

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF BANGKOK

ARTICLE I Name and Relationship

The name of this church shall be the **INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF BANGKOK**. It shall be a constituent part of The Church of Christ in Thailand and shall undertake to carry on its affairs in harmony with the 1998 Constitution of The Church of Christ in Thailand.

ARTICLE II Purpose

The purpose of the International Church of Bangkok is to carry on Christian work in the Protestant tradition by providing for and engaging in the worship of God, the study of His word, the fellowship of Christian people and whatsoever other activities may advance the kingdom of God on Earth.

ARTICLE III Membership

A. Eligibility

A person may become eligible for membership in this Church

1. by presentation of a letter of transfer from any Christian church; or
2. by a statement of holding a current membership in a Christian church (this need not affect an existing relationship with another church); or
3. by a statement of having been received as a member of a Christian church and by a solemn reaffirmation of faith (this need not affect an existing relationship with another church); or
4. by public declaration of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior and of commitment to work for the advancement of Christ's kingdom in and through the ministries of the church, and by baptism, if he or she has not previously received Christian baptism.

B. Acceptance

A person who meets any one of the above conditions may be received as a member.

C. Withdrawals

1. When requested by a departing member, a letter of transfer to any other Christian church may be granted or certificate of good standing may be issued. Such a letter or certificate should include a statement describing the manner in which the member joined the church.

2. A member who no longer resides in Thailand shall be removed from membership unless specifically requesting otherwise; upon returning, membership will be restored upon request.

ARTICLE IV Organization

A. Authority

Jesus Christ is the head of the Church. The ultimate source of authority of the government of this church is the word of God. The government of the temporal affairs of the International Church of Bangkok shall rest with the congregation and be carried on by its duly elected or appointed officers and duly established Council and committees.

B. Congregation

The congregation shall consist of those who take membership in this church and those who attend and support the church without taking membership in it.

C. Church Council

The Church Council shall be composed of the Minister of the church and all elected and appointed church officers.

D. Minister

The congregation shall call a Minister to conduct services of worship and provide pastoral care for members of the congregation and others who may call upon him or her. The Minister shall be duly ordained in the Protestant tradition and acceptable to the local district of The Church of Christ in Thailand.

E. Elected Church Officers

The following officers shall be elected at the Annual Meeting of the congregation for a one-year term:

1. Recording Secretary of the Church
2. Church Treasurer / Chair of the Finance and Stewardship Committee
3. Chair of the Worship Committee
4. Chair of the Membership Committee
5. Chair of the Outreach Committee
6. Chair of the Christian Education Committee
7. Chair of the Fellowship Committee
8. Chair of the Property and Personnel Committee
9. Chair of the Council
10. Vice Chair of the Council
11. Three Members at Large

F. Ad-Hoc Committees

1. **Nominating Committee** The incoming Nominating Committee shall consist of as many as five members, some of whom shall be at-large members of the current Council. Other committee members will be appointed by the Council. Members shall serve for a term of one year.

2. **Call Committee** When the term of the Minister is due to terminate or when the office of the Minister is vacant, the Council shall nominate a Call Committee consisting of 7 to 10 members, at least 2 but not more than 4 of whom shall be chosen from those currently serving as members on the Council. The congregation will then vote, at a duly called congregational meeting, to give its approval of the committee's membership.
3. The congregation or Church Council may establish other ad-hoc committees as is deemed necessary to the life of the church.

ARTICLE V Congregational Meetings

A. Annual Meeting

1. The congregation shall meet annually in business session during the month of January. The date, time and place of this meeting shall be set by the Church Council.
2. The business of the annual meeting shall consist of:
 - a. The reception and review of written reports from the church officers and committees covering activities of the preceding year.
 - b. The adoption of a budget for the ensuing year.
 - c. The election of church officers.
 - d. Consideration of any other business proper to come before the congregation, such as decisions regarding the use of the Perpetuity or Building Funds.

B. Special Congregational Meetings

1. Special congregational meetings may be called to consider the call of a Minister or other matters concerning the welfare of the church.
2. Special meetings may be called by:
 - a. the Minister
 - b. the Church Council
 - c. the written request of 20 members of the church. The request must be submitted to the Chair or Vice Chair of the Church Council.
3. The call of a special meeting of the congregation shall specify the purpose for which the meeting is called. No other business shall be transacted at that meeting.

