

TBMF RULES AND BY-LAWS

RULES OF THE THAILAND BAPTIST

MISSIONARY FELLOWSHIP

Revised: August 19, 2024

RULES

ARTICLE I. NAME

This organization shall be called the Thailand Baptist Missionary Fellowship hereinafter referred to as the "Fellowship."

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

The general purpose of the Fellowship is to proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ in the Kingdom of Thailand by:

- A. Helping in the formation of national churches and in the strengthening of the spiritual life of Christians/believer;
- B. Working with various national church organizations in Thailand and participating in their respective programs;
- C. Providing an administrative unit on behalf of the Cooperating Boards for the care of the various international missionaries who are assigned to the Fellowship;
- D. Being an agency for fellowship; spiritual enrichment and mutual guidance for the missionaries who compose the Fellowship;
- E. Through the Spirit of Jesus Christ, ministering to the holistic needs of people as seen in the Kingdom of Thailand.

ARTICLE III. RELATIONSHIPS

All relationships of the Fellowship shall be controlled by the policies and decisions of the groups listed in By-law I.

- A. The Fellowship shall be responsible to and provide administrative services for missionary societies and church organizations outside of Thailand which work through the Fellowship. Groups which the Fellowship represent are listed in By-law I and are hereinafter referred to as "the Cooperating Boards."
- B. The Fellowship shall cooperate and work with the church organizations within Thailand listed in By-law II.
- C. The Fellowship shall endeavor to work within the general policies of, and participate in the program of the Church of Christ in Thailand.
- D. Fellowship decisions involving the Cooperating Boards' policies and finances shall be subject to the approval of the Cooperating Boards.

ARTICLE IV MEMBERSHIP

- A. **Application for Membership:** To apply for membership an interested Baptist mission board shall:
 - 1. Submit a letter of application to the Fellowship or one of the current Cooperating Boards.
 - 2. Be recommended by one of the current Full Member Boards.
 - 3. Be interviewed by the Cooperating Boards at the next Consultation. At the interview, the Cooperating Boards will want to know of the theology and mission philosophy of the applicant Board, their ability to carry out the planned work and the selection process used for missionaries and volunteers.
- B. **Membership Levels:** An interested Baptist mission board can become a Member.

ARTICLE V. MEETINGS

- A. **Consultation:** Normally held biennially, the Cooperating Boards will hold periodic meetings for the purposes of communicating with each other and with local partners, missionaries and TBMF staff, and to set policies and rules for governing of the Fellowship.
- B. **Annual Fellowship Meeting:** The Fellowship shall hold an annual meeting for fellowship, inspiration, and an annual business meeting. All members, currently resident in Thailand, are strongly encouraged to attend. In addition, national Christians and other persons may be invited to attend as guests or consultants (without voting rights).
- C. **Special Fellowship Meetings:** Special meetings of the Fellowship may be called from time to time as needed.
- D. **Calling of Meetings:** Normally, meetings of the Fellowship shall be called by the Chairperson of the Fellowship in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer or by the action of the Cooperating Boards. The action to call a

meeting should be taken at least one month before the said meeting and written or email notices sent to all members.

E. Agenda: The Chairperson of the Fellowship shall prepare the agenda for the Fellowship meetings in consultation with the Chief Operating Officer. The agenda will normally be sent out to all members at least one month before the meeting date.

F. Quorum: For business sessions of the Fellowship, a quorum shall consist of a majority of the members currently resident in Thailand.

G. Functions of the Annual Fellowship Meeting:

1. To participate in a program of fellowship, inspiration and spiritual enrichment.
2. To receive a written report from each missionary.
3. To conduct elections for all positions as required by the Fellowship Rules and By-laws.
4. To recommend to the Cooperating Boards amendments to the Rules and By-laws of the Fellowship.
5. To recommend to the Cooperating Boards changes in the policies and procedures of the Fellowship.
6. To recommend to the Cooperating Boards the organizations to which the Fellowship may be related.
7. To appoint special Teams and assign their duties.
8. To conduct other Fellowship business as needed.

