

Constitution for Associations

ARTICLE I - NAME

The Associations of the American Baptist Churches of Vermont and New Hampshire will be known by the name selected by the Association with the approval of the ABC/VNH Board of Trustees.

ARTICLE II - OBJECT

The object of this Association shall be to foster a fraternal spirit among the churches, to advance denominational enterprises in the Region, the nation and the world and to affiliate with and promote the work of the American Baptist churches of the Region.

ARTICLE III - MEETINGS

This Association shall hold an annual meeting in the fall and may hold meetings at such other times as may be decided upon.

ARTICLE IV - OFFICERS

At each annual meeting there shall be elected a Moderator, Vice-moderator, Clerk and Treasurer, and two others, who together with the officers named, shall constitute an Executive Committee. The Committee shall have charge of any permanent funds the Association may hold, unless special trustees are appointed to have charge of such funds, and may transact any necessary business when the Association is not in session. All officers shall be elected by a majority of votes. The officers elected shall serve until their successors are chosen.

ARTICLE V - REPRESENTATION

Every church in the Association may have its Pastor(s) and all others attending for the church as voting delegates. If requested, every church shall send to the annual meeting of the Association, a letter giving an account of its condition, together with statistics of its membership on the blank provided for this purpose. In matters of import, the Moderator or the delegates may call for a Permanent Council vote, in which each church shall have three (3) votes - the Pastor and two members of its delegation. Dues of \$10.00 will be annually assessed from each Association church.

ARTICLE VI - ADMISSION AND WITHDRAWAL

A church desiring to become connected with the Association shall present its application, by letter, at the annual meeting, giving evidence that its faith and order are in accord with the practice of the denomination. The matter then shall be referred to a committee of three, appointed by the Moderator, and upon their report, the Association shall take final action.

Any church may withdraw its connection with this Association by giving notice at any annual meeting.

While this Association disclaims authority over any church, it assumes the right to drop churches from its membership, if for three successive years the church is not represented at the annual meeting of the Association or in case a church becomes irregular in faith and practice.

ARTICLE VII - AMENDMENTS

Any Association may propose an amendment to this Constitution and send its proposal to the other Associations; and when the amendment shall have been approved by a majority vote in each of two-thirds of the Associations, it shall be a part of the Constitution.

Standing Rules

1. The annual meeting of the Association shall be called to order by the Moderator or in his/her absence, by the Vice-Moderator, or in his/her absence by the Clerk or senior pastor present.
2. The first business in order after a devotional service shall be the appointment, by the Moderator, of committees, as needed.
3. The newly elected Moderator shall take office at the close of the last service for the day, or earlier in the day if necessary, and shall at that time, name his/her committees for the coming year. The Nominating Committee shall meet at least thirty (30) days prior to the next annual meeting to prepare a slate of officers for the ensuing year.
4. The Program Committee of the annual meeting shall consist of the Executive Committee, an ABC/VNH Staff Person, and the pastor of the church where the meeting is to be held.
5. The Call of the Roll of Churches, taken by the Clerk, shall record the number of pastors and delegates present from each member church, and the number of guest and visitors present at the meeting.

ARTICLE VIII - ORDINATION COUNCIL

Section A: The local church is recognized as the Ordaining Body; however, for national and regional recognition these Articles must be followed. No candidate shall be considered by an Ordination Council until he/she has been examined by the Region Department Professional of Ministry. The scheduling of the ordination council should not be made until after successful completion of the requirements of the Region Department of Professional Ministry. The Standards of Ordination shall not be below those recommended by the Commission on the Ministry of the American Baptist Churches USA.

Section B: An Ordination Preparation Committee of three to seven ordained clergy and laity will be elected at the Annual Meeting. This committee will provide sponsorship and mentoring support to candidates during their preparation. The Ordination Preparation Committee will also supervise and support the candidates as they prepare an ordination paper in satisfaction of the requirements established or recognized by the Department of Professional Ministry of the American Baptist Churches of Vermont and New Hampshire.

Section C: Constitution

1. The Ordination Council shall be known by the name of its Association.
2. The Officers of the Ordination Council shall be the Officers of the Association.
3. The membership of the Ordination Council shall consist of the Officers of the Association elected at the Annual Meeting of the Association, and the Pastor and two delegates from each church in the Association.
4. Representatives of one-third of the churches in the Association shall constitute a quorum. This means 1/3 of the Pastors, 1/3 of the officers and 1/3 of the delegates, and a representative from the Regional Staff.
5. Expenses of the Council shall be met by the treasury of the Association.