C. Notice of Congregational Meetings

1. Notice of any congregational meeting, whether Annual or Special, shall be given at the services of worship on the preceding two consecutive Sundays, and also by email to all those members of the congregation on the current email list of the church at least two weeks in advance of the date of the meeting.
2. Such notice shall include details of the business to be conducted at the meeting. In the case of the Annual Meeting, this notice shall include the proposed budget and the nominees for the Church Council.

D. Voting Rights

1. Only those who are members of the Church under Article III shall have the right to vote upon:
 - a. the call of a Minister
 - b. election of Church officers
 - c. questions of disbanding or changing affiliations of this Church
 - d. a request by the Church Council to spend all or part of the principal of the Perpetuity or Building Funds (see Article X)
2. Those who are not members but are still considered part of the congregation under Article IV, Section B, shall have the right to vote on all other matters of Church business provided they are 15 years of age or over.

E. Quorum

A quorum of any Annual or Special Meeting of the congregation shall consist of those present, provided that at least two-thirds of the membership of the Church Council is present or has notified the Recording Secretary in writing or by email that he/she cannot attend because he/she will not be in Bangkok at the time of the meeting.

F. Parliamentary Procedures

Robert's Rules of Order, latest edition available, shall be the governing parliamentary law of this congregation, except as otherwise provided in this Constitution.

ARTICLE VI Elections of Church Officers

A. Nominating Process

1. A slate of church officers shall be prepared by the Nominating Committee and presented to the congregation in writing, two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.

2. In preparing its slate, the Nominating Committee should give due consideration to distribution of nationality and prior denominational affiliation so that the membership of the Council will be representative of the membership of the congregation as a whole. The Nominating Committee should also give consideration to continuity of Council membership by renominating some current members.
3. Additional names may be placed in nomination from the floor and added to the ballot when such nominations are endorsed by two or more of those present and the nominee agrees in person or in writing to having his or her name placed on the ballot. No more than two names for each office or position may be added to the ballot from the floor.

B. Voting

1. Voting for church officers shall take place at the Annual Congregational Meeting.
2. Voting shall be by written ballot for all offices for which there is more than one candidate. For each such office, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected.
3. For all offices for which there is only one candidate, voting shall be by voice vote, unless a written ballot is requested by one of the members in attendance at the meeting.

C. Officer Vacancies

A vacancy occurring ad interim in any elected office will be filled by the Church Council. The appointee shall serve out the remainder of the unexpired term.

ARTICLE VII The Minister – Call and Responsibilities

A. The Call of a Minister

1. The Minister of this congregation shall be a duly ordained Minister of the Protestant tradition and acceptable to the local district of The Church of Christ in Thailand.
2. When the Call Committee has selected a candidate from the applicants, the committee shall present its recommendation to the Council for its approval. The Council, in turn, shall recommend the candidate to the congregation at a duly called congregational meeting. A vote to issue a call shall require a two-thirds majority of those present who are members of the Church under Article III. Only one candidate may be presented to the congregation at any one meeting.
3. The call of a Minister shall state specifically the responsibilities and the salary and perquisites attached to this office.

4. The call of a Minister shall specify the term of office, which shall not exceed five years. The term is to be included in the recommendation of the candidate by the church Council to the congregation at the meeting called to approve the candidate as required in paragraph 2 above. The initial term may be extended at the request of the Minister or the Church Council, with such a request to be made at least six months prior to the expiry of the initial term and provided the request is approved at a duly called congregational meeting by a two-thirds majority of those present who are members of the Church under Article III.

B. Responsibilities of the Minister

1. The Minister shall preach the Word, administer the sacraments and conduct public worship in consistency with the Protestant Church traditions. He or she shall care for Christ's people individually and as a congregation, give instruction, receive into membership, conduct weddings according to the teachings of the Church and the Laws of Thailand, visit the sick, distressed and bereaved, and conduct funeral services. He or she shall strive to extend the kingdom of God in the community and shall impart knowledge of the Church and its wider ministry.
2. The Minister shall install the members of the Church Council.
3. The Minister shall keep the membership rolls of the congregation, reporting quarterly thereon to the Church Council. She or he shall record pastoral acts in the official church register, which shall remain the property of the congregation.