ARTICLE VI. OFFICE

A. Elected Officers:

1. The officers for the Fellowship shall be:
 - a) Chairperson of the Fellowship
 - b) Liaison for 12th Pahk
 - c) Liaison for 16th Pahk
 - d) Liaison for 18th Pahk
 - e) Liaison for TKBC (10th and 19th Pahks)
 - f) Liaison for Akha (ACT and DAPA)

2. These officers shall be elected by the Annual Fellowship Meeting. They will serve a minimum of one year and up to three years or until absent from Thailand for six consecutive months.

ARTICLE VII. TEAMS

To assist in the necessary administrative functions of the Fellowship.

- A. TBMF Advisory Team (See BY-LAWS IV:B:5 for membership details.)
- B. Conference Planning Team (Will be elected.)

Members of these Teams shall serve until their next leave or home assignment of six consecutive months. Other teams may be formed as needed and the Fellowship may be asked to appoint missionaries to various boards and teams. Members of all teams shall serve for 3 year terms unless another standard applies.

ARTICLE VIII. APPEALS

Any member of the Fellowship and any national church body with which the Fellowship is cooperating may make an appeal to the Cooperating Boards against any action or policy by notifying the Chairperson of the fellowship, or Chief Operating Officer to include the matter on the agenda for the next Consultation.

ARTICLE IX. AMENDMENTS

- A. **Rules:** Amendments to these rules may be recommended at any meeting of the Fellowship by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided that the proposed amendment has been proposed and notice submitted to the members in writing at least one month prior to the meeting.
- B. **By-laws:** Amendments to the By-laws may be recommended at any meeting of the Fellowship by a two-thirds vote of the members present.
- C. Amendments to the Rules and the By-laws shall be operative upon approval of the cooperating organizations listed in By-law I. For amendments that are relatively simple and do not have far reaching consequences, the Cooperating Boards may give approval by an e-mail vote. However, if the vote is not unanimous, or if any Cooperating Board wants discussion on the matter, the question will go to the next Consultation.

BY-LAWS

I. COOPERATING BOARDS

The Fellowship is responsible to and cooperates with the following missionary societies and church organizations:

- A. International Ministries of the American Baptist Churches in the USA (legally incorporated as the American Baptist Foreign Mission Society).
- B. Baptist Mission Australia (legally incorporated as the Australian Baptist Missionary Society Incorporated) of the Australian Baptist Churches.
- C. Uniting Church in Sweden (legally incorporated as Svenska Baptistsamfundet). *See Appendix B*
- D. BMS World Mission (UK).
- E. Japan Baptist Union. (Japan Baptist Overseas Mission Society)
- F. Cooperative Baptist Fellowship Global Mission

The basis of cooperation is the document known as "Guidelines For Cooperation" (2002).

II. NATIONAL CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS AND OTHER BODIES

The Fellowship reaches out to new peoples and areas and cooperates with Church organizations and other bodies in Thailand, including:

- A. The Church of Christ in Thailand (CCT) and its Districts. In particular the Fellowship has historically worked with:
 - 1. The 12th District of the CCT
 - 2. The 16th District of the CCT
 - 3. The Thailand Lahu Baptist Churches (18th District of the CCT)
 - 4. The Thailand Karen Baptist Convention (10th and 19th Districts of the CCT)
 - 5. The Akha Churches of Thailand
- B. Christian Service Foundation (Baptist) (CSF).
- C. Baptist Education Foundation (BEF)
- D. New Life Center Foundation (NLCF)

- E. Nightlight Foundation (NLF)
- F. Compasio Relief and Development Organization (CRDO)
- G. Life Impact Foundation (LIFT)
- H. Kwai River Christian Hospital (KRCH)
- I. Integrated Ministry for Ethnic Minority Foundation (IMEMF)

