



NINE MILE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

ON MISSION TOGETHER SINCE 1845

CONSTITUTION
& Manual of Procedures

NINE MILE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE 1 . NAME OF THE ORGANIZATION

The name of this association of churches shall be the Nine Mile Baptist Association, Inc. (hereinafter referred to as The Association.)

ARTICLE 2. OBJECTIVE

We the peoples of these Nine Mile Baptist Churches choose to cooperate in fulfilling the Great Commission (**Matthew 28:19-20**) and the Great Commandment (**Matthew 22:37-40**); that we carry out this objective without ownership of land, building, or facilities.

Therefore we agree:

- 1) To provide training and resources
- 2) To participate in local and global missions by giving of our time, talents, and finances thus enabling the churches to do together what we could not do alone for the glory of God.

ARTICLE 3. AUTHORITY

- 1) The Association is autonomous under the Lordship of Christ. It shall determine its own membership and program in accordance with its established objective (see Article 2).
- 2) The Association shall not exercise any ecclesiastical authority over the member churches in respect to their doctrines or method of work. The Association and its leadership shall not be a party to any internal difficulties or split in a member church. However, in any case of internal difficulties, and upon request by a member church, The Association may act as an advisory council.

ARTICLE 4. MEMBERSHIP

1. Affiliation

- A. The Association shall be composed of those cooperating Southern Baptist Churches who enter into its constitution and other Baptist churches that may thereafter be elected to its membership according to the regulations of The Association. A Baptist church shall be considered a cooperating church when it follows the doctrines and practices of The Association, submits an annual church letter in one of the two preceding years, contributes financially to The Association in one of the two preceding years, and sends messengers to the Annual Meeting of The Association in one of the two preceding years.
- B. Any Baptist Church, which desires to be received into the fellowship of the Association shall apply at least 90 days prior to The Association's Annual Meeting. In the letter of application, the church shall make a statement of its faith and practices and declare its purpose to cooperate with The Association.
- C. The Executive Board shall study the letter of application and make a recommendation at The Association's next Annual Meeting, if The Association approves the application by a two-thirds affirmative vote, the church shall be received into the Association and Its messengers seated.

2. Withdrawal of Fellowship

- A. Should any member church disqualify itself by doctrines or practices contrary to those of The Association, or fails to send an annual church letter in one of the two preceding years, or fails to contribute financially to The Association in one of the two preceding years, The Association upon failing to reconcile such action may consider withdrawal of fellowship with the member church.
- B. If a member church appears to be in violation of The Association's established statement of faith (see Article 5), The Association may request a meeting with the leadership of the member church. The purpose of the meeting will be to determine if there has been a violation, and a report of this meeting will be made to The Association in regular session.
- C. If evidence of a violation of The Association's Statement of Faith is validated, The Association will seek reconciliation with the member church. However, if the member church continues its practices contrary to The Association's Statement of Faith, The Association may withdraw fellowship from the member church.

- D. If a decision is made to withdraw fellowship from a member church. The following steps must be adhered to:
- 1) The member church will be notified of such a decision by certified mail.
 - 2) If it so chooses, the subject member church will be allowed to present its case before The Association in a specially called session.
 - 3) A vote to withdraw fellowship from a member church will be taken only in a specially called session of all the messengers of The Association. Each messenger shall be notified by a letter, Each church of The Association shall be notified by a certified letter.
 - 4) Withdrawal of fellowship from a member church must be approved by a two-thirds vote.

Messengers

- A. Messengers duly elected by the member churches shall constitute the Annual Meeting of The Association. The elected messengers shall register before or at the Associational meetings.
- B. The Messengers of The Association shall be:
- 1) The pastors of the associational churches provided they are members of their church.
 - 2) Three (3) other messengers from each associational church and for every multiple of one hundred (100) resident members, each church is entitled to one (1) additional messenger.
 - 3) Each officer of The Association not otherwise elected as a messenger. (These persons shall not be included in each church's allowed number of messengers.)

ARTICLE 5. DOCTRINE

The Association affirms that the "Baptist Faith and Message" adopted in 1925, and revised in 1963, 1998, and 2000, represents a consensus of Baptist beliefs for general instruction and guidance. Within the present historical context, the Association further clarifies its doctrinal stance by the following expressions of faith.

A. Scripture

We acknowledge the Holy Scripture to be the sixty-six books of the Old Testament and New Testament. All Scripture is inspired by God (**2 Timothy 3:16**), and God spoke the Scripture through holy men as they were moved by the Holy Spirit (**2 Peter 1:20-21**). All Scripture is Truth (**John 17:17**), because it is impossible for God to lie (**Titus 1:2, Hebrews 6:18**). All Scripture is infallible (**1 Kings 8:56**), and flawless (**Psalms 12:6,18:30**), and it endures forever (**Isaiah 40:8**). The Scripture is the canon on which all human conduct and church doctrine and practices are to be based (**2 Timothy 3:16**). The final criterion by which all Scripture is to be interpreted is Jesus Christ. (**John 14:6**)

B. The Church

- 1) A church is a group of baptized believers who have come to God through Christ and have joined together to worship and serve Him in their local setting.
- 2) The mission of each is to glorify God by bringing all people to Him for redemption through Christ.
- 3) A church, in the context of the association, belongs to a family and network of churches, which gives and receives assistance. This "Family of Churches" involves oneness, shared life, mutuality, and community.
- 4) Each church within this "Family of Churches" is free, independent, self-governing, and autonomous in all areas of doctrine and practice.

