

Blue Water Association of Southern Baptist Churches

Constitution and Bylaws

(Adopted – October 9, 2011)

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I - NAME AND PURPOSE

Section 1 - The name of this association shall be the Macomb County Baptist Association doing business as the Blue Water Association of Southern Baptist Churches. All references to the above association will be Blue Water Association of Southern Baptist Churches, or Blue Water Association in short.

Section 2 – Blue Water Association exists to assist its churches in fulfilling the Great Commission.

Section 3 - This association shall carry out this purpose through:

- A. Assisting local churches in beginning new works.
- B. Supporting the work of its local churches.
- C. Promoting fellowship among its churches.
- D. Encouraging cooperative ministries.

ARTICLE II - RELATIONSHIPS

Section 1 - This association shall exercise no ecclesiastical authority over the churches.

Section 2 - This association may provide counsel to member churches upon their request.

Section 3 - The doctrinal guidelines for this association shall be "The Baptist Faith and Message". Churches affiliating with this association shall be in agreement with this statement of faith.

Section 4 - This association shall cooperate with the Baptist State Convention of Michigan and the Southern Baptist Convention.

ARTICLE III - MEMBERSHIP

Section 1 - This association shall be composed of its member churches and shall be governed by elected messengers from the member churches.

Section 2 - Each member church shall be entitled to elect eight (8) messengers and one (1) additional messenger for every fifty (50) resident members or the major fraction thereof above fifty (50), with no church having more than fifteen (15) messengers. Those churches serving as primary sponsor of a mission or chapel within the physical boundaries of the association will be authorized one (1) additional messenger from the sponsored work. Whether elected as messengers or not, all members of participating churches are encouraged to attend meetings of the association.

Section 3 – The messengers shall be seated only after the Annual Church Profile has been presented to the Associational Clerk, no later than fifteen (15) days prior to the annual meeting.

Section 4 - Only elected messengers in attendance at meetings of the association may vote.

Section 5 - Member churches of the association shall be Baptist churches by identification, by faith, and by practice which are willing to cooperate with the purpose of the association. This cooperation shall include, but is not limited to, the submission of an annual report and the contributing of financial support through the association's unified budget. A church which fails to submit an annual report and make financial contribution to the association for two consecutive years may, after due investigation, be considered to have withdrawn from the association by the Executive Leadership Team. The church shall be notified by the Executive Leadership Team prior to such an action.

Section 6 - Churches desiring to enter into fellowship with this association may petition the Executive Leadership Team. The Executive Leadership Team may form a committee of three (3) to investigate and present a recommendation at a semiannual meeting of the association. A two-thirds majority vote of the messengers shall be necessary for a church to be approved.

Section 7 - The association shall have authority to withdraw fellowship from any church which departs from the faith and practices of our Baptist fellowship. A two-thirds majority vote of the messengers shall be necessary for a church to be dropped from the fellowship. Questions concerning fellowship with the churches shall be considered by the Executive Leadership Team before being brought to the association. The Executive Leadership Team may form a committee of three (3) to investigate and report back to the Executive Leadership Team.

ARTICLE IV - AMENDMENTS

Section 1 - Any article of this Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds majority vote of the messengers present at a semiannual meeting of the association. The recommended amendment(s) must be presented in writing at the preceding semiannual meeting and a copy mailed to the association's member churches at least 45 days prior to the meeting in which it shall be voted upon.

BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1 - GENERAL

1. The parliamentary authority of this association shall be the latest edition of "Robert's Rules of Order".
2. The association shall begin its calendar year and fiscal year in January.
3. An association manual shall be maintained in the BWA office which will include: copy of constitution and bylaws, employee job descriptions, a personnel manual, job descriptions and/or covenants of those receiving financial aid from the BWA, job descriptions for members of each ministry team, an organizational chart depicting the organizational structure of the association, and other documents relevant to the ministry and work of the BWA.

ARTICLE 2 - MEETINGS

1. The association shall meet semiannually, in April (ministry team and staff reports and election of officers, trustees and ministry teams), and in October (annual reports, approval of budget and calendar). Other business may be conducted at the semiannual meetings as needed. The association shall meet at such time and place as it may designate.
2. A quorum shall be twenty messengers from a minimum of eight (8) churches.

ARTICLE 3 - OFFICERS

1. The messengers shall elect, at the April semiannual meeting the four (4) general officers: moderator, vice-moderator, clerk and treasurer. The moderator and vice-moderator shall be nominated by messengers from the floor with the nominee having been contacted prior to nomination and present at the meeting. The clerk and treasurer shall be nominated by the Administrative Ministry Team.
2. The newly elected general officers shall take office on September 1 of the same year.
3. The moderator may serve two consecutive elected terms and is eligible to be elected again after remaining out of office for a period of one year. Other elected officers may succeed themselves.
4. The moderator shall be the leader of the Administrative Ministry Team and ex-officio member of the other ministry teams. The Director of Missions shall be ex-officio member of all ministry teams.
5. In the event the office of moderator is vacated, the vice-moderator shall become the moderator for the duration of the moderator's term, and the Administrative Ministry Team shall recommend a vice-moderator to the Associational Council or a meeting of the association at a semiannual meeting.

