

## CONSTITUTION OF NLM

### Purpose and Basis

#### § 1

The purpose of Norwegian Lutheran Mission (NLM) is to spread the Kingdom of God. Therefore, NLM will preach the Gospel and promote responsibility for mission work both nationally and internationally. NLM will educate, send and support missionaries, and educate and support national co-workers in our mission fields, particularly in China, but also in other countries.

#### § 2

The basis of NLM's work is the Holy Bible and the Confession of the Evangelical Lutheran Church. NLM require of its associates to teach and administer the sacraments in accordance with the Holy Scriptures and the Confession.

#### § 3

NLM consists of *mission fellowships*<sup>1</sup> that are registered in the local NLM regions where they are situated, and that wish to support NLM's objectives according to §§ 1 and 2.

### The General Assembly

#### § 4

The General Assembly is the supreme authority of NLM (cf. §§ 8, 13 and 14).

The General Assembly shall deal with:

- the overall strategic plans for NLM's national and international work
- the Executive Board's three-year report and the main structure for the work nationally and internationally for the next three-year period
- corporate financial reports for the previous three-year period
- the distribution of financial resources between Norway and the mission fields
- the report from the Control Committee
- establishment of mission work among new people groups. In cases where a quick decision is needed, or the work is of a sensitive nature, the Executive Board is authorized to make a decision
- amendments to the Constitution
- other cases submitted by the Executive Board and /or the Council Meeting (see also § 9, second paragraph)

<sup>1</sup> "Mission fellowships" is used here as a common term for the different types of fellowships, congregations and groups for adults, children and youth. In order to send delegates to the General Assembly, these groups must be registered in one of NLM's regions.

The General Assembly shall elect (cf. § 6):

- The Executive Board
- The Control Committee
- The Election Committee / Credentials Committee

The General Assembly shall also include worship meetings, Bible teaching, informative and mission-oriented seminars, and opportunities for discussions about NLM's work.

#### § 5

The General Assembly shall be held every three years by the end of July.

The General Assembly consists of:

- delegates from registered mission fellowships that have been registered in their region for at least one month before the General Assembly. Mission fellowships may elect one delegate each.
- the seven elected members of the Executive Board. They are not entitled to vote on matters submitted by the Control Committee.

All delegates must be active in NLM's ministry, more than 18 years old and present a proxy letter.

#### § 6

The General Assembly shall elect the members of the Executive Board for six years. Every three years, three or four of the members shall withdraw alternately. They may be re-elected. The General Assembly shall elect four deputy members to the Executive Board for three years. The deputies shall be elected in a separate election.

The General Assembly shall elect a Control Committee of three members for six years and one deputy member for three years. Every three years one or two shall withdraw alternately. They may be re-elected.

The General Assembly shall elect an Election Committee / Credentials Committee for the next General Assembly, consisting of five members and three deputy members.

Employees of the Executive Committee's administration cannot be members of the Executive Committee, the Control Committee or the Election Committee / Credentials Committee.

#### § 7

The Executive Board may convene an extraordinary General Assembly. An extraordinary General Assembly may only discuss and pass resolutions on matters submitted by the Executive Board and / or the Council Meeting.

## The Executive Board

### § 8

The Executive Board consists of seven members elected by the General Assembly, and leads NLM's work. The Board, together with the Council Meeting, has a particular doctrinal responsibility and therefore only consists of men. At least four members need to be present to constitute a quorum. The General Secretary shall attend the board meetings and may speak and submit motions, but without voting rights.

### § 9

The Executive Board shall convene the General Assembly on the given date. The Board shall present the three-year report and the financial report to the Assembly. The report shall give a clear overview of NLM's national and international work and outline the main areas of work in the next three years. The Board shall also prepare and present other matters for discussion at the General Assembly. These matters shall be presented to the mission fellowships no later than one month before the General Assembly is held.

Proposals to the General Assembly may also be presented by registered mission fellowships and must be submitted to the Executive Board no later than three months before the General Assembly.

### § 10

The Executive Board constitutes itself with a Chairman and a Vice Chairman from its own members.

#### The Executive Board

- shall specify, implement and evaluate the strategy of the work
- shall review annual reports and other reports from the different branches of the work
- shall establish the main financial regulations of the work
- shall adopt the annual budgets in accordance with strategies approved by the General Assembly and submit an audited financial report as per 31st of December
- shall appoint leaders at the Head Office and evangelists employed by the Head Office
- shall employ and place missionaries<sup>2</sup>, and approve all permanent pastoral appointments in the regions (cf. § 17)
- shall fix wages, salaries and working conditions for NLM's employees
- may enter into binding agreements with partner churches and international organizations
- may issue statements on current topics significant to the work
- shall appoint the necessary boards, committees and councils and determine guidelines for their work
- shall approve any purchase, sale and mortgage of real estate (cf. § 19)

<sup>2</sup> *Missionary* is a common term in the General Instructions for Missionaries for all envois in the service of NLM internationally.