C. Termination of the Call

The termination of the call may be by:

1. resignation of the Minister
2. dissolution of the congregation
3. action of the Sixth District of The Church of Christ in Thailand as initiated by the congregation, through a two-thirds majority of those present who are members of the Church under Article III at a duly called congregational meeting.

ARTICLE VIII The Church Council

A. Responsibilities

The Church Council shall have the general oversight of the spiritual life and activities of the congregation. The other responsibilities of the Council members shall be comparable to what, in some denominational structures, would be termed Elders, Deacons, and/or Trustees, in that they

1. assist in the administration of the sacraments when asked
2. interview those seeking membership in the church, at the discretion of the pastor
3. act on behalf of the congregation in the management of its business and fiscal affairs

B. Conduct of Council Business

1. The Chair and Vice Chair shall be elected at the Annual Congregational Meeting. The Chair shall preside at Council and Congregational meetings, and shall act as a liaison between the Council and the Minister. The elected Vice Chair shall act in the absence of the Chair.
2. The Council shall supervise the maintenance of adequate church records to include minutes of congregational and Council meetings, membership rolls, and financial records of the Church. Such records and minutes, with the exception of minutes of closed executive sessions of the Council, shall be available to the members of the Congregation upon request.
3. The Council shall supervise the fiscal affairs of the church by receiving regular financial reports from the chair of the Finance and Stewardship Committee, arranging an annual audit of the church books, and reviewing and finalizing the budget prepared by the Finance and Stewardship Committee.
4. The Council shall approve the appointment of committee members as proposed by the chairs of the Council Committees during the March meeting, and shall appoint committees as indicated in other sections of the Constitution. The Council and committee chairs shall endeavor to see that youth (9th grade and up) shall be represented on the committees of the church wherever feasible.
5. The Council shall support the Minister in fulfilling his/her calling and be sensitive to the mind and needs of the congregation. Should differences arise within the life of the church, it shall endeavor to give counsel and restore harmony and mutual understanding.
6. The Council shall normally meet once a quarter. Special meetings may be called at the request of the Chair, the Minister, or more than one-third of Council members. All entitled to be present at specially called meetings shall be notified at least one week in advance.
7. A quorum for the transaction of business shall consist of a majority of the members of the Council. A Council member may designate another member to vote on their behalf, if said Council member has informed the Chair or Vice-Chair in writing in advance of the meeting.

ARTICLE IX Duties of Elected Church Officers and Standing Committees

To provide for order and efficiency in the administration of the total program of the International Church of Bangkok, the following duties and responsibilities of the elected officers and standing committees shall be established:

A. Recording Secretary

The duties of the Recording Secretary shall be to keep official minutes of all congregational and Council meetings. Copies of these minutes shall be available to the congregation through the church office as stipulated in Article VIII, Section B.2. The secretary shall be the official correspondent for the Church Council and the congregation.

B. Finance and Stewardship Committee

The Finance and Stewardship Committee shall consist of the church Treasurer, who shall act as the chair of the committee; the Minister; and other members appointed by the Council.

1. The Treasurer shall work with the church secretary / bookkeeper to disburse church funds as stipulated in the Church budget or as agreed upon by the Church Council. The Treasurer shall be responsible for the maintenance of accurate financial records and for presenting financial statements to the Church Council at its quarterly meetings. The Treasurer shall see that the church books are ready for audit after the closing of the church fiscal year, which shall run from January 1 to December 31.
2. The Finance and Stewardship Committee shall arrange for an annual all-member canvass campaign to solicit pledges from the members of the congregation, and shall thereafter give every new member the opportunity to make a pledge for the current year. With the help of the church secretary / bookkeeper, the committee shall maintain records of pledges made and contributions submitted to fulfill these pledges, and shall notify individuals of the status of their pledges on a quarterly basis during each fiscal year.
3. Each year, the committee shall prepare and explain the church budget to the Church Council. This will comprise budgeting of income and expenses in different budget classification categories. The budget, as approved by the Council, will then be presented by the committee to the congregation in writing two weeks prior to the Annual Meeting.
4. The committee shall work with the church secretary / bookkeeper to arrange for the counting and the recording of the offerings after each service and depositing the receipts in the church's bank account. The committee shall review the income and expenditures monthly and present their evaluation of the church's financial situation to the Council at its quarterly meetings.

