

Proposed Constitution & Bylaws of the New River Baptist Association

Article I- Name

The Association shall be known as the New River Baptist Association of Florida.

Article II- Purpose

It shall be the mission of the New River Baptist Association to prepare North Central Florida and beyond for God's coming Kingdom by focusing specifically on missions, ministry and church multiplication.

Article III - Membership

The New River Baptist Association consists of those churches which have been approved for membership, affirming both the purposes of the association and the "Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000.

Any Southern Baptist church that wishes to become a member of the Association may apply by writing a letter stating their desire to become affiliated with the New River Baptist Association. That letter shall be referred to an Administrative Committee and upon recommendation of the Administrative the church shall be admitted to membership by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of the Association. Any church seeking membership shall make application in writing not less than three (3) months before the next annual meeting of the Association.

Any member church that deviates from the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 shall be brought to the attention of the Associational Missionary. The Missionary, upon finding sufficient cause, shall appoint an adhoc committee to investigate the matter and bring a report to the Executive Board of the Association. The Executive Board shall then determine if a recommendation concerning removal of a church from membership in the Association should be presented at the next Annual Meeting. If so, that recommendation to remove a church from membership of the Association shall be a joint recommendation from the Missionary, the adhoc Committee, and the Executive Board. Removal of membership of a church found in violation must be approved by a two-thirds (2/3) vote of messengers present and voting at the annual meeting.

Article IV - Officers

A. The officers of the Association shall be a Moderator, a Vice-Moderator, an Associational Missionary, a Clerk, and a Treasurer.

B. These officers, except the Associational Missionary shall be elected by the Executive Board annually in its September meeting, with their term of office to begin on the first day of October of the year elected and conclude on the last day of April of the following year. The Moderator and Vice- Moderator shall serve for one year and can be nominated for one additional term. The Clerk and treasurer shall be elected for a two-year term and can be nominated for additional terms. The Associational Missionary, Moderator and the Moderator-Elect shall be ex-officio members of all teams and committees.

C. The Associational Missionary job description shall be developed by Administrative Team and approved by the Executive Board.

D. All officers, team and committee members (except as otherwise noted) shall be nominated by the Administrative Committee and elected by the Executive Board at the September meeting of the Association.

E. Any vacancy in office, excluding Associational Missionary, Administrative Assistant, and all employees, shall be filled by the Associational Executive Board, upon recommendation by the Administrative Team.

Article V – Executive Board

A. The Executive Board shall consist of the Pastor/Interim Pastor and two lay people for a total of three (3) persons from each member church for the first 500 resident members, with an additional person for each 500 additional resident members (limited to a total of 5 persons), the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, and Associational Missionary. The Board shall meet a minimum of four (4) times per year in September, January, April, and July.

B. Each church is to elect its members to the Executive Board of the Association and report that information to the Association Office. Members of the Executive Board serve at the discretion of the church they represent; therefore, a representative may be removed/ replaced at the discretion of the church they represent.

C. The Moderator and Clerk of the Association shall serve as chairman and secretary, respectively, of the Executive Board.

D. It shall be the duty of the Executive Board to carry forward the work of the Association as directed by the messengers between sessions and make reports to the Association. Additional Executive Board meetings may be called by the Moderator at his discretion with a minimum of ten (10) days' notice to members. A quorum shall consist of a minimum of one board member from six (6) churches of the Association and a minimum of one officer of the Association.

E. If neither the Moderator nor Vice- Moderator is present, the clerk shall preside over the meeting with the first order of business being to select from those present as acting moderator for that meeting only.

Article VI – Annual Meeting

A. The Association shall have an Annual Meeting. The Annual Meeting will be held on the Thursday after the third Sunday in September for the purpose of inspiration, receiving information and reports, and setting the Associational budget.

B. Messengers shall be elected by the churches of the Association to the Annual Meetings. Each church shall be entitled to four (4) messengers, with an additional messenger allowed for every fifty (50) members above the first fifty (50) or fraction thereof, with a maximum of ten (10) from any one church.

C. The Association, as an independent body, holds the right to refuse to recognize messengers from any church in the Association which abandons the articles, principles or purposes of the By-Laws. Any church, at their request, shall have the liberty of withdrawing messengers from the Association.

D. The Associational year shall begin on the first day of October and end on the last day of September of each year.

E. A quorum at the annual meeting shall consist of a minimum of thirty messengers representing at least ten churches in the Association.

F. In case of an emergency, the Executive Board may change the time or place of any Annual Meeting or may call a special meeting of the Association.

G. The deliberating of the body shall be governed by the latest printing of Robert's Rules of Order. Neither proxy nor absentee voting shall be allowed.