Section D: The ordination of the examined candidate may be held at any time as directed by the church calling for such ordination, but only subsequent to the date of the examination of the candidate. In no case shall the Service of Ordination be held on the same day of the Council's examination. Service of Ordination should not be scheduled until after successful examination by the ordination council.

Section E: The Ordination Service may be arranged by the candidate assisted by the Moderator or Clerk and the pastor of the ordaining church. The Moderator may preside at the service. The Clerk shall be requested to read the records of the Council's Examining Session at the Ordination Service.

Section F: Certificates of Ordination shall be issued by the Region Minister, at the expense of the Association.

ARTICLE IX - PERMANENT COUNCIL

Section A: Declaration

The Permanent Council of the churches of the ABC/VNH Association purposes to bring these churches into a closer affiliation and co-operation, without any encroachment upon the independence of any church or interference with the rights of self-government. Its functions are those usually discharged by Councils, to consider and act upon any matter referred to it by the member churches. It has power to examine and advise, but no power to legislate, to adjudicate or to enforce its conclusions except by the weight that its opinion may carry.

Section B: Constitution

1. The Permanent Council shall be known by the name of its Association.
2. The officers of the Permanent Council shall be the officers of the Association. The membership of the Permanent Council shall consist of the officers of the Association, elected at the annual meeting of the Association, and the pastor and two delegates from each church in the Association.
3. Meetings of the Permanent Council shall be held at the call of the Moderator or Clerk, or upon written request of any church in the Association.
4. Representatives of one-third of the churches in the Association shall constitute a quorum.
5. Expenses of the Council shall be met by the treasury of the Association.

Section C: By-laws

1. The Moderator shall preside at all meetings of the Council.
2. The Vice-moderator, in the absence of the Moderator, shall perform the duties of the Moderator.
3. The Clerk, in a book provided by the Association, shall keep a detailed record of all correspondence and proceedings of the Council; shall give copies of the minutes of each Ordination to the candidate, to the local church and to the Region office, and shall perform such other duties as usually pertain to the duties of clerk or secretary. He/She shall report at the annual meeting of the Association.

ARTICLE X - ORDER OF MEETINGS

Section A: Order of Business for a General Meeting

1. Prayer
2. Call of the Roll of Churches
3. Reading of the Minutes
4. Report of the Clerk
5. Report of the Treasurer (and auditor)
6. Greetings from the President of ABC/VNH
7. ABC/VNH Staff
8. Report of Committees (including the Nominating Committee)
9. Unfinished Business
10. New Business
11. Installation of Officers
12. Program - Missionary or Inspirational
13. Adjournment

Section B: Order of Business for an Ordination Council

1. Prayer
2. Call of the Roll of Churches
3. Recognition of persons invited to sit with the Council
4. Unfinished Business
5. Reading of the Call of the Meeting of the Ordination Council

6. Report of the Region Department of Ministry
7. Examination of the Candidate
 - a. His/Her Christian experience
 - b. His/Her Call to the Ministry
 - c. His/Her Qualifications and Preparation for the Ministry
 - d. His/Her Views of Christian Faith
 - e. His/Her Practical Aim and Purpose in Evangelism and Missions, Christian Education and Civic service
8. The Council in Executive Session shall recommend to the local church the advisability or inadvisability of proceeding with the Ordination of the candidate.
9. Report of the Executive Session to the candidate or the church concerned.
10. Adjournment

Section C: Order of Business for Called Council Meeting

1. Prayer
2. Call of the Roll of Churches
3. Purpose of the Called Council meeting
4. Adjournment

ASSOCIATIONS BY AREA

Eastern Area is comprised of churches in

Southeast Association
Southern Association
Lakes Association

Northern Area is comprised of churches in

Northwest Association
Green and White Mountain Association

Western Area is comprised of churches in

Southwest Association
Monadnock Association
Central Association

COMPILATION OF CHURCHES BY ASSOCIATION

Central Association

Bradford First Baptist Church
Claremont Grace River Church
Cornish United Church
Danbury United Church
East Washington Baptist Church
Goshen Community Church
Hanover First Baptist Church
Hanover Trinity Baptist Church
Lebanon First Baptist Church
Lyme First Baptist Church

