



KNOWING JESUS ... MAKING HIM KNOWN

February 20, 2017

USCIS California Service Center
Attn: I-129 R-1
24000 Avila Road
2nd Floor, Room 2312
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

RE: Similarities between Kurume Bible Fellowship and Los Altos Grace Brethren Church

Dear USCIS R-1 Adjudicator:

My name is Tom Avey and I am the Corporate Secretary for the Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches, Inc. in the United States (also commonly called a Denomination). The Grace Brethren Fellowship has 250 number of member churches in the USA. Alexander Mack in Germany founded our Fellowship of Churches in 1708. By 1729 all of our churches and members had moved to the United States. In 1900, we started an international mission group, which then started new Grace Brethren Churches all over the world. Currently we have more than 4,000 churches in 34 countries around the world.

I am writing to affirm that Kurume Bible Fellowship Church (KBF) located in Tokyo, Japan is a similar type of church to our Los Altos Grace Brethren Church located in Long Beach, CA (LAGBC).

Identification:

LAGBC and KBF both identify as Evangelical churches. We both support and are active in local ministry efforts, actively supporting missions and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ in our local communities. We believe the sharing of the gospel is central to our worship and identity.

Doctrine and Belief:

LAGBC shares an almost identical statement of faith with the KBF church. Our beliefs in God, His son Jesus Christ, the Bible as the inspired word of God, the role of the church in the world, and other aspects of our faith align. We have included both statements of faith as an attachment to this letter for your review.

THE FELLOWSHIP OF GRACE BRETHREN CHURCHES
P.O. Box 384 · Winona Lake, IN 46590 · 574.269.1269 · www.fgbc.org

Worship Practices:

We also share nearly identical worship practices. Grace Brethren Churches, including LAGBC, meet on Sundays for worship, as does the KBF church. KBF and Grace Brethren churches use the Bible as the center of our worship and teaching. Both churches practice the sacrament of communion and baptism during these Sunday worship services. Many of our hymns and worship songs are similar across both churches.

Church Structure:

Our churches are also structured in similar ways, with a pastor as the shepherd of the members. We both have a selected council of members that advise and support the pastor (council or Elders). We both affirm the ministry of women and men in our churches. KBF and LAGBC also practice Christian education similarly, with classes for children, youth, and adults on Sundays or at other times throughout the week.

I affirm that the two churches are similar types of churches and that the beliefs, doctrine, worship practices, and structure of KBF align with our Fellowship of Grace Brethren Churches (Denomination).

If you have any questions, please contact me at the number or e-mail below.

Sincerely,