

By-laws of the Nebraska Baptist State Convention

Article I

Fiscal Year, Term of Office, Meetings

The Regional Fiscal Year shall be the calendar year. The term of office for all officers and members of the Leadership Team shall be from the Region convention through the next region convention.

The President and Vice President, shall serve a one-year term, the President and Vice President may serve two consecutive terms. The Secretary and the Treasurer will serve a three year term and they may serve two consecutive terms.

Article II

Leadership Team

The Executive Minister, President, Vice President, Secretary and Treasurer and the Sections shall be the Leadership team.

The Leadership Team shall meet quarterly. Special meeting may be called by the President or Executive Minister/Region Missionary.

The Leadership Team shall have the power to fill the unexpired term of any officer or Section member who may, for whatever reason, be unable to complete their term of office or who, after being elected but not yet seated in such office, shall, for whatever reason, be unable to assume the office to which they have been elected. Such action shall be presented to the next Leadership Team meeting for affirmation or modification.

Article III

Teams

1. Staff Relations Team

The Staff Relations Team shall be a standing committee, comprised of six members. The Leadership Team shall nominate members for the Staff Relations Team. There shall be three at-large members and three members from the Leadership Team. At least two of the six persons shall be ordained clergy. These nominees shall be mutually acceptable to the Executive

Minister/Region Missionary and the Leadership Team. The term of service shall not exceed two consecutive three –year terms. Vacancies shall be filled in the same manner as original appointments.

The Staff Relations Team develops and maintains the policy and procedure manual and job descriptions for the staff of the Region.

It will serve as an Advisory Search team to the Executive Minister/Region Missionary for selection of Region Executive Staff (other than the Executive Minister). It reviews the Executive Minister's evaluation of all Region employees. It shall follow ABC USA guidelines and work with the Office of the General Secretary in the evaluation of the Executive Minister/Region Missionary's performance.

The Staff Relations team makes staff salary recommendations to the Leadership Team.

2. Nominating

The Nominating team shall be composed of the Leadership Team and the Region staff.

Their duty shall be to nominate candidates for all elective offices.

The Nominating team should seek distribution of Leadership Team membership to reflect the constituency, such as gender, racial and geographic representation.

3. Annual Meeting/Convention/Reunion Team

The Leadership Team will act as the Annual Meeting planning group to plan the next meeting.

4. Temporary Teams

Search Teams

The Leadership Team shall appoint a search team of seven persons to present a candidate for the office of Executive Minister/Region Missionary when that office is vacant. The Personnel Committee shall be represented on the Executive Minister/Region Missionary Search Team. Geographic, gender, lay and actively serving clergy representation shall be achieved.

Additional Teams

Additional teams as may be deemed necessary or expedient shall be appointed by the President and approved by the Leadership Team.

Article IV Sections

The work of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska shall be carried forward through six sections.

The six sections are Administration, Camps and Conferences, Finance and Investment, Professional Ministry, Missions, Region Ministries and Staff. Sections can meet as needed separate from the Leadership Team in order to fulfill mission and ministry tasks.

All sections are subject to the Leadership Team.

Each section shall have members elected for a term of three years with one/sixth elected each year. No member shall be elected for more than two consecutive terms. If a member misses two meetings of the Leadership Team without explanation, that member may be dropped from the Leadership Team.

No person shall be eligible to serve in more than one section at one time.

Section Responsibilities

A. Moses Merrill Camp and Conference Center

Memberships consists of three people. A chairperson and two members, who serve on the Leadership Team.

Develop policy for the ministry of MMCCC and submit those policies to the Leadership Team for approval.

Promote the use of MMCCC.

Promote volunteer and financial support of MMCCC.

B. Finance and Investment

Membership consists of three people. The Treasurer and two members, who serve on the Leadership Team. The Treasurer of the Corporation shall serve as the Chairperson of the Finance and Investment Section.

Formulate the annual budget and supervise the entire financial structure of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska.

Oversee the annual audit of the books and the funds of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska.

Advise the Leadership Team of the investment portfolio.

Seek donors and bequests to the "Permanent Funds" of the churches and other special causes within the work of the region.

C. Professional Ministry

Membership in the Professional Ministry Section shall include one representative from each of the Minister's Council, a pastor and a lay person.

Support Professional Church Leaders (PCLs) in the on-going task of ministry.