III. DUTIES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF OFFICERS

A. Chairperson of the Fellowship:

1. Elected at the Annual Conference.
2. Will serve a minimum of one year and up to three years or until absent from Thailand for six consecutive months.
3. Will be expected to notify the TBMF Advisory Team when leaving the field for six consecutive months, giving at least three months notice where possible.
4. Will preside at the annual business meeting or appoint someone to serve pro-tem. If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting and has not designated someone to preside, the Fellowship itself may appoint one member to be the Chairperson Pro-tem.
5. Shall make appointments prior to or during the Fellowship meeting for the responsibilities as needed, including:
 - a. Conference Recording Secretary (keep the minutes of the proceedings of the Fellowship meetings and prepare them in draft form for the Chief Operating Officer).
 - b. Tellers
 - c. Time Keeper
6. Shall assist the Chief Operating Officer in preparing the agenda for Fellowship meetings.
7. Will serve as Chair of the TBMF Advisory Team.
8. Will coordinate with the Chief Operating Officer and the Crisis Management Team (CMT) in emergency situations.
9. Supervise the Partner Liaisons.
10. Serve as the CCT Liaison.
11. Encourage networking between TBMF missionaries, the CCT, and other appropriate groups.
12. Encourage the formation of regional fellowship opportunities.
13. Communicate any correspondence from the TAT to the Cooperating Boards.
14. In case of conflict between personnel of different organizations within TBMF the Chairperson of the fellowship will inform the involved organizations and the board chair.

IV. NOMINATIONS, ELECTIONS AND APPOINTMENTS

A. Eligibility

1. All regular members who have completed at least one year of service with the Fellowship in Thailand shall be eligible to serve as Chairperson of a TBMF team.
2. When making appointments or electing persons to teams, consideration will always be given to selecting persons so that representation is ensured as far as possible for each Cooperating Board, all work interests, each sex, and the various National Church organizations with whom the Fellowship cooperates. Attempts should be made to ensure a mix of experienced and less experienced members.
3. The TBMF Advisory Team may nominate the name of any appointed TBMF missionary who is expected to return to Thailand within a short period of time to serve on a team.
4. When a member leaves Thailand for six consecutive months, any elected office the member holds is considered vacated and, except for members of the TBMF Advisory Team, may be filled by a missionary named by the TBMF Advisory Team.
5. Each missionary shall be considered eligible for the position of Chairperson of the Fellowship, , Liaison positions and Team positions.

B. Procedures to Elect Officers, Coordinators, Liaisons and TBMF Advisory Team Members

1. A slate of nominated candidates prepared by the TBMF Advisory Team will be sent out at least one month in advance of the Fellowship meeting.
2. Suggested changes can be made from the floor by any member of the fellowship and will be for one vacancy at a time.
3. When the final slate receives more than 50% of the eligible votes, those persons shall be declared elected.
4. If the final slate does not receive more than 50% of the eligible votes it shall be put up for more adjustments from the floor.
5. Missionaries of each board will caucus and elect their TAT member except in the case where a member board appoints their TAT member.

V. TBMF TEAMS AND LIAISONS

A. TBMF Advisory Team (TAT)

1. Shall consist of one missionary from each of the Cooperating Boards, elected as specified in section IV, B, No. 5.
Missionaries will serve a minimum of one year and up to three years or until absent from Thailand for six consecutive months. The Chairperson of the Fellowship, and the Chief Operating Officer are ex-officio members of this Team, with vote. The Chairperson of the Fellowship will serve as chair of the TBMF Advisory Team.
2. The Team will meet quarterly, including the meeting at Annual Conference.
3. The TBMF Advisory Team will choose a Vice Chairperson and Recording Secretary from within the Team.
4. Is responsible for the Conference Planning Team.
5. Will nominate persons to fill the roles of Chairperson of the Fellowship and Partner Liaisons to be presented to the Fellowship for election at the next annual conference.
6. Will nominate persons for the Conference Planning Team (5 people) and TBMF representative to, Union Language School , Bangkok Christian Guesthouse, Thai Tribal Craft and CSF to be presented to the Fellowship for election at the next annual conference.
7. Will make temporary appointments to replace vacant positions until the next meeting of the fellowship.
8. Will nominate persons to fill the roles of Partner Liaison with:
12th Pahk
18th Pahk
16th Pahk
TKBC (10th and 19th Pahks)
Akha (ACT and FAC)
Others as needed
9. Assist in processing requests for missionary/volunteer personnel as needed.
10. Plan TBMF Consultation.
11. Plan TBMF Conference business agenda.
12. Assist in establishing TBMF budgets.
13. When required, will select a TBMF missionary/Cooperating Board representative to serve as TBMF Representative for special occasions (e.g. CCT Biennial Meeting). The TBMF Chairperson, or Chief Operating Officer may select a representative when required at short notice.
14. Shall be responsible for making recommendations to the Cooperating Boards when grants are requested for buildings, land, vehicles, and other major property items related to TBMF.

