

CONSTITUTION FOR THE RALEIGH BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

ARTICLE I - NAME

This body, a non-profit corporation under the laws of the state of North Carolina, shall be known as the Raleigh Baptist Association.

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE, MISSIONAL STATEMENTS AND CORE VALUES

Section A. PURPOSE:

The Raleigh Baptist Association is a fellowship of congregations committed to joining God where He is at work in our world through the intentional pursuit of a future for every church and a church for every person.

Section B. MISSIONAL STATEMENTS:

1. To assist churches in discovering mission opportunities and partnership possibilities.
2. To provide networks through which churches may offer mutual support and encouragement.
3. To encourage the building of relationships which will strengthen the bonds of fellowship among our churches.
4. To equip church leaders to fulfill the ministry to which God has called them.
5. To identify for churches the resources available for accomplishing their Great Commission vision.
6. To challenge churches to reach the unchurched.

Section C. CORE VALUES

Revelation, people, diversity, cooperation, excellence, innovation, and results ... these are the core values of the RBA. Each value is rooted in our commitment to the Lord Jesus Christ, and comes from our understanding of Scripture.

We value revelation! Our aggressive pursuit of the movement of God in Wake County is rooted in His initiative. He reveals His activity to us and we desire to join God where He is at work. We do not embrace just any plan, but we give ourselves fully to the plans revealed by Him through His Word. (John 5:17, 19-20)

We value people! We accept people as they are. We approach them first and primarily on the basis of their needs not ours. It is our belief that the most significant need of any person is a personal relationship with Jesus Christ. A high level of initiative is taken to establish relationships with other pastors and church leaders. Grace abounds (II Corinthians 5:16-20, Galatians 6:2-5, Philippians 2:1-4)

We value diversity! We see our differences as opportunities to experience God more fully. Our goal in all things is to experience unity in diversity through Christ. We seek to understand cultural differences and plan our cooperative work on the basis of that understanding. We seek to create a genuinely inclusive, multiethnic association. We value differences in perspective that might be brought through differences in gender and generational views as well as liturgical and worship preferences. (Acts 10:34-35, I Corinthians 12:12, Ephesians 4:4-13)

We value cooperation! We consciously choose to join our hearts, our imaginations and our resources to accomplish the shared challenge of reaching the greater Wake County area for Christ. We are intentional in our efforts to build trust through networking. We believe we can and must learn from one another under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. (Acts 11:22-30)

We value excellence! We set high standards in everything we do. We make our standards explicit so we can evaluate our progress. We regularly re-evaluate the standards themselves. We make covenants of accountability - with God and with one another because, in order to consistently meet high standards, we need encouragement, support, and challenge from those around us. (Philippians 4:8-9, I Corinthians 10:31)

We value innovation! We live in a constantly changing, complex environment which presents new challenges for congregations in this rapidly growing metropolitan area. We believe we must be ever alert to the movement of God. As He moves, we must make adjustments needed to join Him. Therefore, we seek to create an environment where creative thinking and continuous learning are possible. The stability needed to face our challenges is found in our relationship to Jesus Christ rather than in familiarity with a particular method or approach. Risk-taking is encouraged. (Isaiah 43:18-19, Matthew 9:16-17)

We value results! We are called to the highest life through stewardship. The Lord has specific results He wants to produce in and through us. Therefore, continually clarifying the desired end results of our efforts are good stewardship. Intentionality characterizes our work and we are willing to be accountable to one another. We distinguish between the means and the end, and we seek out and use the most effective means for achieving our desired end results. (Luke 19:11-27, John 15:5)

Revelation, people, diversity, cooperation, excellence, innovation, and results ... these are the core values of the RBA. They serve to guide and inform our cooperative work in Wake County as we link the Great Commission to church mission for kingdom growth.

ARTICLE III – MEMBERSHIP and MESSENGERS

Section A. The Association shall be composed of cooperating Baptist churches in the area served by this Association. Member churches shall maintain scriptural integrity and doctrinal positions and practices consistent with one of the Baptist Faith and Messages.

Section B. A cooperating church shall be one that supports the ministry and mission of the Association through annual financial gifts and by completing the Annual Congregation Profile.

- a. A cooperating church will demonstrate financial support by contributing at least one percent (1) of undesignated gifts to the Raleigh Baptist Association and thereby be entitled to ten (10) messengers at any meeting of the Association. Churches that contribute less than one (1) percent annually would be entitled to five (5) messengers. If a church does not support the Association financially, messengers will not be seated for sessions in which business is transacted.
- b. A cooperating church will demonstrate support of the Association by completing the Annual Congregation Profile by October 1 of each year. If the church fails to complete the Annual Congregation Profile messengers will not be seated for sessions in which business is transacted the following year.

Section C. Any church or mission applying for membership in the Association shall be received under watchcare for a period of time sufficient to prove, through practice and attitude, its place as a cooperating Baptist church. A church, upon organization, may apply for membership through the Church Relations and Credentials Committee of the Association.