Support retired PCLs as they transition to a new style of living and encourage them as they discover new ministries.

Nurture PCLs by encouraging life-long learning through the support of communal and individual educational events.

Encourage individuals responding to the call of God to ordained church ministry and oversee the process for those seeking recognition within the ABC/NE and ABC/USA.

Maintain the integrity of those called by God to service by establishing, performing, and in the spirit of Christ, maintaining a process of accountability and redemption for violators of the Ministers' Council Code of Ethics and of Biblical standards.

The Professional Ministry section will recommend to an ordaining church whether an individual be ordained and receive American Baptist recognition. The ordaining church will convene The Council on Ordination by inviting the following representatives:

- 1) The members of the Professional Ministry section,
- 2) One layperson and one clergyperson from each of the four ABC/NE churches in closest geographic proximity to the ordaining church, and
- 3) The Council on Ordination will be chaired by the Executive Minister/Region Missionary of ABC/NE churches, the Associate Executive Minister/Region Missionary of ABC/NE, or the Chairperson of Professional Ministry section. The Council on Ordination will consist of those invited by the ordaining church, according to the guidelines previously stated, who attend the meeting(s) of the Council on Ordination with the candidate. American Baptist recognition of those already ordained will be handled by the Professional Ministry section.

D. Missions

Membership consists of three people. The region's ABC USA Representative and two members. Foster and promote the work of American Baptists in all phases of Missionary endeavor among the churches of Nebraska.

Promote the work of stewardship and sponsor special teams or efforts for larger support of Christian work.

Cooperate with the Division of United Mission Support of the American Baptist Churches USA.

E. Region Ministries

This section will be comprised of a representative of the American Baptist Men of Nebraska, American Baptist Women of Nebraska, the Minister's Council and Youth pastor/sponsor.

The role of this section will be to assist in planning men's, women's, pastors and youth events, keep the region informed and connected to these ministries while working with ABC/NE churches.

F. Region Staff

This section will be comprised of the Executive Minister/Region Missionary, the Associate Executive Minister/Region Missionary, and a representative of the MMCCC staff.

Article VI Procedure

All meetings shall be conducted to conform to standard parliamentary practice and procedure.

Article VII Records

The Secretary shall keep a record of the proceedings of the Leadership Team and the Annual Meeting of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska, a copy of which records shall be kept at the State Office subject to inspection.

The Treasurer shall review the receiving, handling and disbursement of all current trust and permanent funds as authorized by the Leadership Team upon the written order of the Executive Minister/Region Missionary. The Treasurer shall oversee keeping a complete record of all transactions and render a report at each meeting of the Leadership Team and the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska. The records shall be kept at the State Office subject to inspection.

Article VIII Church Affiliation

A duly constituted Church of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska shall:

1. Conduct regular weekly services of worship. It shall operate in conformity with generally accepted Baptist beliefs and practices.
2. Accept and support the work of the Region, American Baptist Churches USA and their affiliation with the same.

3. Support the mission of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska, in reasonable financial and volunteer participation. All churches are encouraged to give at least 10% of their income to American Baptist Churches United Mission, as a basis upon which to build their mission giving. Churches below this level will be encouraged to move towards this goal at the rate of 1% per year. Churches that are dually aligned shall have this same goal, dividing this giving equally between affiliations. (F & I, April 1993)
4. Retain an American Baptist pastor in good standing. A pastor who is not credentialed at the time of call to the church shall obtain recognition and good standing with American Baptist Churches of Nebraska. A pastor of a yoked congregation credentialed in another denomination shall obtain American Baptist Churches of Nebraska recognition of this or her credentials and maintain good standing with American Baptist Churches of Nebraska.
5. Submit the standard annual report to the Region Office.
6. Be incorporated as a non-profit organization.
7. The American Baptist Churches of Nebraska Leadership Team shall determine the membership status of churches based on these minimal criteria.

Article X Amendments

These by-laws shall be amended at any regular meeting of the Board of Directors of the American Baptist Churches of Nebraska by a two-thirds vote of those present providing due notice of such proposed amendment shall be sent out with the call to such meeting.

Adopted: May 10, 1996
Amended: Aug. 17, 2002
Amended: Aug. 28, 2004
Amended: Feb. 20, 2010
Amended: April 2016 (proposed)