

BY-LAWS

THE MISSIONARY CHURCH, INC., WESTERN DISTRICT

Adopted May 1969
Revised 1972, 1974, 1984, 1990, 1998

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this organization shall be THE MISSIONARY CHURCH, INC., WESTERN DISTRICT.

ARTICLE II – CORPORATION

Section 1 – The Missionary Church, Inc., Western District is a California corporation and as such is incorporated in California and Arizona.

Section 2 – The boundaries of the Missionary Church, Inc., Western District shall include California, Arizona and such other areas as may be determined by the General Conference of The Missionary Church, Inc.

ARTICLE III – RELATIONSHIP

This organization is a subsidiary of THE MISSIONARY CHURCH, INC. with headquarters at 3911 Vanguard, Fort Wayne, Indiana 46809, and as such is responsible for the promotion of the work and objectives of the parent organization within the confines known as THE WESTERN DISTRICT. It shall be governed in all matters pertaining to the doctrine, polity, and practice by the Constitution and By-Laws of the parent organization.

ARTICLE IV – PURPOSE

The Missionary Church, Inc., Western District and its churches exist to be a holy people of God, building His church by promotion and experiencing Christ's Great Commission through:

- *Spiritual and Numerical Growth
- *District Vitality and Excitement
- *The Planting and Renewal of Churches
- *A Sense of Family

among its people, so that the Kingdom of God may be built in a way pleasing to our Lord.

ARTICLE V – DISTRICT CONFERENCE

Section 1 – Jurisdiction – The Missionary Church, Inc., Western District shall be governed by an annual District Conference which shall function in accordance with the authority delegated to it by the constitution and The Missionary Church, Inc. and the Missionary Church Inc., Western District By-Laws.

Section 2 – The District Conference shall include all churches and district institutions within its confines. A district institution is any institution within the district controlled by the district and used for district purposes.

Section 3 – COMPOSITION – The District Conference shall be composed of the denominational president (member ex-officio), all ordained and licensed ministers resident in the district, the members of the District Executive Board, and one lay delegate for each 50 members or fraction thereof from each full member church. The only voting representation from an Affiliate Church shall be the pastor.

Section 4 – Time of Meeting – The District Conference shall meet annually at the time and place decided by the District Conference or the District Executive Board. All conferences shall be governed according to Robert's Rules of Order.

Section 5 Function of the District Conference

- A. The District Conference shall elect, by ballot its own officers and committees including the District Superintendent, the Vice District Superintendent, the Secretary, the Treasurer, the additional members of the Executive Board, and such other officers as may be deemed necessary. A majority of votes cast shall be required for election of the officers (with the exception of the 2/3 majority of votes cast needed for the election of the District Superintendent – see Article VI – Section 2a).
- B. It shall approve new churches for membership in the Missionary Church, Inc. and request that a certificate of membership in the denomination be issued by the proper denominational officer (Article XIII – Local Church, Section A and B, Missionary Church Constitution follows:)

1. Member Churches – Definition

- a. A Missionary Church, in the context of this constitution, shall be a church which has adopted the Constitution of the Missionary church, Inc., and which has been recommended for membership by its District Conference or Executive Board and officially received and chartered by the General Board and officially received and chartered by the General Board. These shall be regarded as organized churches.
- b. New churches not yet chartered by the General Board shall be called “Fellowships.” These will be regarded as unorganized churches.

2. Procedure for chartering a Missionary Church:

Fellowships desiring to be recognized as member churches of The Missionary Church shall follow this procedure...

- a. The pastoral leadership shall be duly credentialed by the District Executive Board.
- b. There shall be at least 15 baptized adults (16 years or older) in the fellowship who are committed to the formation of a Missionary Church.
- c. The fellowship shall be fully informed of and in agreement with The Missionary Church Articles of Faith and Practice.
- d. The fellowship shall be informed of and agree to the responsibilities of a Missionary Church in proportionately contributing their share to the on-going ministries of their district and the denomination.
- e. The pastor and a steering committee shall serve as the examining committee to recommend applicants for charter membership.
- f. At a duly called meeting of the fellowship, the District Superintendent or his representative shall receive charter members and preside over the organization of the church.
- g. In addition to the pastor, the church shall be organized with the following officers: Secretary, Treasurer, and a
- h. t least one (1) Deacon or Elder.
- i. The newly organized church shall submit an application for member church status to the District Executive Board, which shall review the application for the purpose of recommending the church to the General Board for approval as a member church.