New London First Baptist Church
Newport First Baptist Church
Plainfield Community Baptist Church
Randolph United Church
Strafford, VT, United Church
Sutton, NH, First Freewill Baptist Church
Tunbridge Baptist Church
Warner United Church
Wilmot Flat Baptist Church

Green & White Mountain Association

Berlin First Baptist Church
Campton Baptist Church
Campton New Life Church of the White Mtns.
Franconia United Church
Loon Area Christian Ministry
North Danville Baptist Church
North Stratford First Baptist Church

Passumpsic Community Baptist Church
Sheffield Federated Church
Sutton, VT, Freewill Baptist Church
West Charleston Freewill Baptist Church
Whitefield Community Baptist Church
Woodstock Pemi Valley Church

Lakes Association

Alton Community Church
Ashland First Freewill Baptist Church
Belmont First Baptist Church
Bristol, NH, Baptist Church
Canterbury United Community Church
Chocorua Community Church
Ctr. Sandwich Federated Church
Franklin Baptist Church
Gilford Community Church
Gilmanton Community Church
Holderness Community Church
Lakeport United Baptist Church

Lochmere Free Baptist Church
Loudon Center Freewill Baptist Church
Madison Baptist Church
Melvin Village Community Church
Meredith Center Free Baptist Church
Milton Community Church
New Hampton Community Church
Sanbornton First Baptist Church
Sanbornton Second Baptist Church
Water Village Community Church
Wolfeboro Falls First Baptist Church

Monadnock Association

Acworth United Church
Antrim Baptist Church
Harrisville/Chesham Community Church

Keene First Baptist Church
Lyndeborough United Church
West Swanzey Community Church

Northwest Association

Addison Community Baptist Church
Barre First Baptist Church
Bristol, VT, First Baptist Church
Burlington First Baptist Church
Burlington New Alpha Missionary Baptist Church

Colchester United Church
Enosburg Falls New Life Christian Church
Fairfax United Church
Georgia Plain Baptist Church
Hardwick United Church

Hinesburg United Church
Huntington United Baptist Church
Lincoln United Church
Middlebury Memorial Baptist Church
Middlesex Shady Rill Baptist Church
Montgomery Center Community Baptist Church

Montpelier First Baptist Church
Richford First Baptist Church
Saint Albans First Baptist Church
Starksboro First Baptist Church
Westford United Church

Southeast Association

Brentwood First Baptist Church
Candia First Baptist Church
Ctr. Strafford Third Baptist Church
Danville Baptist Church
East Hampstead Union Church
Exeter First Baptist Church
Hampton Falls First Baptist Church
Hampton First Baptist Church
Newmarket Community Church
Newton First Baptist Church

Newton Junction Baptist Church
Northwood First Baptist Church
Plaistow First Baptist Church
Portsmouth Middle Street Baptist Church
Portsmouth New Hope Baptist Church
Seabrook Trinity United Church
South Hampton Baptist Church
Strafford Bow Lake Baptist Church
Strafford Second Baptist Church

Southern Association

Bow Crossroads Community Church
Chester, NH, Congregational-Baptist Church
Concord United Baptist Church
Derry First Baptist Church
Goffstown Christian Fellowship
Hudson First Baptist Church
Manchester French Speaking Baptist Church
Manchester First Baptist Church

Manchester Primera Iglesia Bautista Hispana
Milford Bridge Community Church
Nashua Comunidade Batista dos Milagres
Nashua First Baptist Church
Nashua First Spanish American Baptist Church
Nashua New Fellowship Baptist Church
Penacook United Church
Salem Centerpoint Community Church

Southwest Association

Bellows Falls First Baptist Church
Bennington First Baptist Church
Brattleboro First Baptist Church
Cavendish Baptist Church
Chester, VT, First Baptist Church
Fair Haven First Baptist Church
Grafton Church
Jamaica Community Church
Manchester Center First Baptist Church
Mt. Holly Village Baptist Church
North Bennington Baptist Church
North Springfield Baptist Church

Poultney United Baptist Church
Readsboro First Baptist Church
Rutland First Baptist Church
Saxtons River Christ's Church
South Londonderry First Baptist Church
South Newfane Church
Springfield Calvary Baptist Church
Townshend Church
Vernon Union Church
Wardsboro Yoked Parish
Whitingham Community Church
Wilmington Baptist Church