

A NEW RELATION IN JOINT MISSION


INTRODUCTION

As the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico we confess our faith and hope in God the Redeemer before the different churches and missionary entities scattered throughout the world.

We believe that the Universal Church is made up of people of every tongue, race and nation, to whom the message of reconciliation of God with the sinner through Jesus Christ, as well as that of reconciliation of man with his fellow man has been entrusted through the Gospel.

Therefore, those of us who make up the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico rejoice in the fact that we belong to that great family of God, and thus we declare that, based on the love of Christ, we join those who wish to make Christ known to the world as the only Saviour of sinners.

God has ordained in His Church, as He has stated in His Word in Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12:12 and 28, and Ephesians 4:11, 12, apostles, teachers, preachers, evangelistics, etc. for the building up of the Body of Christ.

 We believe the mission of the Church to be one of partnership and that, therefore, as believers, we owe each one to the other, even if we live in different parts of the world.

Therefore, in our fraternal relations with churches and missionary entities from all the countries of earth, we join, joyfully and willingly, in a common effort of aid and mutual cooperation to fulfil the mission of God in a world which is shaken up and in need of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

Because of this, and as a basis of those relations, we present the following:

DECLARATION OF THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES

1. WE BELIEVE in the sovereignty of God as Maker, Owner and Sustainer of everything that exists and we acknowledge him as the only Lord of conscience.
2. WE BELIEVE in the deity and humanity of Jesus Christ and we acknowledge him as the Only Begotten Son of God and Redeemer of humankind.
3. WE BELIEVE in the Holy Spirit as Guide and Comforter of men and we acknowledge his regenerating and purifying work in the life of human-beings and His permanent presence in the life of the believers and of the Church.
4. WE BELIEVE in the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit and we acknowledge the three persons as one God, equal in holiness, power and glory.
5. WE BELIEVE in the Bible as written revelation and in its plenary inspiration by the power of the Holy Spirit and we acknowledge it as the only rule of Christian faith and practice.
6. WE BELIEVE that man is a sinner by nature and unable to reach salvation on his own merits and we acknowledge that he urgently needs Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

7. WE BELIEVE that the Universal Church is the Body of Christ, of whom He is the Head, and we acknowledge that the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico is part of that Body.
8. WE BELIEVE that the primary mission of the Church is to glorify God and that its task is the proclamation of the Gospel for the integral redemption of man and we acknowledge that there is only one Gospel, the Gospel of Jesus Christ.
9. WE BELIEVE that the Confession of Faith, the Westminster Catechisms and the Apostles' Creed are doctrinal symbols of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico and we acknowledge that its doctrine is expressed satisfactorily based in the Holy Scriptures.
10. WE BELIEVE that the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico has reached her maturity and autonomy and we acknowledge its Constitution, Discipline, Liturgy and Order of Worship as the norms that govern its organization and life.

THEREFORE, we declare these THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES to be the determining basis of faith, of the work and of the relationships that the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico establishes with other ecclesiastical bodies and missionary entities.

#### ADMINISTRATIVE PRINCIPLES

WHEREAS we have been made partakers of the heavenly calling which bestows on us the privilege of enjoying the life of fullness of the Triune God through our Lord Jesus Christ, and which imposes on us the need to be his co-workers in the evangelistic task;

WHEREAS the Holy Spirit has distributed his gifts in the Church with the richness and diversity as well as with the consequent responsibility of each one in particular and all as a whole for the fulfillment of His will;

WHEREAS the reality of the actual world imposes on us, in a very urgent way, to adopt as ours the divine concern for the salvation of man according to his eternal purpose and at the time in which we live;

WHEREAS we cannot remain ignorant of the fact that relationships between mission organizations and churches that, seeking common objectives and working in common fields of labor, at times evidence lack of mutual understanding;

WE DECLARE that our relationships as the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico with churches and missionary entities will be governed by the following

#### PRINCIPLES

1. Autonomy. We acknowledge that the Holy Spirit, in his sovereignty, has incorporated into the Church those of us who evidence a wise variety of ministries, abilities and methods of work in the spread of the Gospel. From this it is inferred that it is He who has also bestowed on us a self-identity that demands mutual respect, understanding and complementation in the tasks He has entrusted to us. Therefore, we respect other churches and missionary entities and, by the same token, we ask for respect of the particular expression of our understanding of Biblical doctrine and the execution of our task as well as the culture and idiosyncrasy of our Country.

2. Interdependence. It is evident that the task of evangelization of our own country and the whole world cannot be undertaken either by isolated efforts or by exclusive ministries. The need is imposed on everyone of us to enter into a spirit of true interdependence that will make wise use of our particular gifts and the resources within our reach. We cannot ignore that there are at least three ways in which this interdependence is to be practiced that is:

- (1) IN PARALLEL FORM, when two entities recognize their own identity and they work in a parallel form, joining ~~some~~ efforts occasionally in short term projects and tasks.
- (2) IN MUTUAL RESPECT, when two entities acknowledge the presence of each other and they establish relations of reciprocity and interchange, but in complete respect of the personality, the territorial rights and the methods of work of each other, having joint labors in just a few occasions.
- (3) IN COMPLETE FUSION, where such identification of purposes, efforts, objectives and ideals is reached that there exist no distinctions between a church as such and a missionary entity of a different origin from the other. As the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico we believe that the biblical imperative calls us to establish relations by the Holy Spirit, with no loss of our identify and inherent rights.

We wish above all to express a mutual submission to the lordship of Christ as Head of the Church, to our Heavenly Father as the One who issued the eternal plan of salvation of men and to the Holy Spirit as infallible Guide of the Church according to the clear guidelines of his HOLY WORD.

