needed.

## 6.3. Pastor

6.3.1. The pastor shall be, a person called by God to be a clergy, a servant of God, imitating Christ in leading and pastoring the church, preaching and teaching the Bible, dedicating to prayer and preaching.

6.3.2. Responsible for the gospel church's Holy Sacraments (baptism and Holy Communion), wedding, funeral and other ceremonies.

- 6.3.3. The pastor shall work with the pastoral team and the deacons' board in serving, respecting and accepting the church's administrative decisions.
- 6.3.4. Once called, the pastor shall automatically become a member of the gospel church until his departure.
- 6.3.5. The pastor shall have proper theological training, ordained, and shall be a salaried staff of the church.
- 6.3.6. The ordination of the pastor shall be initiated by the gospel church's deacons' board, and shall be recommended to the joint pastoral fellowship of the Nordic Chinese Christian Church. The joint pastoral fellowship will then commence the ordination process.
- 6.3.7. Regarding the hire of pastor by the gospel church, the deacon board shall appoint a "Pastoral Hire Committee" to carry out the task. Any decisions made by this task group must be approved by the deacon board and then examined by the joint pastoral fellowship, and finally approved at the Membership General Meeting. Employment contract must not conflict with the labor regulation of the local government authority.

#### 6.4. Preacher

- 6.4.1. The preacher shall be, a person called by God to be a clergy, a servant of God, imitating Christ in leading and pastoring the church, preaching and teaching the Bible, dedicating to prayer and preaching.
- 6.4.2. The preacher shall be the pastor's assistant. In the absence of the pastor, the preacher will carry out tasks assigned by the pastor. If the gospel church does not have a pastor, deacons' board shall make detail arrangement for the preacher regarding performing church ceremonies.
- 6.4.3. The preacher shall work with the pastoral team and the deacon's board in serving, respecting and accepting the church's administrative decisions.
- 6.4.4. Once called, the preacher shall automatically become a member of the gospel church until he leaves.
- 6.4.5. The preacher shall have proper theological training. After the inauguration ceremony will become the salaried church staff.
- 6.4.6. Regarding the hire of preacher by the gospel church, the deacons' board shall appoint a "Pastoral Hiring Committee" to carry out the task. Any decisions made by this task group must be approved by the deacons' board and then examined by the joint pastoral fellowship, and finally approved at the Membership General Meeting. Employment contract must not conflict with the labor regulation of the local government authority.



## 6.5. Elder: According to the needs of the Gospel Church

- 6.5.1. The elder shall be matured in spiritual life, fulfill the requirement in 1 Timothy 3:1-7; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 5:1-3, has been a member of the gospel church continuously for no less than seven years, has received recognized systematic Bible training and is willing to assist the pastor in managing the church and protecting church order.
- 6.5.2. The elder shall assist the pastor in serving, preaching the gospel and pastoring the church. In the absence of the pastor, he shall assume the duties of the pastor.
- 6.5.3. The elder shall work with the pastoral team and deacons' board, respecting and accepting decisions made in the overall management of the church.
- 6.5.4. Detailed arrangements in the appointment and dismissal of an elder shall be handled by the "Elder Appointment Committee" as delegated by the deacons' board. Decisions made by the committee must be approved by the deacons' board and then passed at the Members General Meeting.
- 6.5.5. The appointed elder shall be confirmed by the pastor with the laying on of hands in prayer.
- 6.5.6. The elder shall serve a three-year term which can be extended. The elder in the gospel church is not a salaried position.

## 6.6. Consulting Pastor

- 6.6.1. In the event that the gospel church is without a pastor and is in need of one to pastor and manage the church, they can recruit an experienced pastor to be their consulting pastor.
- 6.6.2. The procedure of recruitment is to be handled by the deacons' board.

## 6.7. Deacons

- 6.7.1. Deacons are lay-leaders of the gospel church, responsible for the church's documents, assets, administration and finance, etc. He shall also help the pastor in managing church business and sharing the various church works.
- 6.7.2. Deacons shall actively seek spiritual growth, whose life demonstrates qualifications for leadership as found in 1 Timothy 3:8-13. They must have the desire to serve and have good reputations. They shall have been a member of the gospel church for at least two years continuously.
- 6.7.3. Believer meeting the qualifications shall be nominated by a church member and seconded by another during the nomination period and accepted

by the deacons' board before becoming a candidate. The candidate shall be voted upon at the Annual General Meeting before becoming deacon.

6.7.4. Term of office shall be two years and can be extended.

6.7.5. Deacon who wants to resign, must give one month advance notice to the deacon board. Upon accepting the resignation, the deacon board shall submit it to the Special General Meeting for approval before the resignation can become effective.

## 7. CHAPTER VII – MEETINGS OF MEMBERS OF THE GOSPEL CHURCH

7.1. General meeting is the final management decision making machinery.

7.1.1. One third of the current voting membership shall constitute a quorum. If the quorum is not present, the deacon board shall reschedule it to the same day in the next week, at the same time and place, and at the rescheduled meeting, regardless of the number represent, the voting members present shall constitute a quorum.

7.1.2. Quorum of members shall consist of: members present and by proxy. Each member can only represent a maximum of three proxy members and must vote according to the absent members' instructions.

7.1.3. The deacons' board chairperson shall preside over all meetings.

7.1.4. Except where otherwise specified in this Constitution, all motions shall be passed by a two-thirds majority vote.

7.1.5. The regular general meetings shall be the annual general meeting and the general meeting. Other meetings shall be special general meetings.

### 7.2. Annual General Meeting

7.2.1. Once a year the deacons' board shall call an annual general meeting.

7.2.2. At the annual general meeting, members shall elect deacons, receive and discuss reports of the church's ministries, and pass the budgets of the following year.

7.2.3. The board secretary shall give written notice to individual members at least two weeks before the meeting, stating the meeting date, time, place, agenda and relevant reports.

7.2.4. Member wanting to raise any item for discussion at the meeting must first obtain the agreement of at least two other members and submit the request in writing to the deacons' board no less than one month before the meeting.

### 7.3. General Meeting

- 7.3.1. The deacons' board shall call a general meeting when necessary.
- 7.3.2. The general meeting shall include the presentation of last year's financial report and other matters concerning the life and ministry of the church for report and discussion.
- 7.3.3. The procedure in calling the meeting is the same as the annual general meeting in 7.23 and 7.24.

#### 7.4. Special General Meeting

- 7.4.1. Members can request the deacons' board to call a special general meeting, but must have the agreement of at least one third of members and submit relevant items for discussion in writing.
- 7.4.2. The deacons' board chairperson must call a special general meeting within two months on receipt of the written request from member.
- 7.4.3. When necessary the deacons' board can also call a special general meeting.
- 7.4.4. Two weeks before the meeting, the secretary must notify members the date, time, venue and agenda of the meeting.

### 8. CHAPTER VIII – CONSTITUTION APPENDIX

- 8.1. The Joint Pastoral Fellowship shall review this Church's constitution once every five years. If changes are deemed necessary, it must be approved by the joint council who will then form a Constitution Amendment Committee to make the changes. Approval of the proposed amended constitution shall be made by the deacons' board of member gospel churches as well as their members. The final effective date of the amended constitution shall be decided by the joint council.
- 8.2. This Constitution can be translated into different languages but the Chinese language shall be the official version.
- 8.3. Member churches are free to make an abridged version of this constitution in their local language in order to meet the requirement of the local authority, as long as such versions do not conflict with this Church's version. Registration to the local authority shall be made by the member churches themselves.