



**BY-LAWS OF THE
ARIZONA BAPTIST CONVENTION**
dba Southwest Church Connection

Amended February 2015



By-Laws Of The Arizona Baptist Convention

ARTICLE I: Name

The name of this organization, an Arizona non-profit corporation shall be: Arizona Baptist Convention. The ministry names shall be Southwest Conservative Baptist Association and / or Southwest Church Connection, here and after referred to as the Association.

ARTICLE II: Vision, Values and Purpose

Sec. 1 Vision: The Association is a network of churches empowered by the Lord and mobilized by passionate spiritual leaders reaching the Southwest with the Gospel through healthy, reproducing churches.

Sec. 2 Values: The values of the Association are as follows:

- A. Bible-centered
- B. Gospel-focused
- C. Mission-driven
- D. Grace-infused
- E. Relationally-connected
- F. Culturally-inclusive.

Sec. 3 Purposes: The purposes of the Association shall include, but not be limited to, the following:

- A. Encourage and assist church growth and health;
- B. Promote the establishment of new churches;
- C. Offer training and resources to assist churches in spiritual formation and growth;
- D. Assist churches in the process of filling pastoral positions;
- E. Offer counsel to churches, upon request, as it relates to the ministry of that church;
- F. Encourage appropriate affiliation with, and support of, other ministries with like-minded doctrine, vision, values and purpose while maintaining our historical connection to Conservative Baptist mission efforts
- G. Equip, encourage, and connect pastors and churches of all ethnic groups;
- H. Assist churches in ordination process

ARTICLE III: Annual Meetings

The Association shall meet annually at a time and place to be determined by the Board. For the purpose of fulfilling Association business, each member church shall have one voting delegate. Each church shall be expected to submit an annual statistical report.

ARTICLE IV: Officers

The Corporate Officers of the Association shall be President, Vice-President, and Secretary. They shall be elected annually by the Board of Trustees.

Sec. 1 Qualifications: Any person holding an office in the Association must be a member in good standing of an Association church, and shall be in full agreement with these By-Laws.

Sec. 2: Duties:

- A. The President of the Association shall preside at the Annual Meeting of the Association, and shall be Chairman of the Board of Trustees. He shall perform such other duties as are usual for the President of an organization.
- B. The Vice-President shall preside at the Association in the absence of the President, and shall assume the Office of President in the event of death or resignation of the President.
- C. The Secretary of the Association shall also be the Secretary of the Board of Trustees and shall certify all minutes.

ARTICLE V: Board of Trustees

- Sec. 1 The Board of Trustees of the Association, which is the administrative body of the organization, shall consist of a minimum of twelve (12) duly elected members. The Regional Executive and Treasurer shall be non-voting, ex-officio members of the Board. The elected members shall be divided into three (3) classes elected annually to serve three-year terms. No Board member shall be elected to serve more than two consecutive terms without being out of office one year.
- Sec. 2 The Board of Trustees shall hold at least three (3) meetings annually. Special meetings may be called by the President or Regional Executive when deemed necessary. A majority of members present at an official meeting of the Board of Trustees shall constitute a quorum.
- Sec. 3 In the case of the absence of a Board member from any two regular Board meetings within a twelve month period the Board of Trustees may declare the office vacant.
- Sec. 4 The Board of Trustees may appoint a replacement for any vacant office to fill the unexpired term.
- Sec. 5 The Board of Trustees shall act as the Nominating Committee. They will, in consultation with the Regional Executive, prepare a list of nominees to serve as board members from the constituency at large. The election will take place at the Annual Meeting of the Association.
- Sec. 6 The Board shall, as its primary priorities, serve as shepherds and stewards of the region's ministries and resources respectively to accomplish the vision of the Association in a manner consistent with its core values. In addition to its primary priorities, the Board shall also:
 - A. Elect Corporate Officers (President, Vice-President, and Secretary).
 - B. Formulate policies for the operation of the Association.
 - C. Upon receipt of an application from a church for membership in the Association, the Board will evaluate the application and may approve the application. The Board will then inform and introduce the new church to the Association.
 - D. Review, revise if necessary, and adopt the proposed budget presented by the Regional Executive. The Board of Trustees shall have the authority to adjust expenditures as necessary.
 - E. Select members of the Board of Trustees to serve as Board of Directors members on other partner or subsidiary organizations.
 - F. Have authority to borrow or lend money on behalf of the Association.
 - G. Have authority to sell and purchase property for the Association.
 - H. Receive all real and personal property in the name of the Association, and authorize signatories to sign any and all legal documents as necessary.
 - I. Keep a complete record of all Board meetings, with minutes and resolutions and make copies available as required.