3. **Discipline**

Any local church which fails to live up to the spirit of this constitution or which for other sufficient reason disturbs the fellowship of the denomination, shall be admonished by the District Superintendent, or by other persons appointed for the purpose by the District Executive Board: and if the church fails to comply with the demands laid before it, it may, after full investigation and on recommendation of the District Conference by a two-thirds vote, have its charter removed by two-thirds vote of the General Board.

4. **Affiliate Churches**

Any body of people served by a minister under the direction of the denomination, yet not fully recognized as a Missionary Church according to the provisions of the foregoing article, may have the standing of an Affiliate Church. As such it may bear the name Missionary Church but it shall not be entitled to representation at General Conference apart from its pastor. The Affiliate status is not to exceed three (3) years. They shall not be entitled to representation at District Conference apart from their pastor.

- C. It shall license and ordain ministers in keeping with the provisions of the Constitution of The Missionary Church and shall certify such to the General Secretary who shall issue the credentials.
- D. It shall conduct conferences, conventions, and camps in the district as practical and shall take steps as are necessary to implement and to promote the missionary programs of the denomination.
- E. It shall receive the reports of the District Superintendent and other officers, pastors, and other ministers, boards, and committees and submit to the General Conference such reports as may be required.
- F. It shall be the prerogative of the District Conference to make recommendations to the General Conference.

Section 6 – Special Conference – A special Conference may be called by the District Executive Board. The membership of the special conference shall be the same as the membership of the previous Annual District Conference.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS AND ELECTIONS

Section 1 – Executive Officers – The Executive Officers of the Missionary Church, Inc., Western District shall consist of a District Superintendent, Vice District Superintendent, Secretary, and Treasurer. All officers shall be members in good standing of a full member Missionary Church.

Section 2

A. The District Superintendent shall be elected for a term of four years by the District Conference. The District Executive Board shall select and recommend one candidate, from among the ordained ministers of the Missionary Church, to the District Conference for ratification. He takes office August 1.

If needed, the following search procedure shall be used:

1. The District Executive Board shall appoint a Search Committee.
2. The Search Committee shall solicit names of potential candidates from the local church pastors and boards.
3. The Search Committee shall research and interview appropriate candidates and recommend one candidate to the District Executive Board.

4. If the District Executive Board affirms this candidate, they will bring that candidate to the District Conference for election by ballot.
5. In the case that the candidate does not receive a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote, the Search Committee will be reconvened to seek a new candidate.

B. The Vice District Superintendent shall be elected for a term of 2 years by the District Conference. The Nominating Committee shall select and recommend one candidate from among the ordained ministers of the Western District to the District Conference for ratification. He will take office at the end of Conference. In the case that the candidate does not receive a 2/3-majority vote, the District Executive Board shall appoint a Vice District Superintendent for a one-year term.

C. The Secretary of the District shall be elected for a term of two years by the District Conference.

D. The Treasurer of the District shall be elected for a term of two years by the District Conference.

E. The terms of District Superintendent and Secretary shall be staggered with the terms of the Vice District Superintendent and Treasurer.

F. All elected and appointed officers and committee members shall take office at the close of the Annual District Conference, except for the District Superintendent as provided in Article VI, Section 2a.

G. Vacancies occurring in the Executive Officers or committee not otherwise provided for shall be filed by appointment by the District Executive Board. Such appointees shall serve until the next annual District Conference.

Article VII – Duties of Officers

Section 1 – The District Superintendent shall have supervision of all churches and ministers within his jurisdiction; arrange for conventions and conferences within the District; arrange for meetings in each church in the interest of denominational programs; emphasize the duties of churches to their pastors and pastors to their churches; and uphold the Constitution of the Missionary Church. In cases of necessity between District Conferences, he shall take such steps as necessary in the change or transfer of ministers. He shall serve as the chief liaison officer in all negotiations between pastors and churches. He shall hold pastors and churches responsible for submitting required denominational reports and statistics. He shall submit to the General Conference a full report of the work of his district, including a summarized statistical report of the General Conference term. He shall serve as the liaison between the district the Board of Higher Education, the colleges of the Missionary Church, and World Partners. He shall accept such other assignments as may be outlined from time to time by the District Conference.

Section 2 – The Vice District Superintendent shall perform such other duties as are delegated to him by the District Superintendent. In the case of death, resignation, or removal of the District Superintendent, the Vice District Superintendent shall be come the Superintendent until the next District Conference.