15. Shall be responsible for the care of the TBMF office property and TBMF vehicles.
16. Shall function according to the general property policies of the Cooperating Boards.
17. Shall have the right to appoint sub-teams at any time to assist with the above tasks.
18. Recognizing the need to gather in one place quickly, the Chiang Mai based members of the TBMF Advisory Team will serve as the Crisis Management Team.
19. The Chief Operating Officer will prepare the agenda for TBMF Advisory Team meetings in consultation with the Chairperson.
20. Responsible for maintaining/updating appropriate sections of the “Guidelines, Policies and Helpful Hints”, “Volunteers Handbook” and “Pre-Arrival Handbook”.
21. Responsible for maintaining and updating the TBMF library.
22. Each TAT Board representative is responsible to ensure that all new staff receive appropriate orientation to both Thailand and TBMF and that a language acquisition programme is instituted and monitored.

B. Conference Planning Team

1. Composed of 5 people.
2. Will serve a minimum of one year and up to three years or until absent from Thailand for six consecutive months.
3. Will be expected to notify the TBMF Advisory team when leaving the field.
4. Responsible for planning and implementing TBMF Annual Conference.

C. Partner Liaisons

1. A TBMF missionary will be assigned to each partnering group as listed in V. A. 8 above as “TBMF Liaison.”
Will serve a minimum of one year and up to three years or until absent from Thailand for six consecutive months.
2. Will be expected to notify the TBMF Advisory Team when leaving the field for six consecutive months, giving at least three months notice.
3. Responsibilities of TBMF Liaisons
 - a. Look for new missionary/volunteer opportunities and communicate all requests to TBMF Advisory Team to be submitted by the Chairperson of the Fellowship to the Cooperating Boards, copying the appropriate partner liaison.
 - b. Look for partnership opportunities for all boards.
 - c. Receive requests from the Boards for placement of missionaries and communicate to appropriate partner groups.

- d. Attend (at least part of) annual convention as TBMF representative.
- e. Attend other meetings as appropriate.
- f. Provides a short written report to the TBMF Advisory Team four times per year.
- g. Be aware of what the mission board and the local church or group expects from a new missionary and help coordinate these expectations with the new person(s).
- h. The Chief Operating Officer will serve as the default contact person for outside groups (e.g. national conventions, CCT, NGOs, etc.) that may not be sure who to contact.
- i. The TBMF Chairperson or Chief Operating Officer will refer queries to appropriate missionaries or Boards.
- j. The TBMF Chairperson or Chief Operating Officer will receive and orient guests to the work of TBMF.

VI. Specialized representatives

Special Boards

The Fellowship may make appointments or nominations to special boards as provided for by the rules and regulations of the respective organization. Fellowship members serve on the following boards:

- 1. Christian Service Foundation (Baptist), Board of Directors. (1)
- 2. Union Language School, Board of Directors (2)
- 3. Bangkok Christian Guesthouse (1)
- 4. Thai Tribal Craft (1)

VII. RESPONSIBILITIES OF TBMF MISSIONARIES

Missionaries of Member Cooperating Boards assigned to the TBMF:

- A. Shall be available for appointment to all TBMF teams and positions.
- B. Shall attend the TBMF annual conference.
- C. Shall notify the Chief Operating Officer, prior to leaving the country for any purpose or in-country but away from home overnight.
- D. Shall notify their national leaders and, if appropriate, the Ecumenical Relationships Office (ERO) of the CCT prior to leaving for Home Assignment.

