

**THE CONSTITUTION of
THE SOUTH CENTRAL ASSOCIATION OF BAPTIST CHURCHES**

Adopted at April 21, 2012 AGM and Revised May 6, 2012 (Name change April 12, 2014 AGM)

ARTICLE 1 NAME AND AFFILIATION

This organization shall be known as “The South Central Association of Baptist Churches.”

It is one of the several Associations affiliated with the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec (CBOQ), and by this affiliation the member churches of the Association become member churches of the CBOQ.

ARTICLE 2 MEMBERSHIP

The membership of this organization shall be comprised of those Baptist churches which on the first day of October, 1957, formed the South Central Association of Baptist Churches and such other churches as have been and hereafter may be recognized and accepted into the membership of the Association by vote of the Assembly at a meeting called for the purpose of considering such recognition.

The Association, while recognizing the autonomy of each church, shall have the power to remove from membership any church which in the opinion of the Assembly, acting on recommendation of the Executive, shall be found to have forfeited its right to membership. Such church shall then cease to be a member of the Association and of the CBOQ.

The current approved ***Covenant Agreement between Churches and The South Central Association of Baptist Churches*** (below) is the framework for cooperation and constitutes a part of this constitution.

ARTICLE 3 PURPOSE

The purpose of the Association shall be to do together what the individual member churches cannot do individually:

- a) To support, resource, and train its member churches and pastors for the proclamation of the Christian Gospel and doctrines and the advancement of the cause of Christ in the world;
- b) To provide opportunity for Christian fellowship and inspiration among the member churches and pastors;
- c) To coordinate and encourage mutual cooperation in the common tasks of the member churches, such as, but not limited to congregational health, mission, worship, evangelism, encouragement, and service;
- d) To help member churches tell their stories of ministry, baptisms etc., for the encouragement, prayer, and support of other churches;
- e) To give expression to the mind of the churches and to convey these convictions and desires to the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec;
- g) To promote the interests and the initiatives of the Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec, Canadian Baptist Ministries, Canadian Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec, and the Baptist World Alliance.

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ARTICLE 4 STRUCTURES

4.1. THE ASSEMBLY

The member churches of the Association are represented by Assembly. Representation on the Assembly consists of;

- 1 - All active pastors,
- 2 - The Executive, and
- 3 - Delegates chosen by each church from among its congregation on a proportional basis, as follows:
 - a) Up to 4 delegates for the first 100 members or fraction thereof;
 - b) 1 delegate for each additional 100 members or fraction thereof.

4.2. MEETINGS OF THE ASSEMBLY

Decisions of the Assembly will be made by motion and recorded in the minutes of the meeting. All motions will have a Mover and Second. Unless otherwise specified, a simple majority of representatives present and voting will carry the motion. Each representative present is entitled to one vote per motion.

Visitors at the Meetings of the Assembly may by motion be extended all of the privileges of Assembly representatives, except for that of voting.

The agenda for meetings shall be set by the Executive. Member churches may present to the Executive agenda items for consideration.

A minimum of six weeks' notice of meetings will be provided. The lesser of fifteen (15) members of the Assembly or representation from 1/3 of the churches shall constitute a quorum.

4.2.1. THE SPRING MEETING

The Spring Meeting shall be held at a time and a place determined by the Executive. The purpose of the Spring meeting shall be inspiration, and the review and approval of the following reports for the preceding year:

- a) The Executive and Committee reports,
- b) Financial Statements and presentation of a draft budget for review, and
- c) Reports of affiliated organizations (e.g. Camp Hermosa).

Any other business proposed by the Executive may be presented.

4.2.2. THE FALL MEETING

The Fall Meeting shall be held at a time and a place determined by the Executive. The purpose of the Fall Meeting shall be inspiration, and the review and approval of the following reports:

- a) The Nomination Report, and
- b) The Budget for the coming year.

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Any other business proposed by the Executive may be presented.

4.2.3. OTHER MEETINGS

Other Meetings may be held throughout the year. The date, time, location, and agenda for such meetings shall be determined by the Executive.

Article 5 THE OFFICERS

5.1 THE OFFICERS OF THE ASSOCIATION

The Officers of the Association shall consist of the following:

- 1) Chair and Vice Chair,
- 2) Clerk, and
- 3) Treasurer.

The Officers shall be elected through the nomination process.

Each Officer shall hold office for a two year-term and until his/her successor is installed; except for the Vice Chair, who assumes the Chair after two years

One person may hold the office of Clerk and Treasurer simultaneously.

5.2 DUTIES OF OFFICERS

1) Chair and Vice Chair

The Chair and/or Vice Chair shall preside at all meetings of the Association and at such other meetings of a general nature as shall be arranged within the Association.

The Chair shall be a voting ex officio member of all Committees and Task Forces of the Association.

Where possible the office of Chair and Vice Chair shall alternate between a pastor and a layperson.

2) CLERK

The Clerk shall:

- a) Keep the records of the Assembly and of the Executive;
- b) Conduct correspondence pertaining to Association matters;
- c) Coordinate the preparation of the Annual Report; and
- d) Receive such honorarium as may be determined by Assembly.