C. Worship Committee

The Worship Committee shall consist of the elected chair; the minister; the Director of Church Music; and other appointed members. This committee shall structure itself to provide the oversight of

1. Ushers
2. Church Music
3. Communion Services
4. Chancel Appointments (such as altar cloths and banners)
5. Pulpit Supply
6. Special Services

D. Membership Committee

The Membership Committee shall consist of the elected chair; the minister; and other appointed members. This committee shall have the responsibility for actively seeking to expand and strengthen membership of International Church of Bangkok. The committee shall endeavor to welcome and assist newcomers to the church.

E. Outreach Committee

The Outreach Committee shall consist of the elected chair; the minister, and other appointed members. This committee shall have the responsibility for exploring ways in which the congregation, both collectively and individually, may express the Christian faith by sharing lives, talents and resources with others either within or outside of the church. The committee shall present recommendations to the Church Council for the Christmas Eve benevolence offering.

F. Christian Education Committee

The Christian Education Committee shall consist of the elected chair; the minister; and other appointed members. The Christian Education Committee shall assess the needs of the congregation in the realm of Christian Education and establish an over-all educational program in the areas of church school, youth, adult study, camp, and special programs to meet other needs. The committee may structure itself as seems most convenient to carry out its programs efficiently and effectively.

G. Fellowship Committee

The Fellowship Committee shall consist of the elected chair, the minister, and other appointed members. The Fellowship Committee shall provide opportunities whereby the congregation may enjoy social fellowship. The committee shall also provide opportunities for fellowship following services at which new members are received and on other special occasions.

H. Property and Personnel Committee

The Property and Personnel Committee shall consist of the elected chair; the Chair of the Finance and Stewardship Committee; the minister; and other appointed members.

1. The committee shall be responsible for the maintenance of all property and possessions of the congregation, both purchased and rented. It shall propose rules for the use of such property and possessions to the Church Council for approval. This committee shall study and make recommendations on proposals for the acquisition and disposal of properties and possessions to the Church Council. The committee shall maintain a running inventory of church properties.

2. The committee shall be responsible for the general oversight of employees of the church. It shall assist the minister in selection and employment of such persons as may be necessary for the work of the church. The committee shall be responsible to review regularly the quality of work and attitude of the employees and make recommendations to the Council regarding terms of employment and salaries. The committee shall be responsible to arbitrate with Church employees, when necessary, in consultation with the minister and the Chair of the Church Council.

I. Members-at-Large

The three members-at-large elected to the Church Council shall assume duties as assigned by the Council. This may include serving as members of the Nominating Committee.

ARTICLE X Perpetuity and Building Funds

A. Perpetuity Fund

A Fund shall be maintained to generate income for the purpose of supplementing regular offering receipts. Earnings from the fund may be used to pay any operating or Outreach expense or capital expenditure as approved by the Church Council. However, a decision to spend all or part of the principal in the fund must be approved by a two-thirds majority of those present at a duly called congregational meeting. Only those present at the meeting who are members of the Church under Article III may vote.

B. Building Fund

A Fund shall be maintained to hold financial donations that have been given to the church for the designated purpose of enabling the church to purchase, build, or enter a long-term lease for a permanent place of worship. A decision to spend all or part of the principal in the fund must be approved by a two-thirds majority of those present at a duly called congregational meeting. Only those present at the meeting who are members of the Church under Article III may vote.

ARTICLE XI Amendments

Amendments to this Constitution may be made at any duly called congregational meeting by a two-thirds majority of those present who are members of the Church under Article III, provided that:

1. the call of the meeting clearly states that a constitutional amendment is to be considered; and
2. the proposed amendment has been made available in writing on the two preceeding consecutive Sundays before the congregational meeting; and
3. the proposed amendment has been emailed to those on the email list of the church not less than two weeks prior to the date of the meeting.