VIII. PROCEDURES

Procedures of the Fellowship and its teams shall be conducted in an orderly manner allowing all views to be expressed and guided by Roberts Rules of Order or another mutually agreed upon method.

IX. VOTING

- a. Unless otherwise provided for, each member of the Fellowship shall have one vote. There is no provision for voting by proxy.
- b. The Chairperson of the Fellowship and the Chairperson of a TBMF team shall have the right to participate and vote on any action. Tie votes are lost.
- c. In emergency or unusual situations an electronic correspondence vote may be taken, but in all cases a two-thirds vote of all eligible voters currently in Thailand is required to pass a correspondence action. Correspondence votes shall be recorded in the minutes of the next meeting.

Revised: February 2002

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Revised: October 2004

Revised: May 2006

Revised: May 2007

Revised: August 2007

Revised: November 2008

Revised: February 2015

Revised: November 2015

Revised: August 2024

**Rules & By-laws
Appendix A**

**TBMF Membership Plan
Approved at TBMF Consultation: April 26-30, 2007**

Applying for Membership

There are 3 steps to become a member of TBMF. An interested Baptist mission board would:

1. Submit a letter of application to the TBMF or one of the current Member Boards.
2. Be recommended by one of the current Member Boards.
3. Be interviewed by the Member Boards at the next Consultation. At the interview, the Member Boards will want to know of the theology and mission philosophy of the applicant Board, their ability to carry out the planned work and the selection process used for missionaries and volunteers.

| Member Type | For Who? | Privileges & Responsibilities | Services Provided |
|-------------|---|---|---|
| Member | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For Baptist mission boards that have a long term commitment to Thai work and who have been recommended by another full member board of TBMF. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Part of the governing body of TBMF. Establishes the Guidelines, Rules & By-Laws and attends the biennial Consultation as a voting member. 2. Contributes financially to the support of TBMF as established by agreement of all full member boards. 3. Contributes financially to both the CCT and the Christian Service Foundation as agreed. 4. Pays a portion of conference expenses based on related participants. 5. Each member board is represented on the TBMF Advisory Team. | <p>Full service of TBMF which might include:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eligible for CCT visas when appropriate. 2. Volunteer placement, preparation, orientation and care. 3. Channeling of funds if needed. 4. Assisting with itineraries and guiding of visitors and tours. 5. Assisting in securing non-CCT visas for volunteers if needed. 6. Volunteers are invited to TBMF Conference as a visitor. 7. Personnel are invited to any Fellowship events. |

Funding formula for Full Members: Total TBMF Administrative Budget

Each Full Member Board will pay 3%. The remainder left after each board pays 3%, will be divided according to the number of missionaries and volunteers (over 1 year) in the country related to each Board as of January 31 of the previous year.

Revised: February 2002

Revised: October 2004

Revised: April 2007

Revised: August 2007

Revised: February 2015

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Appendix B

It took us 100+ years to become Uniting Church in Sweden

In 1905 there was a meeting in Sweden where the Baptist Union of Sweden (BUS), the Methodist Church in Sweden and the Swedish Covenant Church (SCC) met to discuss if these three denominations could merge. There was an agreement, that the idea was good - but not very much happend.

Around year 2000 the youth organizations of these three denominations started to discuss a common office and more joint ventures. A few years later the merged and told their mother organizations that they strongly encouraged them to do the same. They gave the mother organizations 10 years, otherwise the youth organizations would split up again, like before.

2008 all three denominations took the decision to merge in their annual conferences, where all local churches are represented. It was a long process to give life to this new organization, Uniting Church in Sweden (UCS). At the annual conference in 2012 UCS was ready to take off with its new leadership.

BUS as a baptist denomination has been a member of the Thailand Baptist Fellowship for many years. UCS is still carrying a baptist identity, but not only. It carries also a Methodist heritage from the Methodist church in Sweden. It carries also a Lutheran/Congre-gationalist heritage from the SCC. The vision for this new organization is:

Uniting Church strives
to be a church for all aspects of life
where the encounter with Jesus Christ
transforms me, you and the world