ARTICLE 6. MODERATOR

- 1) The elected officer of The Association shall be the Moderator.
- 2) The Moderator shall be elected by The Association each year at the Annual Meeting. (See the Manual of Procedures for guidelines and duties.)
- 3) The Moderator shall assume, or continue his duties at the conclusion of the Annual Meeting.

ARTICLE 7. ASSOCIATIONAL YEAR AND MEETINGS

- 1) The associational year shall be from January 1 to December 31.
- 2) The Annual Meeting of The Association shall be in October and Semi-Annual Meeting in April. The time, place and agenda shall be recommended by the Associational Leadership Team. (See Manual of Procedures for guidelines.)

3) In an emergency, The Association may be called into special session by the Executive Board.

ARTICLE 8. AMENDMENT

- 1) This constitution may be amended provided:
 - A. The suggested amendment shall have been presented in writing to The Association at the previous Annual Meeting or Semi-Annual Meeting.
 - B. The suggested amendment is approved by a two-thirds vote of the Elected messengers to the Annual Meeting or Semi-Annual Meeting who are present and voting
- 2) In all cases of proposed amendments the latest Revised Edition of Robert's Rules of Order will be followed.

ARTICLE 9: SUCCESSION

In the event of the death, incapacity, prolonged absence, or resignation of a member of the Leadership Team, the Executive Board shall assume responsibilities for the day-to-day operations until the next regular meeting of the Association. The Executive Board shall report to the Association at each regular and special meeting of any actions it has taken in the interim. Furthermore, the Executive Board shall have the authority to appoint an Acting Associational Strategist/Administrator until one can be hired and approved at the next Associational Meeting.

BY-LAWS

- 1) Each session of any associational meeting shall be opened and closed with prayer.
- 2) Those elected messengers or associational board members present during a regular or specially scheduled meeting shall constitute a quorum.
- 3) Each person who desires to speak on a matter before the body shall arise and address the Moderator. (Note: Guests may be seated in the body and may speak with the consent of the Moderator, but they may not vote.)
- 4) No person shall speak more than twice on any single subject without the consent of the Associational Leadership Team. However, The Moderator reserves the right to limit any and all speakers.
- 5) No person shall be present in the assembly when any matter which relates specifically to the person who is under debate.
- 6) No question shall be discussed unless its adoption shall first be moved and seconded.
- 7) The usual method of voting shall be by uplifted hand. However when two or more persons have been named for the same office, and in all other cases when requested the voting shall be by ballot.
- 8) The By-Laws may be amended at any Meeting of the Association by the concurrence of two-thirds of the Messengers present and voting.
- 9) The latest Revised Edition of Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the meetings of The Association in all cases to which they are applicable and when they are not inconsistent with the Constitution and By-Laws of The Association.

RULES OF DECORUM

- 1) Each person who desires to address the body shall confine all remarks to 5 minutes or less concerning the matter under discussion and shall not be interrupted unless the Rules of Decorum or Robert's Rules of Order are violated.
- 2) Although the nature or consequences of a measure may be condemned in strong terms, no person shall reflect upon the motives, feelings, or imperfections of any other person.
- 3) During debate while any person is speaking or if the Association is engaged in voting, no one is permitted to disturb the assembly by whispering, talking, walking across the floor or in any other way.
- 4) Any person who violated these By-Laws, or Rules of Decorum, or otherwise manifests a spirit contrary to the grace of the Gospel, shall be reprovved, silenced, or such action taken as The Associational Leadership Team may think proper. Any such action must seek reconciliation with the person.

Manual of Procedures

GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR ALL NOMINATED AND ELECTED POSITIONS:

- 1) Be a person of spiritual maturity, member of a local associational church, and have demonstrated a commitment to the work of the Lord and The Association.
- 2) Be a person of moral integrity, personal piety, and knowledgeable of the scriptures.

- 3) Be familiar with the structure of The Association and be knowledgeable of the denomination and its work.
- 4) Have a good rapport with associational leadership and the churches of The Association.

Executive Board

The Executive Board shall be composed of the members of the Missions Ministry Team, the Pastoral Care Team, and the Associational Leadership Team and will serve 3 year terms, preferably with one third of the members rotating off annually. Members of the Board will come from volunteers, those selected by the Executive Board, or nominated from the floor.

- 1) The Executive Board shall carry out all assigned tasks given to it by The Association (in annual or semi-annual session).
- 2) The Moderator shall act as the chairman of the Executive Board and shall have authority to call unscheduled Executive Board meetings.
- 3) The Executive Board shall review and approve all action taken by the Missions Ministry Team and the Pastoral Care Team.
- 4) The Executive Board is empowered to transact any and all business between the annual meetings of the association. (The quorum for this transaction of business shall consist of seven members, either in-person, or online.
- 5) The Executive Board shall publish to the churches a written report following each of its meetings and shall publish a cumulative report at the Annual Meeting and Semi-Annual Meeting.
- 6) Any cooperating church may send observers to the Executive Board meetings. An observer may speak to any issue, but only Board members may vote.

