

CONSTITUTION
NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION
NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST CONFERENCE
(updated October 2018)

ARTICLE I – NAME

The name of this Association shall be: The North Central Association of the North American Baptist Conference.¹

ARTICLE II – PURPOSE

The Association exists to provide member churches the opportunity to carry out the mission of our North American Baptist Conference “to glorify God by making disciples of Jesus Christ at home and internationally” by:

1. Resourcing our churches, lay leaders and pastors to be spiritually healthy in obeying the Great Commission (Matthew 28:18-20) and the Second Great Commandment (Matthew 22:39).
2. Promoting and facilitating leadership for and support of ministries within the Association and Conference.
3. Creating opportunities for fellowship and community where we can worship together through celebration, inspiration and mutual encouragement in obedience to the Great Commandment (Matthew 22:37).

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

The membership shall be composed of all organized and recognized North American Baptist Churches in the northern part of South Dakota, all of North Dakota and eastern Montana.

ARTICLE IV – REPRESENTATION

The representation shall consist of delegates of the Association member churches.

ARTICLE V – SESSIONS

The Association shall meet at least once a year.

¹ Hereafter referred to as “Association” and “Conference” in this Constitution and Bylaws.

ARTICLE VI – OFFICERS

The officers of the Association Executive Committee² shall be:

1. Moderator
2. Recording Secretary
3. Treasurer
4. Regional Leadership Team Representative
5. One to three At-Large Members

ARTICLE VII – CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

This constitution may be amended at the annual meeting of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the registered delegates, provided that a notice of the change is submitted to the Association churches sixty days before the annual meeting.

The churches are responsible to distribute it to their Association delegates.

² Hereafter referred to collectively as the “Executive.”

BYLAWS TO THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE
NORTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION
NORTH AMERICAN BAPTIST CONFERENCE

ARTICLE I – QUORUM AND VOTING PROCEDURES

A quorum shall consist of representatives of not less than one-half of the Association churches, with a minimum of fifty delegates voting. Decisions other than those which regard election of officers, purchase or sale of property, or constitutional change may, at the discretion of the Executive, be voted on by mail ballot with the same quorum stipulations as above.

ARTICLE II – RULES OF ORDER

The rules contained in Robert's Rules of Order shall govern the Association when applicable and consistent with the Bylaws of this Constitution.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP

- A. A Baptist church that wishes to unite with the Association shall make application in writing to the Recording Secretary, with written reports of its origin, development, organization and statement of faith. The Executive, acting as the Credentials Committee (Article VII), shall review the application and then make its recommendation to the Association. The application for membership shall be approved by a (simple) majority of the delegates present and voting.

The application for membership shall be presented by delegates from that church, if possible. Membership in the Association shall constitute membership in the Conference.

The ongoing membership of each church within the Association shall include representation by delegates at official Association meetings and contributions to the Association budget. The Executive shall communicate with all Association churches regardless of their level of participation in this area.

This is done to encourage representation at and contributions to the Association, and/or to help churches address their need of ongoing responsibility to the Association and its ministry.

- B. The Association shall have the right to withdraw the membership of a church charged with departing from Scriptural teachings and commonly accepted Baptist beliefs. Such action shall be taken only after all attempts at reconciliation have taken place. Following the recommendation of the Credentials Committee, a two-thirds majority vote of delegates present and voting shall be required for the withdrawal of the hand of fellowship.

ARTICLE IV – REPRESENTATION

- A. Each member church shall have five delegates for the first 200 members of the church and one additional delegate for each additional 100 members as specified below. Each church may also select an alternate for each delegate to serve in his or her absence. The delegates and their alternates from each church shall be active members of that church and shall include at least one member from each of the three following categories:
1. The senior pastor or pastoral designee. The pastoral designee may be:
 - An Associate Pastor
 - A lay leader when the pastor serves multiple churches.
 - A lay leader when the church is without a pastor.
 2. A member of the governing lay leadership board of that church.
 3. Members at large of that church.

In the event that a vote is required of the Association before the annual meeting, the Executive will send out a ballot to each member church. Each church will select its own delegates, according to the number of delegates granted (as specified above).