§ 11

It commits NLM in all respects when two of the following affix their signatures on behalf of the Executive Board: the Chairman, the Vice Chairman and the General Secretary. The Executive Board may grant power of attorney.

**The Council Meeting**

§ 12

The Executive Board shall convene at least one Council Meeting between each General Assembly. Council Meetings shall be convened when requested by at least 1/4 of the members of the Council Meeting or by a minimum of three members of the Executive Board. A Council Meeting consists of the Executive Board, its deputy members, two members chosen by the National Board of NLM Ung as well as elected representatives above the age of 18 from the regions. Regions with 1-50 mission fellowships may send two representatives. Regions with more than 50 fellowships may send an additional representative for each additional 50 fellowships (regions with 51-100 fellowships may send three representatives, etc.).

The representatives from the regions are elected by the Annual Regional Meetings. The members of the Council Meeting are elected for three years prior to each ordinary General Assembly. A reasonable number of deputy members should be elected.

The members of the Control Committee are entitled to attend the Council Meeting as observers.

The Executive Board is entitled to summon persons whose attendance it deems appropriate, but only elected representatives as well as members and deputies of the Executive Board are entitled to vote.

The Council Meeting constitutes itself and elects chairmen, secretaries and the necessary committees to effectively conduct the meeting.

§ 13

Together with the Executive Board, the Council Meeting has a particular doctrinal responsibility on behalf of the entire organization and may overrule Executive Board resolutions on doctrinal matters. The Council Meeting therefore consists only of men. If the Council Meeting recommends the General Assembly to make amendments to the Constitution of doctrinal character, a majority of 2/3 of the votes is required. The Council Meeting decides whether a Constitutional amendment is of doctrinal character or not.

§ 14

The cases that the Executive Board want the Council Meeting to treat, must be prepared by the Executive Board and submitted to the members of the Council Meeting no later than one month before

the meeting shall be held. All documents shall be made public. In cases where the Council Meeting makes a final resolution, this must be made clear in the dossier.

The members of the Council Meeting can themselves request the inclusion of items on the agenda, and claim to have them treated. They must do so no later than three months before the meeting is held. The Council Meeting makes final resolutions in doctrinal matters of principal character and in cases submitted by the previous General Assembly. All other resolutions by the Council Meeting are advisory.

## **International Work**

### § 15

The Executive Board calls, commissions and sends missionaries to the mission fields on behalf of NLM.

Every year each mission field holds a Missionary Conference, which is NLM's highest authority in the respective areas or countries. All resolutions passed by the Conference are subject to approval by the Executive Board.

The Executive Board determines the *General Instructions for NLM Missionaries*.

The international work is led within the framework outlined by the Executive Board, the Missionary Conference and agreements with partner churches where such agreements exist.

## **Regions**

### § 16

NLM's work in Norway is divided into regions. Each region has an annual regional meeting. The work in the regions is led by a Regional Board.

The Annual Regional Meeting shall among others

- elect the Regional Board and Regional Council for Children and Youth Ministry
- review annual reports and financial reports
- elect representatives to the Council Meeting

### § 17

The Regional Board shall call and employ workers in their region.

Employment of Region Leader, Leader of Children and Youth Ministry, Administrative Leader and the permanent employment of fellowship leaders and lay preachers are subject to approval by the Executive Board.

The Executive Board has the power to ask the Regional Board to take appropriate action to secure a good working environment and to ensure that NLM's Constitution, Core Values and contracts of employment are observed

#### **Property/ Finances**

##### § 18

All donations to NLM from regions or mission fellowships shall be regarded as NLM's property and may not be used for any other purpose.

##### § 19

Properties and parts of properties that belong to NLM's mission fellowships, institutions, or regions shall be regarded as NLM's property and are under the governance of the Executive Board. This does also apply to NLM's properties internationally. Purchase, disposal or mortgaging of real estate is subject to approval by the Executive Board or its authorized representative.

#### **Amendments to the Constitution**

##### § 20

This Constitution may only be amended by resolutions of the General Assembly adopted by a 2/3 majority after the motion for amendment has been published in the manner described in § 9. Such amendments must not be contrary to the objectives and principles of NLM as these are expressed in §§ 1 and 2.

*Original document: NLM's Grunnregler, amended by the General Assembly in Melsomvik in 2015.  
In the case of conflicts between the Norwegian text and the English text, the Norwegian text prevails.*