ARTICLE 4 - TRUSTEES

1. The association shall have three (3) trustees. Each trustee will serve three (3) years, with terms rotating so that the term of one will expire each year. New trustees shall be elected at the April semiannual meeting. No two (2) trustees shall come from any one (1) church.
2. The trustee serving in the third year of his/her term shall act as chairman. This trustee shall also serve on the Administrative Ministry Team.
3. The trustees shall have the full power and authority to transact the legal business of the association.
4. All action to be taken by the trustees shall be ordered and approved by the association or its Executive Leadership Team.

ARTICLE 5 - EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP TEAM

1. The association shall have an Executive Leadership Team composed of the pastors of its churches and the associational council. The moderator shall serve as chairman of the Executive Leadership Team and the Director of Missions shall serve as exofficio member.
2. The Executive Leadership Team shall have charge of all interest and work of the association during the interim between meetings of the association and shall have all power of the association, except as limited by the constitution and bylaws and by any specific action taken by the association in session. The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be fifteen (15) members representing at least seven (7) churches.
3. The Executive Leadership Team may schedule its own meetings as need arises during the interim between semiannual meetings of the association.
4. The Director of Missions and/or moderator may call a special meeting of the Executive Leadership Team with sufficient advance written notice to the membership of the Team, stating the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.

5. The Executive Leadership Team may vote to change the time and/or place of the semiannual meetings or to call for additional meetings of the association with sufficient advance written notice to the membership, stating the time, place, and purpose of the meeting.
6. In the event that the Director of Mission's office is vacated, the Executive Leadership Team shall appoint a search committee to be presented for approval at the next scheduled semiannual meeting or a special called meeting of the association, with sufficient advance written notice to the membership, stating the time, place, and purpose of the meeting

ARTICLE 6 – RESIGNATION AND CALLING OF DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS

1. In the event that the Director of Missions' office is vacated, the association in a regular semiannual meeting or a called meeting of the Executive Leadership Team shall elect a DOM Search Committee composed of a chairman and four (4) members. The moderator and vice-moderator shall serve as ex-officio members. The Administrative Ministry Team shall present a list of names for consideration to compose the DOM Search Committee.
2. The search for and employment of a new Director of Missions shall be guided by the "Blue Water Association of Southern Baptist Churches Personnel Handbook", "Principles and Practices Manual of the Baptist State Convention of Michigan", and the document "Basis for Working Agreement Between Association(s) and The Baptist State Convention of Michigan", and any other documents approved by the BWA, BSCM, and NAMB. The Director of Missions shall be jointly employed by the Baptist State Convention of Michigan, the Blue Water Association of Southern Baptist Churches and the North American Mission Board, SBC.
3. The association in a regular semiannual meeting of the association or a called meeting of the Executive Leadership Team shall elect an Interim Director of Missions. The Administrative Ministry Team shall bring a recommendation for consideration as the Interim DOM. Approval can be given to all financial compensation, and reimbursement for expenses related to the work as Interim Director of Missions, such as: travel, convention/conferences, hospitality, etc.

ARTICLE 7 - ASSOCIATIONAL COUNCIL

1. The association shall have a council composed of the general officers of the association and the members of each ministry team. Other associational leaders may attend as needed.
2. The Director of Missions shall serve as chairperson of this council. In the absence of the Director of Missions, the moderator will serve as chairperson.
3. The purpose of this council is to coordinate the overall program of the association and prepare a calendar of events for adoption by the association.

ARTICLE 8 – MINISTRY TEAMS

The association shall be organized into four (4) ministry teams in keeping with the stated purpose of the association (Constitution, Article 1, Section 3). The Director of Missions and the moderator shall serve as exofficio members of the ministry teams. Other members may be added to ministry teams as needed by the associational council.

1. Administrative Ministry Team - Composed of the moderator, vice-moderator, clerk, treasurer, chairman of trustees, personnel leader, Church Strengthening Ministry Team leader, Church Planting Ministry Team leader, and Fellowship Ministry Team leader. The moderator will conduct meetings of this team, except when dealing with the following:
 - a. Budget - When preparing the proposed budget for the Association, the treasurer will conduct meetings of the Administrative Ministry Team.
 - b. Personnel / Nominating – When dealing with personnel/nominating issues, including annual evaluations, the Personnel leader will conduct meetings of the Administrative Ministry Team.
 - c. The Administrative Ministry Team shall prepare a proposed budget and calendar for the following year to be presented and voted on at the October meeting. The Administrative Ministry Team shall nominate the clerk, treasurer, and any additional Council members at the April meeting. The Administrative Ministry Team shall fill any vacancies which occur during the year with the approval of the Associational Council or the Association at a semiannual meeting.
2. Church Strengthening Ministry Team - Composed of Church Strengthening Team leader, and at least four (4) other members. The Church Strengthening Ministry Team will resource churches in the areas of evangelism, Bible study, senior adults ministries, discipleship, music/worship, youth/singles ministries, preschool/children ministries, and other areas related to church growth.
3. Church Planting Ministry Team - Composed of the Church Planting Ministry Team leader and at least four (4) other members. The Church Planting Ministry Team is to resource the churches in planting new anglo or ethnic churches. They also are responsible for seeking, evaluating and coordinating church planters.
4. Fellowship Ministry Team - Composed of the Fellowship Ministry Team leader and at least four (4) other members. The Fellowship Ministry Team is to resource the churches in providing opportunities for fellowship among churches, fellowship/ministries to pastors/staff and spouses and other areas related to fellowship.

ARTICLE 9 - AMENDMENTS

The bylaws of this association may be amended by a majority vote of the messengers during any semiannual meeting provided the proposed amendment(s) were presented at the previous semiannual meeting.