Section 3 – The Secretary shall record and keep all minutes of the District Conference and perform such other functions as are outlined by the Conference or District Executive Board.

Section 4 – The Treasurer shall receive such monies as the District Conference shall determine and make payments in keeping with its policies and directives. He shall submit an annual report to the District Conference and such other reports as the District Conference, District Executive Board, and District Superintendent shall require.

Article VII – District Executive Board

Section 1 – Composition – The District Executive Board shall be composed of the District Superintendent, Vice District Superintendent, Secretary, Treasurer, seven (7) Members-at-Large, and all District Directors who shall be advisory members only. The terms of the Members-at-Large shall be three (3) years. At least four (4) members of the District Executive Board shall be laymen. All District Executive Board members shall be members in good standing of a full member Missionary Church.

Section 2

A. **Duties** – It shall be the responsibility of the District Executive Board to conduct the necessary business of the District Conference in the intervals between the Conferences; it shall deal with all emergency matters and may call a special session of the District Conference when necessary. Its actions shall be subject to ratification by the next District Conference.

B. **Credentials** – It shall examine ministerial candidates, license and ordain ministers. It may appoint a committee to examine ministerial candidates. It shall certify to the General Secretary annually list of all ordained and licensed ministers under the jurisdiction of the District. This shall be done in accordance with Article XI, Section E – Constitution of The Missionary Church, Inc.

C. **Pastoral Relations** – The District Executive Board shall serve to assist the District Superintendent in pastoral changes when necessary; to resolve any conflicts and problems arising from pastoral selections in the highest interest of the churches, pastors, and the denomination. The District Superintendent shall be the liaison officer between the District Executive Board, pastors, and congregation in all pastoral relations.

D. **Board of Directors** – The District Executive Board shall serve as the Board of Directors of the District Conference and shall hold in trust any properties owned by the District Conference and have authority to receive and hold in trust monies, gifts, and legacies; acquire, loan, or borrow money, purchase, sell, improve, convey, or exchange real estate held by the District Conference, or other property such as stocks, bonds, mortgages, and other securities; issue annuity agreements; and serve as the trustees for estates and gifts in conformity with civil laws of the several states in keeping with the authority delegated by the District Conference. The District Executive Board may designate certain of its officers to serve as agents to carry out any of the foregoing authorizations.

E. **Committees** – The District Executive Board shall have authority to appoint standing committees as provided for in Article IX and any other ad hoc committees it deems necessary to fulfill its purpose.

F. **General Board Representatives** – The District Executive Board shall appoint representatives to the denominational General Board, denominational committees, and any other denominational organization deemed necessary.

G. **Quorum** – A majority of the members of the District Executive Board shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business, provided due notice of the meeting has been given.

ARTICLE IX – CONFERENCE COMMITTEES

Section 1 – NOMINATING COMMITTEE

A. It shall be composed of the District Superintendent, Vice District Superintendent, the Executive Officer whose term does not expire, and three (3) members who shall be elected by the District Conference. It shall effect its own organization.

B. It shall submit nominations to the District Conference for the following: The District Secretary, District Treasurer, additional Members-at-Large of the District Executive Board, and such others as may be delegated to it.

Section 2 – THE GOALS COMMITTEE shall formulate and evaluate the Western District goals and help in their implementation at the local church level under the direction of the District Executive Board.

Section 3 – THE FINANCE COMMITTEE shall care for all fiscal matters in the Western District, make monthly reports to the District Executive Board, and recommend financial policies for the District. They shall counsel with churches of the district in the areas of finance.

Section 4 – THE CHURCH MULTIPLICATION COMMITTEE shall develop the church planting philosophy and help in the establishing of new churches in the Western District. It shall recruit church planters, discover target areas, plan for demographic studies, and oversee the development process.

Section 5 – THE CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE shall examine candidates for licensing and ordination to the Christian ministry and make its recommendations to the District Executive Board.

ARTICLE X – DISTRICT DIRECTORS

Section 1 – A DIRECTOR OF STEWARDSHIP may be appointed. He shall give leadership, in cooperation with the District Superintendent, to stewardship education, assist in raising funds for the district and denomination, and carry out such other duties as assigned by the District Executive Board.

Section 2 – A DIRECTOR OF CHURCH MULTIPLICATION may be appointed. He shall give leadership and direction to the Church Multiplication Committee and shall give direction to all church planting efforts, in cooperation with the District Superintendent.