Section D. The Association shall have full right to withdraw fellowship from any church whose course of conduct is uncooperative or inconsistent with the mission of the Association. The Church Relations and Credentials Committee must initiate this process.

Section E. Any church may withdraw from the Association at its pleasure. Intent to withdraw should be communicated by letter to the Church Relations and Credentials Committee.

ARTICLE IV - MEETINGS

Section A. The Association shall convene twice annually. The meetings shall occur on the last Tuesday in October and on the last Tuesday of April.

Section B. Each church is encouraged to select heads of church organizations as part of its messenger complement. All pastors of churches in the Association shall be recognized as messengers in addition to those specified in Article III.

Section C. The Association shall have no power to infringe on any of the internal rights of the churches; it may advise with the member churches and recommend measures of usefulness for their adoption.

Section D. In case of emergency, the Missions and Ministry Council is empowered to change the time or place of meeting or call a special meeting of the Association upon reasonable notice to the churches of the Association.

Section E. In all points of order, the Association shall be guided by Roberts Rules of Order (latest revised edition).

ARTICLE V - MINISTRY TEAMS

The Association shall promote an aggressive program of training, leadership development, evangelism, missions and stewardship emphasis through the following Ministry Teams: The Administration Team, The Leadership Training Team, The Missions Involvement Team and the Vision Assistance Team. Ministry assignments for each team can be found in the Ministry Teams, and Committees Manual.

ARTICLE VI - OFFICERS

The officers of the Association shall be a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, Director of Music and three trustees. They shall be nominated by the Nominating committee and elected at the April meeting, to take office on May 1. The Nominating Committee shall fill vacancies occurring between the meetings of the association. The duties of these officers shall be defined in the Bylaws.

ARTICLE VII - ADMINISTRATION

The Executive Director and other employees of the Association shall be charged with the responsibility of providing resources and services to member churches to assist them in fulfilling their Kingdom vision. They shall work under the direction of and subject to the authority of the Association. They shall be nominated by the Missions and Ministry Council and elected by the Association at any session, or at a special meeting if the next session of the Association is thirty (30) days or more beyond the date on which the employee is nominated.

The areas of service of the Executive Director shall include:

- a. Chief administrator, planner, and resource person for the Association.
- b. Be an ex-officio member and serve as counselor, advisor to staff, the Missions and Ministry Council, the Ministry Teams, and Committees of the Association.

ARTICLE VIII - ASSOCIATIONAL BUDGET YEAR

The budget year for the Association shall begin on January 1 and end on December 31 of each year.

ARTICLE IX - AMENDMENT

This Constitution may be amended at any meeting of the Association by a majority vote of the messengers present and voting; provided written notice of the proposed change(s) shall be given to the churches at least thirty (30) days before the meeting.

BYLAWS OF THE RALEIGH BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The work of the Association shall be governed by the following Bylaws:

I - OFFICERS

Section A. The Moderator shall preside over all meetings of the Association and shall preside over meetings of the Missions and Ministry Council. A Moderator shall not serve more than two terms in succession.

Section B. The Vice-Moderator shall perform the duties of the Moderator when the Moderator is absent from meetings. The Vice-Moderator shall be chairman of the Church Relations and Credentials Committee.

Section C. It shall be the duty of the Clerk or Assistant Clerk to attend and keep full records of the meetings of the Association and the Missions and Ministry Council and to compile, edit and distribute to the churches the minutes and data from the church letters in an annual report.

Section D. The Treasurer shall work with the financial secretary to safeguard and disburse all funds of the Association. Disbursements shall be made in accordance with the budget adopted by the Association under the direction of the Resource Committee. The Treasurer shall make reports to each meeting of the Association and report to the meetings of the Missions and Ministry Council.

Section E. The Trustees shall hold title to all property of the Association. When authorized by the Association, they shall execute notes secured by mortgages or deeds of trust in the purchase of the church sites or other property. The trustees in all acts with respect to property purchased shall be controlled and directed by the Association.

Section F. The Association Music Director shall cooperate with the Meetings and Plans Committee to plan meetings of the Association and serve as a member of the Missions and Ministry Council.

II - MINISTRY TEAM STRUCTURE

Section A. **COMPOSITION, ELECTION AND MEETINGS.** Members shall be elected at the October meeting to take office at the conclusion of the October meeting for three-year terms. Ministry Team members cannot succeed themselves after a three year term. A member elected to fill an unexpired term of less than two years may be re-elected to a full-term. Membership shall include both ordained ministers and lay persons from as many different churches as possible. No more than two-thirds of the members may be of either category. Each Ministry Team shall meet regularly and at the call of the chairperson. Reports shall be submitted to the bi-annual meetings of the association.

Section B. **THE LEADERSHIP TRAINING TEAM** shall promote church growth and development and strengthen churches in their ministries of reaching people and developing believers. Areas of responsibility will include: Ministry Team Support, Family Ministry, Christian Education Programs, Worship, Communication, Affinity Networks and Strategy Planning. The Ministry Team shall be composed representatives of the major program areas. The facilitator will be the staff member assigned to this team.