Associational Leadership Team

- 1) The ALT consists of the Moderator, Clerk-Treasurer, Pastoral Care Strategist, Missions Strategist, & Technology Administrator.
- 2) The Pastoral Care Strategist, Missions Strategist, Clerk-Treasurer, & Technology Administrator are to be hired as contract workers to help fulfill the ministry of the Association.
- 3) In case of a vacancy among the Associational Leadership Team, the Executive Board may appoint a Personnel Team of not more than 4 members from Associational Churches to recommend a replacement to the Executive Board for review. If acceptable, the Executive Board will present the replacement to be approved or rejected by the messengers at the next Associational Meeting.

Moderator

- 1) Be an ex-officio member of all associational teams.
- 2) Preside over all meetings of The Association (in annual session and semi-annual session), and the Associational Executive Board.
- 3) Receive and submit all motions and propositions of business presented at any business meeting. Shall bring to vote all business which is properly moved and seconded and shall announce the results of all votes.

CLERK-TREASURER

- 1) Attend, record, certify and preserve a record of all transactions of the Associational Executive Board and all official associational business meetings.
- 2) Supervise, record and report the registration of messengers to The Associational Annual Meeting and Semi-Annual meeting. Record and report member attendance at the Associational Executive Board Meetings.
- 3) To review monthly financial statements.
- 4) To present financial written reports at the Executive Board Meetings and any meeting of the Association.
- 5) To be an authorized signatory on the associational bank account.
- 6) Receive, deposit, and disburse all money and keep accurate records of all transactions.

PASTORAL CARE STRATEGIST

The Pastoral Care Strategist will strive to minister to and foster cooperation between the pastoral staff of the Nine Mile Baptist Churches.

Some of his possible ministry goals could include, but not limited to:

- 1) Maintain a pulpit supply list for the use of NMBA churches.
- 2) Strive to contact every NMBA Pastor at least monthly by phone, text, or in-person.
- 3) Offer quarterly meetings for the purpose of equipping and encouragement of our pastors.
- 4) Develop and oversee pastoral care support teams to provide encouragement to our Pastors.
- 5) Meet at least monthly with the four-person NMBA team for developing and strategic planning ministry objectives for NMBA.
- 6) Help facilitate ministry conferences and training opportunities.
- 7) Provide Pastoral Counseling and offer referrals as needed.
- 8) Resource NMBA Pastors with other helps such as retreats available.
- 9) He will provide a verbal and/or written report of his ministry at each Executive Board Meeting to be included in the Annual and Semi-annual Meetings book of reports.

MISSIONS STRATEGIST

The Missions Strategist will strive to minister to and foster cooperation of ministry and missions opportunities between the Nine Mile Baptist Churches.

Some of his possible ministry goals could include, but not limited to:

- 1) Interface with Church planting including communicating and advising any church planters working within our associational area.
- 2) Promote and coordinate ministry opportunities among our NMBA churches when additional manpower, equipment, finances, and prayer can be shared among our churches.
- 3) Interface with the BCM Director (Baptist Collegiate Ministry) on the SIU (Carbondale) Campus and seek ways that the NMBA can encourage their ministry.
- 4) Inform churches of other ministry opportunities including Lake Sallateeska Baptist Camp and Disaster Relief.
- 5) Coordinate and promote other mission trip opportunities as they become available.

TECHNOLOGY ADMINISTRATOR

The Technology Administrator will strive to oversee and promote our NMBA website to help keep the churches of the Association informed of coming events and ministry opportunities.

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- 1) Be responsible to recommend personnel to The Association to be hired and for dismissal and be responsible for the oversight of all Associational Personnel.
- 2) Prepare and present the annual proposed budget to The Association for approval.
- 3) Review expenditures at least quarterly in terms of budget allocations; recommend budget adjustments if needed.
- 4) Study and make recommendations concerning proposed expenditures not included in the budget.
- 5) Be charged with the responsibility of reviewing the associational Constitution and By-Laws annual and present any necessary changes to The Association from the team or those offered by members of the association.
- 6) Study each letter of application by a church for membership in The Association to determine:
 - A) If the applying church's statement of faith and practices agree with that of The Association as outlined in Article 5 of the Associational Constitution.
 - B) If the applying church agrees to cooperate with The Association, submit an annual church letter, contribute financially to the Association and send messengers to the Annual Meeting.
 - C) At the Annual Meeting make a recommendation to accept the applying churches which meet the requirements of membership.
 - D) Decline any application, which does not meet the requirements of membership, and give a full report as to church was denied a recommendation requirements why the applying of acceptance at the Annual Meeting. The committee shall also notify the applying church as to why was denied a recommendation of acceptance, and recommend steps of action, which the applying church needs to accomplish in order to be reconsidered for membership at a later data.