

BYLAWS
OF
BELL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

PREAMBLE

To the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each member church of the Bell Baptist Association, and the freedom of action of this association of churches with respect to its relation with other organizations and entities, we do declare and establish these Bylaws.

ARTICLE I
Name and Purpose

Section 1. Name

The name of this association of churches is **BELL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** and will be further referred to in the Bylaws as the Association of Churches.

Section 2. Purpose

The purposes of the Association of Churches are to:

- a. Provide mission information and opportunities for churches as they seek to expand their mission field.
- b. Provide opportunities for establishing and maintaining relationships between member churches.
- c. Provide resources to assist churches in achieving and maintaining congregational health.

ARTICLE II
Government and Membership

Section 1. Government

This autonomous association of churches, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, retains unto itself the exclusive right to temporal life of the Association of Churches. The membership reserves the exclusive right to determine who shall be members of the Association of Churches and the condition of such membership. The Association of Churches chooses to act in a democratic fashion, with authority vested in its members, as set forth herein. The Association of Churches is subject to the control of no other church, association, or ecclesiastical body, but may choose to cooperate with other organizations and entities in missions efforts.

Section 2. Membership

Membership in the Association of Churches shall be composed of participating churches:

- a. Participating churches shall affirm the Association Covenant (Constitution, Art. III).
- b. Participating churches shall be expected to submit an Annual Church Profile.
- c. Churches desiring membership in the Association of Churches shall present a petitionary letter, which affirms their acceptance of the Association Covenant (Constitution, Art. III).
- d. The Credentials Team will review the petitionary letter and recommend the church begin a one year "watch care" relationship with the Association in the next Annual Meeting. This period will allow the church to participate the activities of the BBA. It is a time for the church and BBA to develop relationships that will determine if membership in BBA is in the best interest of the church and BBA.
- e. The Credentials Team will meet with the church leadership after the year of "watch care" and determine if they will proceed with the church's petition for membership in the BBA.
- f. Upon the recommendation of the Credentials Team, the Association of Churches may affirm the membership of a petitioning church by two-thirds (2/3) vote of messengers at the annual meeting following the year of "watch care."

- g. The Association of Churches may terminate the membership of a participating church by three-fourths (3/4) vote of messengers at the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE III
Annual Meeting

The Association of Churches shall hold annual meetings at such times and places as it may choose. Each member church shall be entitled to two (2) messengers and an additional one (1) messenger for every fifty (50) members on its rolls; except that, the maximum number of messengers from any one member church shall not exceed twenty-five (25). Each messenger attending shall be entitled to one (1) vote. Voting by proxy is prohibited. Those messengers in attendance and voting shall constitute a quorum.

ARTICLE IV
Ministry Leadership

Section 1. Messengers

- a. Messengers shall be elected/authorized by action of member churches.
- b. Messengers shall register at and attend annual meetings of the Association of Churches.
- c. Messengers shall be responsible participants in the discussion and determination of actions taken at annual meetings of the Association of Churches.

Section 2. Executive Board

The Association of Churches shall have an Executive Board composed of the pastors of member churches, four (4) at-large members elected/authorized by each member church, the general officers of this board, and committee/team leaders. The Executive Board shall transact business for the Association of Churches between sessions of the annual meeting. The members present and voting shall constitute a quorum. The officers of the Association of Churches shall be the officers of the Executive Board.

Section 3. Association Officers

- a. Election of officers
 - i. The Executive Board shall designate a nominating committee prior to the annual meeting.
 - ii. The nominating committee shall present a slate of officers to the messengers at the Annual Meeting for election by majority vote.
 - iii. Nominations from the floor may be accepted.
- b. Term of officers. The officers, duly elected and installed, shall serve a term of one (1) year.
- c. Vacancies. Should any office of the Association of Churches become vacant, the uncompleted term of that office shall be filled by an officer appointed by the Moderator.
- d. Moderator
 - i. The Moderator shall preside over the meetings of the Association of Churches.
 - ii. The Moderator shall serve as Chairman of the Executive Board.
 - iii. The Moderator shall serve as ex-officio member of committees/teams.
 - iv. The Moderator shall be authorized to appoint special committees/teams as needed to accomplish the ministry of the Association of Churches.
 - v. The Moderator shall appoint a Parliamentarian. The Parliamentarian shall serve as a procedural guide and judge during meetings of both the Executive Board and the Annual Meeting, utilizing Roberts Rules of Order as reference.

- e. Vice Moderator
 - i. The Vice Moderator shall preside over the meetings of the Association of Churches in the absence of the Moderator.
 - ii. The Vice Moderator shall become Moderator in the event of a vacancy in that office.
- f. Clerk
 - i. The Clerk shall keep accurate minutes of all business transacted by the Executive Board or during the Annual Meeting.
 - ii. The Clerk shall maintain such minutes on file in the Association of Churches' office, available for review by members.
- g. Treasurer
 - i. The treasurer shall oversee the employees of the Association of Churches who receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of vouchers approved and signed by authorized personnel, all money or things of value paid or given to the Association of Churches, and shall keep at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements.
 - ii. The treasurer shall cause the employee responsible for financial clerical duties to prepare a monthly, itemized report of the receipts and disbursements of the preceding month.
 - iii. The treasurer shall cause the financial reports and records of the Association of Churches to be audited internally annually by an auditing committee or a qualified accountant.
 - iv. The treasurer shall recommend to the Executive Board when it is deemed necessary to have an external audit of financial records.
 - v. The treasurer shall serve as a member of the Finance Team.

Section 4. Staff

- a. Director of Missions. The Director of Missions shall perform the duties of Chief Executive Officer of the Association of Churches.
- b. Administrative Assistant. The Administrative Assistant shall perform the duties of Secretary of the Association of Churches.

Section 5. Trustees

Trustees shall serve the Association of Churches in transactions requiring legal signatures, as legal signers. In all cases the Trustees shall act only on the stated authority of the Association of Churches.

ARTICLE V
Corporate Officers

The corporate officers of the Association of Churches shall be the President, Secretary, and Trustees. The President shall be the Director of Missions and the Secretary shall be the Administrative Assistant.

ARTICLE VI
Financial Administration

Section 1: Financial Policies

- a. Financial procedures shall be consistent with an Association of Churches-approved Financial Policy Manual.
- b. Fiscal Year: The Fiscal year of the Association of Churches shall be the calendar year.
- c. Special Gifts: Receipt of special or designated gifts will be dispersed in a manner which honors the Lord and is within the codes of the U.S. Internal Revenue Service and the intent of the giver.