Section 3 – ACCOUNTABILITY – All directors shall be appointed by the District Superintendent with the approval of the District Executive Board and shall be accountable to the District Superintendent. They shall be advisory members of the District Executive Board.

ARTICLE XI – FINANCES

Section 1 - DISTRICT FINANCES – The Missionary Church, Inc., Western District shall be self-supporting in its operation. Its fiscal year shall be January 1 through December 31.

Section 2 – WORLD MISSIONS – All World Missions funds from local churches will be sent directly to the denominational treasurer as soon as possible after the first of the month by the local church treasurer.

Section 3 – DISTRICT ADMINISTRATION AND DISTRICT SUPPORTED MINISTRIES BUDGET – Each local church shall be responsible for 2% of their gross income (with the exception of bequests and capital funds) as their “Fair Share” for district support and district supported ministries.

ARTICLE XII – MINISTERS

Included in these By-Laws is Article XII –E, 1-11 of the Constitution of The Missionary Church, Inc.

Section 1 – MINISTERIAL REVIEW

A. Annually, but no later than January 31, the church board shall meet with the pastor to discuss the relationship between the pastor, the church board, and the congregation. During this meeting the pastor’s salary and other benefits shall be reviewed.

B. On or before February 1 of each year, each minister shall express, in writing, to the District Superintendent his desire regarding his field of service for the next Conference year. If the pastor thinks that change of pastors is advisable, he shall inform his church board.

Section 2 – VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

A. The pastor or the church board may request a vote of the local church conference. Such a vote shall be taken the first Sunday in February or at such a time as the local conference shall determine. The date of the voting shall be announced two Sundays in advance. Absentee votes are not permitted in a pastoral vote.

B. The District Superintendent shall be informed of the decision of the church the week following the vote.

Section 3 – TECHNICAL PROCEDURE FOR CALLING A PASTOR

A. The ruling board of each church shall contact the District Superintendent within two weeks of their senior pastor’s resignation.

B. They shall set up an appointment with the District Superintendent for the purpose of putting in writing a statement of why they exist, the present spiritual condition, description of this body of people and future goals.

C. Church Evaluation and Analysis – The four (4) areas listed in paragraph “B” (above) and further clarified below shall be described in writing and given to all candidates being considered.

1. The Biblical purpose of the church and its mission shall be clearly stated.
2. The vital spiritual signs apparent in the church shall be spelled out.
3. The body shall be described as to age category, statistical analysis, past and present programs, how the community perceives the church, and a community demographic study.
4. Future goals shall be clearly stated.

Section 4 – CANDIDATE SEARCH

A. It is advisable to have the District Superintendent present for the initial interview with the candidate.

B. The candidate shall have a personal interview with the District Superintendent before he is presented for final approval as senior pastor.

C. If the candidate has not been previously credentialed with the Missionary Church, he shall be approved by the District Superintendent prior to being presented to the congregation.

Section 5 – SELECTION AND ORIENTATION

- A. The pastor shall be chosen by a vote of the local conference at a meeting called for this purpose. He shall be chosen from among persons approved for ministry by the District Superintendent. 70% of all votes cast shall be required for selection. Proxy and absentee votes shall not be permitted. The District Executive Board, working in cooperation with the church board, shall have the privilege, where deemed necessary, to appoint the pastor of those churches where either the district or the denomination subsidizes the church or the pastor's salary.
- B. Each newly appointed pastor shall have a time of orientation with the District Superintendent regarding the function and resources of The Missionary Church.
- C. The term of service shall be an indefinite period of time. (Reference Article XII, Section 1-A)
- D. When a vote of confidence is deemed necessary and the incumbent pastor receives less than 60% of the votes cast, the advisability of the pastor remaining shall be determined by the District Superintendent, the pastor, and the church board in consultation.
- E. Pastors shall normally move to their new charge the month of July.

Section 6 – VACATION – Pastors and the District Superintendent shall be granted at least two weeks of vacation with pay each year, exclusive of denominational and district conferences and camps.

ARTICLE XIII – AMENDMENTS

Amendments to the By-Laws may be adopted at any session of District Conference, providing they do not conflict with the Constitution of The Missionary Church, Inc.

ARTICLE XIV – DISSOLUTION

In the event it becomes necessary to dissolve or terminate the organization of the Missionary Church Inc., Western District; by unanimous vote of the District Executive Board, all assets, if any after all expenses and debts have been paid, shall be transferred to "Missionary Church, Inc., Fort Wayne, Indiana, which qualifies under section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1984 or amendments thereto."