ARTICLE VI: Special Committees

The Board may appoint Special Committees for any purpose in the exercise of its responsibilities. The Board will determine the length of service of such committees.

ARTICLE VII: Personnel

Regional Executive

Sec. 1 Calling:

- A. A Search Committee may be appointed by the Board of Trustees.
- B. The Regional Executive shall be called for an indefinite term by a three-fourths (3/4) majority vote of the Board of Trustees.
- C. He shall be governed by the terms of the working agreement approved at the time of his call, or as amended by mutual agreement.

Sec. 2 Duties:

- A. He shall be the Chief Executive Officer of the Association.
- B. He shall be responsible for the efficient operation of the Association ministries under the policies set by the Board of Trustees.
- C. He shall give regular written reports to the Board and an annual written report to the Association.
- D. He shall recommend to the Board the hiring and discharging of all staff and personnel.

Sec. 3 Termination:

- A. The services of the Regional Executive may be terminated by a thirty-day written notice by either the Regional Executive or the Board of Trustees, or lesser time if deemed appropriate and/or necessary by the Board of Trustees.
- B. Termination of the Regional Executive shall require a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote of the Board of Trustees.
- C. Should any charge of immorality or Christian misconduct be brought against the Regional Executive, it will be referred to the officers of the Association, who will investigate and recommend to the Board of Trustees an appropriate action, including possible immediate termination.

ARTICLE VIII: Receiving and Dismissing Churches

Sec. 1 Member Churches: Any church desiring to come into membership with the Association shall first make a written application through the Board of Trustees. The church desiring membership shall submit all documents required by the Affiliations Policy adopted by the Board. If the church making application meets the requirements and is approved by the board for membership, the Board shall inform and introduce the new church to the Association.

- A. The applicant must be an organized church with:
- 1) Biblical pastors and lay leadership defined and in place.
 - 2) A Statement of Faith consistent with the Association statement
 - 3) An affirmation of support of the Values of the Association
 - 4) Proof of Incorporation in the State in which it is located.
 - 5) Possession of a Federal Employee Identification Number
 - 6) In the case of a church plant; provide evidence of a relationship with a supporting/mother church or churches, a committed core group, and fiscal support.
- B. The church will have an on-site visit by a representative of the Association.
- C. The church shall contribute financially to the Association, and participate in regional ministries and gatherings and submit an annual report.
- D. The Board may drop and exclude any church from its fellowship and membership by a three-quarters (3/4) vote of the Board present at a regularly scheduled Board meeting.
- Sec. 2 Fellowshiping churches and ministries: Fellowshiping churches/ministries are organizations and/or individuals who are like-minded in belief and mission who wish to connect, support and/or participate with the Association in reaching the southwest with the gospel. While these ministries may not enjoy the full privileges of membership, their input and participation is welcomed. The Board of Trustees will consider requests from such ministries and churches before entering into a Fellowshiping agreement.

ARTICLE IX: Dissolution

The Association may only be dissolved as a corporation in accordance with the Articles of Incorporation and the corporate laws of the State of Arizona. In the event of dissolution, the assets shall be distributed so as to further God's Kingdom.

ARTICLE X: An Annual Report

An Annual Report shall be published each year for distribution to member churches of the Association after the Association's fiscal year ends. A copy of the Annual Report shall be filed for permanent record.

ARTICLE XI: Amendments

- Sec. 1 This Constitution may be amended at the Annual Meeting of the Association by a two-thirds vote of the delegates present, providing that the amendment has been sent to the Regional Executive and to the pastors of affiliated churches at least sixty (60) days prior to the date it is to be voted on by the Association. Any proposed amendment being received by the Regional Executive office shall be published in the next edition of the official publication and/or communication of the Association.
- Sec. 2 The Statement of Faith (See Addendum) may only be amended by a three-fourths vote of the delegates present at the Annual Meeting, providing that the proposed change has been read and published at the Annual Meeting one year prior to the vote to amend.