- B. North Central Association officers and the Regional Minister are to be recognized as ex-officio³ delegates and are considered to be in addition to all other delegates.

ARTICLE V – SESSIONS

The Executive shall determine the date and place of the annual Association meeting, taking into consideration invitations received. They shall bring their recommendation to the Association sessions for approval.

ARTICLE VI – TERM AND DUTIES FOR OFFICERS

- A. Duties of Officers:
1. The Moderator shall:
 - a. Preside at all sessions and conduct the business of the Association according to parliamentary procedure.
 - b. Appoint committees and other positions under Article VII of the Bylaws.
 - c. Chair the Executive.
 - d. Sit ex-officio on all committees.

³ Throughout this document an ex officio status does carry with it voting privileges.

2. The Recording Secretary shall:
 - a. Keep accurate minutes of all business transactions.
 - b. Submit minutes to the Executive for examination and approval.
 - c. Forward annual Association minutes to Association churches, Executive members and the Conference office within thirty days of their approval by the Executive.
 - d. Forward minutes of each Executive meeting to the Association member churches. Association churches are responsible to distribute all copies of minutes to their Association delegates.
 - e. Write such letters as the Executive or the Association may designate.
 - f. Tally any mail ballots.
3. The Treasurer shall:
 - a. Oversee all financial records.
 - b. Make an annual financial report to the association.
 - c. Oversee the payment of bills and transfer of funds as directed by the Association and/or the Executive.
 - d. Receive the offerings taken during the Association sessions and oversee reimbursement to the host facility for its expenses as itemized in writing.
 - e. Arrange for annual financial review of Association financial records.
4. The Regional Leadership Team Representative shall be a member of the Regional Leadership Team.
5. At least one and no more than three At-Large Members will participate in all Executive meetings and serve as determined by the Executive.
6. All tasks and responsibilities not otherwise delegated in these bylaws will be performed by the Executive.

B. Terms of Office

1. The Moderator, Recording Secretary, and Treasurer shall be elected for a two-year term and may serve unlimited consecutive terms.
2. The Regional Leadership Team Representative and each At-Large Member shall be elected for a three-year term and may serve unlimited consecutive terms.

ARTICLE VII – COMMITTEES AND OTHER APPOINTMENTS

A. The Executive shall:

1. Consist of:
 - a. The Association officers as voting members.
 - b. The Regional Minister, select representatives of committees appointed by the moderator, and select individuals fulfilling positions appointed by the moderator as non-voting members.
2. Develop and promote all Association objectives as well as coordinate Association ministries and church planting advances.
3. Plan the Association annual meeting.
4. Prepare the annual budget for the coming year and present it to the Association for approval.
5. Inform all churches of the needs and goals of the Association and encourage the churches to accept their share of the financial responsibility.
6. Act on behalf of the Association in the interim between annual sessions.
7. Examine the minutes after each annual Association business meeting and include its findings in the minutes sent out to the churches.
8. Communicate following each Executive meeting and at other times it deems necessary with Association churches who will distribute such communication to their Association delegates.

B. The Credentials Committee shall:

1. Be composed of the Executive and up to two appointed individuals as deemed necessary who will be appointed by the Executive.
2. In cooperation with the Regional Minister:
 - a. Give guidelines to local churches regarding the ordination and credentialing of pastors.
 - b. Be available for contact by the ordaining church and the candidate prior to the calling of a council of Ordination.
 - c. Give guidance to the church and candidate in matters of ordination and credentialing. They are to review the candidate's credentials privately. If the candidate meets the requirements, the Committee shall aid the church and candidate in calling the Council and proceeding with the Ordination. If there are deficiencies, the Committee will privately inform the church and the candidate, and will make remedial suggestions.
 - d. Instruct the church to proceed with Ordination and Credentialing as follows:
 - i. The ordaining church is to contact the Credentials Committee, before any date is set for calling the Council of Ordination, which will meet to review the candidate's credentials in the following areas:
 1. Christian experience
 2. Call to the ministry
 3. Moral character

4. Doctrinal statement
5. Academic preparation
6. Relationship to the Association and Conference
- e. Provide a report of the Committee's findings, actions and recommendations to the church, candidate and Council in writing.
- f. Aid the church in calling the Council and in preparing for the ordination service. (See NAB Credentialing Guidelines at nabconference.org, pp. 6-7).
- g. Act regarding the recognition of the ordination of pastors ordained in non-Conference churches. The procedure and purpose for recognition are the same as outlined above.