3) TREASURER

The Treasurer shall:

- a) Keep record of all financial transactions of the Association;
- b) Report regularly to the Executive and Assembly;
- c) Present a reviewed financial statement to the Spring Meeting;

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- d) Receive such honorarium as may be determined by Assembly; and
- e) Recommend a draft budget to the Executive for presentation at the Spring Meeting.

ARTICLE 6 COMMITTEES

The Assembly and/or Executive may, from time to time, establish Committees and Task Forces as required to carry out the work of the Association.

All Committees shall be responsible to the Association and shall report regularly in writing to the Assembly concerning their activities and plans.

Elected members of Committees may serve a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms and shall not be eligible for re-election to the Committee until after the lapse of one year.

Standing Committees may appoint additional members and establish short term task force teams with the concurrence of the Executive.

The Association shall maintain the following Standing Committees: Executive, and Association Ministry Committee (AMC). The Assembly may establish and mandate additional Standing Committees as required.

6.1. EXECUTIVE

The Executive shall consist of:

- a) The Officers of the Association,
- b) A representative of the Association Ministry Committee, and
- c) A representative of other Standing Committees.

The Executive shall oversee matters arising between meetings of the Assembly, carries out the programs and policies set forth by the Assembly; and discharges the duties of the Assembly between meetings, subject to the approval of the Assembly at its next meeting.

The Executive shall monitor areas of population growth within the Association and make recommendations to the Assembly concerning possible future church planting projects. The Committee shall encourage and assist in the establishment of new churches and shall (if invited) appoint one member to be its representative on the appropriate planning committee.

The Executive shall serve as the Nominating Committee and fill vacancies on the Association, Camp Hermosa Inc., delegates to CBOQ Assembly, and other appointments as necessary. Pursuant to 6.1.1 advisors from Camp Hermosa shall assist in the filling of vacancies within the Camp Hermosa structures. Consent of each person being nominated will be received prior to the presentation of this report.

6.1.1 ADVISORS TO THE EXECUTIVE

To assist the Executive in its mandate, advisors, with adequate experience, may be invited to provide their input. Examples of such advisors may include, but not limited to,

- a) Previous Executive members,
- b) Camp Hermosa Representative,

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- c) Children & Family Representative, and
- d) Youth Representative.

6.2. ASSOCIATION MINISTRY COMMITTEE (AMC)

Pursuant to 3.a), the Association Ministry Committee shall consist of a minimum of three elected members, at least two holding credentials through Canadian Baptists of Ontario and Quebec. Members are elected by the Assembly. One member shall be elected each year and shall serve a three-year term.

The AMC shall oversee its role in the credential, induction, and ordination processes for pastors within the Association.

This committee will seek to promote regular fellowship, training, and encouragement of pastoral personnel such as students in training for ministry, active and retired pastors, chaplains and missionaries within the Association.

Where special circumstances in a church indicate the need for action, the Committee shall acquaint the Executive with the circumstances, and if so authorized by the Executive, shall arrange a conference with the church in question.

ARTICLE 7 VACANCIES

A vacancy occurring in any Office or Committee may be filled by the Executive to complete the existing term subject to ratification at the next Spring or Fall meeting of the Assembly.

ARTICLE 8 FINANCES

The Association shall have the right, in view of its budget requirements; to seek and hold from its member churches such funds and dues as may be considered necessary for the maintenance of its work, as per Part II of the Covenant Agreement.

The annual dues of the constituent churches shall be set at the Fall Meeting.

Expenses: The expenses of the Officers, expenses for Association delegates attending CBOQ Assembly, and necessary expenses incurred by the Committees in the discharge of their duties, upon approval of the Executive, will be paid from Association funds. Mileage is reimbursed at the rate approved through the budget process.

Signing Authority: The Executive shall develop policies and appoint individuals having signing authority. All cheques require one signature. Assembly will be advised of changes in policy and/or individuals having signing authority.

ARTICLE 9 POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The Assembly may adopt or revise policies and procedures which do not conflict with this Constitution and may amend or repeal such.

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ARTICLE 10 AMENDING THIS CONSTITUTION

Amendments to this Constitution shall be presented at a duly called Spring or Fall meeting for approval of the Assembly at the next Spring or Fall meeting. Such proposed amendments will be delivered to the Clerk of the Association. The Clerk, at least 60 calendar days prior to the Meeting, will cause a notice of such proposed amendment to be sent by mail to the clerk of each member church. Such notice must contain the name of the Mover and the Second when presented to the Clerk. A two-thirds majority of delegates present and voting will carry the motion.