ARTICLE XII: By-Laws and Rules of Order

- Sec. 1 All sessions of the Annual Meeting shall be opened and closed with prayer.
- Sec. 2 Robert's Rules of Order shall be parliamentary authority.

ADDENDUM 1 – Statement of Faith

1. I believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired by God, as inerrant in the original writings, and as the supreme and final authority in faith and life. (*II Timothy 3:16-17; Psalm 19:7; Isaiah 8:20; II Peter 1:21*)
2. I believe in one God, eternally existing in three persons: Father, Son and Holy Ghost. (*Isaiah 45:21-22; Jeremiah 10:10; Genesis 1:26; Matthew 28:19; John 1:1-14; Matthew 3:17*)
3. I believe that Jesus Christ was begotten by the Holy Spirit, was born of the Virgin Mary, and is true God and true man, and is the only Mediator between God and man. (*Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38; Luke 2:1-7; John 1:1-14; I Timothy 2:5*)
4. I believe that man was created in the image of God; that he sinned and thereby incurred physical death and spiritual death which is separation from God. (*Genesis 1:27, 31; 2:7; 2:6-17; I Corinthians 15:21; Romans 6:23*)
5. I believe in the vicarious death of the Lord Jesus Christ as a substitutionary sacrifice for our sins, and that all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood. (*I Peter 1:18-19; 2:24; Acts 16:31; Ephesians 1:7; John 1:7; Ephesians 2:13; Revelation 1:5; 12:11*)
6. I believe that all who receive the Lord Jesus Christ by faith are born again of the Holy Spirit and thereby become children of God. All such are indwelt by the Holy Spirit, and baptized by Him into that spiritual body (church) of which Christ is the head. (*John 3:3-7; 1:12-13; 14:16-17; I Corinthians 12:12-13; Colossians 1:18, 24*)
7. I believe in the eternal security of all who trust our Lord Jesus Christ. (*John 3:16, 36; 10:28-29; Romans 8:35-39; II Timothy 1:12; Jude 1*)
8. I believe in the resurrection of the Crucified, ascension into heaven, and in His present life there for us as High Priest and advocate. (*Psalm 16:10; Matthew 28; Mark 16; Luke 24; John 20; John 21; Acts 2:22-36; I Corinthians 15; Acts 1:10-11; Hebrews 5:1-10; 7:23-28; I John 2:1*)
9. I believe in (a) "that blessed hope," and in the (b) personal and visible return of our Lord Jesus Christ to the earth to establish His Kingdom.
 - (a) Rapture (*Titus 2:11-13; John 14; I Thess. 4:13-18*)
 - (b) Return to earth (*Psalm 24; Isaiah 9:6; 24:22-23, Zachariah 14:4; Acts 1:10-11, Jude 14-15; Revelation 20*)
10. I believe that baptism is the immersion of a believer in water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, setting forth the essential facts of redemption - the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; and also the essential facts in the experience of the believer - death to sin and resurrection to newness of life; and that the Lord's Supper is a commemoration of the Lords' death until He comes. (*Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 8:34-39; Acts 16:30-33; Romans 6:1-11; Matthew 26:26-29; I Corinthians 11:20-34*)
11. I believe that a local New Testament Church consists of a company of baptized believers who have voluntarily associated themselves for worship, for instruction, and for service for our Lord. (*Acts 2:41; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:2*)
12. I believe that a local New Testament Church is a self-governing body and must be free from interference by an Association or any other ecclesiastical or political authority. Therefore, the Church and State must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from the dictates or patronage of the other. (*Acts 6:3-6; 4:19-20; 5:29; 13:2-4; 15:2; 22-31*)
13. I believe in the bodily resurrection of the saved and lost. The saved shall appear in Heaven at the Judgment Seat of Christ to receive rewards and to dwell with Him for all eternity. The lost shall be judged at the Great

White Throne and be cast into eternal hell. (*John 5:29; I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Ephesians 2:8-9; I Corinthians 3:11-15; Luke 16:19-31; Revelation 20:11-15; I Corinthians 15*)

14. I believe that every human being is directly responsible to God in matters of faith and life, and that each should be free to worship God according to the dictates of his conscience. I believe, however, that only those are properly entitled to be called Baptists who believe in and subscribe to the historic Baptist faith.