C. Committees and Positions Appointed by the Moderator

1. Special committees may be established or dissolved and members appointed by the Moderator as deemed necessary by the Executive and shall report to the Executive. Such committees will have a purpose statement, a named chairperson, and submit an annual report to the Association meeting.
2. The Statistical Secretary shall:
 - a. Keep all the statistical records of all Association churches.
 - b. Make an annual report to the Association.
3. The Nominating Committee shall:
 - a. Consist of two members of which the Moderator is the chairperson.
 - b. Prepare the ballot for the election, having received consent from all nominees presented. If possible there should be at least two nominees for each office.
 - c. Serve as head tellers for the election; be responsible to distribute, collect and count the ballots; and present the reports of the election to the Moderator as quickly as possible. Additional tellers may be appointed by the Moderator to assist this committee at the business session of the annual Association meeting.
4. The Parliamentarian shall:
 - a. Be appointed by the Moderator prior to the annual Association meeting.
 - b. Be prepared to make rulings on parliamentary procedures as requested by the Moderator.
5. The Constitution Change Committee shall:
 - a. Consist of three members appointed by the Moderator, one of which the moderator shall appoint as chairperson.
 - b. Submit all recommended constitution changes to the association churches sixty days before the annual meeting. The churches are responsible to distribute the recommended changes to their Association delegates.

ARTICLE VIII – REGIONAL MINISTRIES

- A. The Regional Minister shall be charged with facilitating and promoting church health within the Northern Plains Region. His focus is to be specifically upon pastors, their families and church and Association leaders.
- B. Regional Leadership Team shall:
1. Be established with a minimum of two members from each association of the Northern Plains Region (Manitoba and North Central). Team members from the North Central Association will include the Regional Leadership Team Representative and at least one additional member appointed by the Association Executive.
 2. Conduct a search to determine candidates for the position of Regional Minister and, upon approval of the Executive, hire the Regional Minister.
 3. Join with those appointed by the other association(s) of the region to guide the activities of the Regional Minister and provide accountability for him, while partnering with him in specific projects as needed.
 4. Make regular reports to and make requests of the Executive.
 5. Conduct an annual Regional Minister Job review, providing a report to the Executive of each association. The Regional Minister Job Description is to be reviewed regularly. Changes in the job description are to be recommended by the Regional Leadership Team and approved by the Executive.
 6. Annually submit a recommendation to be approved by each cooperating Association for the salary and ministry expenses of the Regional Minister.
 7. Oversee employment of the Regional Minister, including recommending termination, if necessary, upon approval by the Executive.

ARTICLE IX – BUSINESS PROCEDURES

- A. A simple majority vote is required for election to office and passage of all motions unless otherwise stated in the Constitution or By-laws.
- B. Budgeting and Other Business items

Association business agenda items and a proposed budget shall be distributed to all NCA churches no later than sixty days before the annual Association meeting. Each church is responsible to distribute a copy of these materials to each of its delegates. The churches shall review agenda items and the proposed budget and inform their delegates of their opinions.

The delegates shall vote accordingly at the annual Association meeting.

ARTICLE X – VACANCIES

The Executive shall be empowered to fill the unexpired term of any officer or committee member. In the case of a vacancy in the position of Association officers, such appointment shall only be until the next meeting of the Association at which time an election shall be held to fill the vacancy.

ARTICLE XI – EXPENSES

- A. All Association operating expenses are to be paid by the Association.
- B. All officers, representatives and committee members shall be reimbursed for expenses related to planning and conducting Association business. Travel allowance shall be paid at the rate established by the Conference.

ARTICLE XII – ELEGIBILITY

To be eligible for election or appointment to an office, an individual must be a member of an Association church and have attended at least one annual Association meeting.

ARTICLE XIII – EXHIBITS

All promotional exhibits and material displays must be approved by the Executive.