Revision History

April, 1990	Revised and adopted.
April 26, 1997	Bylaw #6 mileage reimbursement changed from 9 cents to 17 cents per kilometre.
April 29,2000	Bylaw #9 passed at the 2000 Annual General Meeting.
April 23, 2005	To incorporate 20 motions approved at the 2005 Annual General Meeting, and to revise format. Refer to Annual Meeting Report – South Central Association SWOT Analysis Task Force report.
April 21, 2012	Rewritten reflecting recommendations of <i>Planning for Change</i> initiative. Edited to reflect recommendations regarding the Annual Meeting, Structural changes to Committees, plus minor editorial changes.
May 6, 2012	First sentence of 6.2 revised to reflect Apr 21/12 AGM desire to include lay leadership on AMC.
April 12, 2014	Name changed to South Central Association of Baptist Churches
Nov. 6, 2014	Motion to continue the practice that the executive’s terms start at the spring meeting.

**Covenant Agreement Between _____ Church (“the Church”)
And The South Central Association of Baptist Churches (“the Association”) January 30, 2008**

Introduction

Understanding that each local church is an autonomous body of Christian believers which seeks to follow God’s leading in ministry and mission, this agreement is our covenant as an individual local church to work in partnership, doing together what we could not do alone, with other churches through the South Central Association of Baptist Churches to develop common vision and values and to achieve common goals through mutually agreed upon means. This document describes the nature and details of the relationship between the Church and the Association.

The South Central Association of Baptist Churches is the body which has been created by autonomous local churches working together to act on behalf of each member to assist each other in ministry and mission through co-operative and supportive ministry. In a sincere spirit of unity and co-operation, the churches join together in our interdependent work of local and global mission, development of leadership and of churches and supportive fellowship.

Part I The commitment of the Association to its member churches:

The Association through its Executive covenants to support the ministry of its member churches by:

- praying for the work and ministry of each member church throughout the year;
- developing and resourcing churches and ministries within the constituency, including pastors, administrators, youth ministry, camping, and community ministries;
- supporting the development of the local church including the fostering of church health, church planting, and ministry innovation;
- participating in the accreditation process for the mutual benefit of churches and pastors including a discipline process for cases of moral and ethical failure;
- supporting the professional development of accredited ministry leaders within the constituency;
- providing strategic leadership resources and stimulating intentional lifelong development (professional, personal, spiritual) for ministry leaders;
- developing a mentoring culture that supports leadership;
- Promoting and encouraging Canadian Baptist Ministries, Baptist Women of Ontario and Quebec and McMaster Divinity College;
- providing additional resources and benefits to our member churches;
- encouraging our sense of shared relationship and identity;
- preparing an annual budget to respond to our shared values for approval.

Part II The commitment of the Church to the Association

The Church covenants that it will assume the following rights and responsibilities by:

- actively working to further the Shared Values of the Association;
- identifying and recruiting individuals to the work of the Association;
- respecting and upholding the provisions and procedures of the Association as expressed in its Constitution, as amended from time to time;
- voluntarily contributing their time, talent and treasure to the work of the Association, to the best of their ability;
- receiving notice of, attending, and participating at all appropriate meetings of the Association through its Delegates;

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- agreeing to be a member in good standing of this Association that is also a member of the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec (BCOQ);
- contributing financially its *pro rata* share based on its membership.

Part III The Relationship Between the Local Church and the Association.

The Church and the Association hold in common these historic Baptist distinctives:

- the Lordship of Jesus Christ;
- the Bible as the sole authority in matters of faith and practice;
- the Church as a voluntary fellowship of persons who have received by faith the new life of the Spirit and who give witness to this faith in believer's baptism and the fellowship of the Lord's Supper;
- the priesthood of all believers in Christ, by which all believers have equal access to God through the one mediator, Jesus Christ, and are responsible to offer themselves in grateful service to Christ and their neighbours;
- soul liberty and freedom of religious conscience;
- the autonomy of the local church under the headship of Jesus Christ; and,
- the separation of church and state.

As defined by such formal agreements as our respective constitutions and by-laws, we will as partners:

- pray for one another;
- encourage and support one another;
- respect and honour each other's freedom to determine its respective God-given purpose, and mission;
- honour and respect each other's assemblies and the decisions that are made by those assemblies;
- share the responsibility and authority within our jurisdictions;
- contribute our time, talent and treasure in support of our common goals and objectives;
- affirm our mutual responsibility to work collegially together to further our Shared Values
 1. Leadership Development – (including Ordination processes and Inductions)
 2. Strategic Mission – cost effective and significant mission initiatives,
 3. Multi-cultural – intentional ministry to/with our growing multicultural/ethnic diversity,
 4. Church health and planting,
 5. Local church renewal,
 6. Public witness and social concern.

Notwithstanding the above, in faithfulness to God, under the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and led by the Holy Spirit, the Church may define its own affirmations of faith and covenant; enjoy the freedom of doctrinal statements; organize and govern its structure under autonomous constitutions and by-laws; develop its own ministries, mission and service; call or dismiss its own pastor and other staff; choose its own officers; and own and control its property without the permission or approval of another body, including the Association.

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Part IV Acceptance and Termination of the Covenant Agreement

As this is a voluntary covenant, acceptance and termination of this agreement will be acknowledged as follows:

Acceptance: By the Association through a written and approved motion of Council and by the church through a written and approved motion of the church.

Termination: Following 90 days after receipt of either a written and approved motion of the Association Council or a written and approved motion of the church.