H. All motions passed by the body should be put in writing and submitted to the clerk before the close of the session.

Article VII – Administrative Team

The Administrative Team shall be composed of five elected members of the Executive Board and the Associational Missionary, Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Treasurer, and Clerk shall serve as nonvoting members.

The Administrative Team will coordinate the work of the Association, prepare the Annual Calendar, and make day-to-day decisions about the work of the Association designated to them within the parameters set forth by the Executive Board. The Administrative Team will determine the frequency of its meetings, but will be available to meet with the Associational Missionary at times when decisions must be made. When a vacancy occurs in the office of Associational Missionary or Administrative Assistant, a search team from the Association shall be nominated by the Administrative Team.

The Administrative Team shall also serve as the personnel committee responsible for writing and reviewing job descriptions, annually reviewing the staff and their needs, making recommendations to the Budget Committee regarding cost of living and/or merit pay increases for staff, hiring part time and

contract workers for the Association, and handling disputes that may arise among the staff, employees, and contract workers of the Association.

The Administrative Team shall serve as the nominating committee of the Association.

Article VIII - Teams/Committees; Size; Term; Responsibilities

A. The Great Commission Group shall consist of the team leader of each of the following teams:

1. Missions Mobilization Team (MMT) – The purpose of this team shall be to keep the Association aware of mission opportunities and mobilize churches to fulfill the Great Commission throughout North-central Florida, the state, the nation and the world.
2. Women’s Missionary Union Team (WMU) – The purpose of this team shall be to work with the state and national WMU organizations in providing mission education promoting mission opportunities for preschoolers, children, youth and adults within the churches of the Association and around the world.
3. Disaster Relief Team – This team shall enable the churches of the Association to partner with the Florida Baptist Convention in having opportunities to be part of a highly trained and well organized disaster relief effort prepared to respond to disasters when called upon by state and national leaders.

B. Ministry Group shall consist of the team leader of each of the following teams:

1. Discipleship Team – This team shall provide opportunities to disciple believers through Associational training events.
2. Youth Ministry Team – This team shall provide opportunities for youth to come together for fellowship, evangelistic emphasis and spiritual training.
3. Assist Team- This team shall provide opportunities for association churches to assist small and/or struggling congregations.

C. Association Support Group shall consist of the team leader of each of the following teams:

1. Church Secretaries’ Team- This team shall plan fellowships and training events for the ministry assistants in the churches of the Association.
2. Ministers’ Conference – The Minister’s Conference President shall be annually elected by the ministers’ conference participants and shall work to provide opportunities for fellowship and training among the ministers of the Association. He is responsible to appoint a speaker and location for the monthly Ministers’ Conference.
3. Budget Committee – This committee shall annually make recommendation for an Associational budget at the September meeting of the Executive Board and which must be approved at the annual meeting of the Association in October.

D. Adding or Deleting Teams/Committees

Teams/Committees may be added or deleted as necessary between annual meetings of the Association. Corresponding changes to the bylaws pertaining to the addition or deletion of teams/committees shall be brought to the Executive Board by the Administrative Team and then approved at the annual meeting.

E. Team Size, Term and Rotation

Teams shall be as small as one, but may not be larger than six members, except as otherwise noted, with one third of each team/committee rotating off annually. The size of the team shall be determined by the Administrative Team. All team and committee members shall begin duties on the first day of November of the year elected and end on the last day of October of the following year, except as otherwise noted.

F. Differentiation: Team vs. Committee

1. Team: Teams shall function as autonomous bodies acting as stewards of the purpose and finances which have been entrusted to them by the Executive Board, reporting as needed to demonstrate accountability.

2. Committee: Committees shall have no vested powers in and of themselves, other than to meet and make recommendations to the Administrative Team or the Executive Board of the Association.

G. The Associational Missionary shall call a meeting of all teams and committees on the second Tuesday of October each year. This meeting shall be used for training the teams and committees regarding the Association's mission statement, organizational structure, and each team/committee's responsibility, and for planning the calendar for the following year.

Article IX – Financial Support

The Association and its ministries and organizations shall operate on a unified budget. Each church shall be expected to contribute its proportionate share of the annual budget, to defray the expenses of the promotional, educational, and missionary activities of the Association. Contributions on a monthly basis are requested from the churches. The fiscal year shall be from the first day of January to the last day of December.

Article X – Annual Church Profile

The churches affiliated with the body shall furnish annually the information requested by the Annual Church Profile at the time specified by the Association.

Article XI – Legal Representatives

The Moderator and the Clerk shall sign all legal documents as directed by the Association of its Executive Board. They shall perform such other functions and duties as directed by the Association or its Executive Board.

Article XII – Amending By-Laws

These By-Laws may be amended by a vote of two-thirds (2/3) of the messengers present and voting at any Annual Meeting of the Association, provided the changes have been presented to the Executive Board in a regular or called meeting prior to the Annual Meeting.