#### AREAS OF WORK

At the beginning of a new period of relations between the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, the cooperating churches and missionary entities, it is to be understood that the Church of Mexico has opportunities to accomplish its ministry in different areas of work which it will perform according to its possibilities.

We suggest that these areas of work be governed according to the following order of priorities:

#### IN MEXICO

NEW FIELDS - It is understood as new fields those states within our country where at the present there is no Presbyterian work under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico, or that it does exist in a token form, such as:

NEW FIELDS OF THE PACIFIC AND THE NORTHWEST, that comprises the states of Baja California Norte, Baja California Sur, Colima, Chihuahua, Durango, Nayarit, Sinaloa, and Sonora.

NEW FIELDS IN THE CENTER, that comprises the states of Aguascalientes, Guanajuato, Hidalgo, Jalisco, Puebla, Queretaro, San Luis Potosi y Tlaxcala.

The foregoing implies that there will be a difference in time in the fulfillment of the projects. Nevertheless, in both situations there will be frequent evaluation by the Committee of Joint Mission. These fields should be under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly until such a time as they can be under the jurisdiction of the presbyteries nearest to them, with the direct help of the General Assembly.

ALREADY ESTABLISHED WORK - We consider as already established work those places where both Synods and Presbyteries under the jurisdiction of the General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico are already working. We urge the Assembly to continue responding to its own needs and projects creating a sense of unity and cooperation within its own field of action, in general as regards its own organizations and institution, and that only in very special cases any aid from the cooperating churches be used, after previous study and after it has been approved by the General Assembly.

#### IN OTHER COUNTRIES -

The National Presbyterian Church of Mexico in cooperation with the churches and missionary entities, will participate in specific projects within their own geographical areas that can be accomplished such as in border areas, work among Spanish-speaking people, interchange in work or study caravans that will serve the purpose of enriching fraternal relationships, as well as other projects; also it offers, in the spirit of Christ, aid in the personnel and finances in appropriate proportion in mission projects where the Gospel needs to be preached.

#### JURISDICTION OF PERSONNEL

All personnel working in any project approved by the participating churches and missionary entities will be subject to the Church which received him or her according to its own structure, with the appropriate information to the church or missionary entity which sent him or her. This applies both to personnel which is already working in both countries as well as that which will participate in a project in the future. For that purpose, both parties will establish an adequate proportion.

Concerning personnel which could come to our country, it will be subject to our particular circumstances and he will be tested to verify the purity of his doctrine at least every four years, studies will be realized to try to increase national personnel and to decrease the participation of cooperating churches.

#### FINANCES

The same system as above will be followed in connection with financial aid for approved projects.

## CONDITIONS OF OPERATION

In order to carry out this new relationship in mission between the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico and the churches and missionary entities, it is recommended:

- I. That a Committee of Joint Mission be established. This Committee will be made up by the Executive Committee of the General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico plus the directors of the departments of Program and Development of same and those of the Synods.
- II. This Committee of Joint Mission will have the following responsibilities, subject to study for ratification or rectification, as the case may be, by the respective bodies:
  1. To coordinate the implementation of the plans in the areas previously specified.
  2. To process projects already approved by the respective churches.
  3. To test the persons coming to verify the purity of his/her doctrine.
  4. To aid the bodies and/or institutions, where the missionaries have been assigned in the supervision, orientation, and pastoral care of personnel.
  5. To evaluate periodically the projects approved by the cooperating churches to seek and increase National participation in personnel and financially.
  6. To inform the results of the previous evaluations to the respective bodies.
  7. To serve as a channel to process requests to participate in projects outside of Mexico.

## PERIOD OF OPERATION

It is recommended that during this new relationship in Mission, the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico make periodic evaluations with the purpose of acquiring major responsibilities in the projects in which she is involved.

## POLICY OF THE NATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF MEXICO WITH REGARD TO PARA-ECCLESIASTIC MISSIONARY ENTITIES

In the face of the fact of the presence of para-ecclesiastic missionary entities which for a long or short time have worked in Mexico and which in many occasions have had a close relationship with churches, organizations and ecclesiastic bodies both officially and non-officially and which in some cases their presence is questionable, the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico establishes its policy toward those para-ecclesiastic missionary entities and/or "Faith Missions"; and because they represent missionary structures different from those which are related to a church or a denomination, it is imperative that the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico:

1. Know who those missionary entities are.
2. Know their purposes, structure in particular, administrative policy, doctrinal statements and specific objectives.
3. Regulate the participation of those missionary entities and/or "Faith Missions". especially those which might be working in the area of work of the General Assembly.
4. Show in a concrete form its disposition, if it is necessary, to enter into joint planning of common ministries and labors in order to fulfill the divine purposes for our country in a spirit of mutuality and without engaging in any competition whatsoever.

In order to reach these objectives it is recommended that both parties be willing to enter into serious conversations in order to determine the fields of mutual action, the duties and privileges that both parties will acquire, the length of specific projects, the standards of periodic evaluation that should be applied both to the relationship and to the projects, and all of those details that might be relevant for each particular missionary entity, according to its own individual circumstances.

The National Presbyterian Church of Mexico reserves the right to establish or not establish relationships with those entities, providing the appropriate information to the ecclesiastical bodies under its jurisdiction.

This document was approved by the General Assembly of the National Presbyterian Church of Mexico in its XIV special called meeting of July 10-13, 1979 in the Filadelfia Church of Cuernavacas, Morelos.

The Secretary:

Pbro. Juan Garcia Martinez

THE COMMITTEE:

Pbro. Samuel Trinidad B., Dr. Pablo Perez Morales, Pbro. Juan Garcia Martinez,  
Pbro. Isaias Uc Colli, Dr. Alberto Alvarado B., Dr. Saul Tijerina Gonzalez,  
Pbro. Severo Ek. Profr. David Macias S.