Section C. **THE VISION ASSISTANCE TEAM** shall be responsible for working with member churches in the following areas of ministry: demographic research, revisioning/strategic planning, new church starts, ethnic and language ministry and evangelism. The Ministry Team shall be composed of representatives from the major program areas. The facilitator will be the staff person assigned to this team.

Section D. **THE MISSIONS INVOLVEMENT TEAM** shall be responsible for helping churches recognize the multiple ways mission and ministry needs can be met. It shall also discover needs and seek to network churches to deal with those needs. The Ministry Team will focus on four main areas: historic/traditional programs such as WMU, Baptist Men, Chaplaincy and Student Ministry; hands on local projects; partnerships local, national and international; and public policy issues. This team shall be composed of representatives from the major program areas. The facilitator will be the staff person assigned to this team.

Section E. **THE ADMINISTRATION TEAM** shall have the following tasks: it shall administer the financial, real and personal resources of the Association, recommend to the Association a proposed annual program budget, manage the budget in cooperation with the Treasurer and Financial Secretary, coordinate and promote the financial program of the Association to assure understanding of the Association's financial needs, and provide for an annual audit and implement the Financial Policy as contained in Article V of these Bylaws.

The Administration Team will be composed of the following: the treasurer, moderator and vice-moderator, trustees, clerk and assistant clerk, the Resource Committee, the Constitution Committee, the Meetings and Plans Committee, the Nominating Committee, and the Missions Endowment Committee. The Executive Director of the Association shall serve as the facilitator of the Administration Team.

III - MISSIONS AND MINISTRY COUNCIL AND COMMITTEES

Section A. **THE MISSIONS AND MINISTRY COUNCIL** shall be composed of the officers of the Association and chairpersons of the committees and Ministry Teams. It shall serve as an administrative and advisory unit of the Association, discharging such duties as may be assigned and carrying forward the work of the Association between the meetings of the Association. Regular meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of January, March, May, July, September, and November and as necessary to carry out the work of the association. It shall prepare and present to the October meeting a coordinated Calendar of Activities for the Association for the ensuing year. It shall serve as the nominating committee for the office of Executive Director and other employees.

Section B. **THE NOMINATING COMMITTEE** shall be appointed by the Moderator at the October meeting of the Association. There shall be seven (7) members, each from a different church. The committee shall nominate the officers named in Article VI of the Constitution, the chairman and members of the Ministry Teams named in Article II of the Bylaws and the members of the Ordination Committee. Its report shall be made at the April meeting with respect to officers of the Association and chairpersons, and at the October meeting with respect to all other members of Ministry Teams and Committees.

Section C. **THE ORDINATION COMMITTEE** shall consist of no less than seven (7) members. This committee functions as a service to association churches who desire to ordain individuals who have been called to a specific ministry. Candidates may be placed before the committee for examination. A thirty-day (30) notice from the church is requested in order to arrange, schedule and expedite an examination. After such examination the Committee will make its recommendation to the church. This recommendation should be given serious consideration before the church proceeds with ordination. The Nominating committee nominates this Committee as set out in Section B.

Section D. **THE CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE** shall consist of three (3) members, appointed by the Moderator at the October meeting of the Association. This committee shall examine the Constitution and Bylaws of the Association and propose such changes as are deemed wise and necessary.

Section E. **THE RESOURCE COMMITTEE** shall consist of seven (7) members. The ministry assignments of the Resource Committee will be to prepare an annual budget, supervise and manage property, and relate to matters of personnel in consultation with the Executive Director.

Section F. **THE MISSIONS ENDOWMENT COMMITTEE** shall consist of five (5) members. The ministry assignment shall be to solicit and manage resources for the on-going missions and ministry program of the Raleigh Baptist Association.

Section G. **THE MEETINGS AND PLANS COMMITTEE** will consist of seven (7) members. The ministry assignment shall be to plan for the place and program of the bi-annual sessions, and any special meetings of the association.

Section H. **THE CHURCH RELATIONS AND CREDENTIALS COMMITTEE** will consist of seven (7) members. The ministry assignments will be: 1. To assist in the verification of credentials for messengers at meetings of the Association. 2. To assist churches who inquire as to membership in the Association. After an initial request to be considered for membership, the committee will schedule appropriate meetings with the church to share information and determine if the church should proceed with Watchcare status.

IV - FINANCIAL POLICY

The Association and its 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 of the churches. Budget requests for the following year must be submitted to the Resource Committee by August 1 of each year. The Resource Committee shall submit a proposed annual program budget for the ensuing associational year at the October meeting of the Association. The proposed budget shall be furnished to each member church for its use in determining its participation in the association's promotional, educational and missionary activities.

V - AMENDMENTS

These Bylaws may be amended at any meeting of the Association by a majority vote of the messengers present and voting; provided written notice of the proposed change(s) shall have been given to the churches at least thirty (30) days before the meeting.