

CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS
of the
Baptist Convention of New York
a northeast network of church

Constitutional & By Law revisions voted on at the Annual Session 2021.
By Law revisions included from 9/24/2022

Constitution
Article I: Name

This body shall be called the Northeast Baptist Network, hereinafter referred to as the “Network.”

Article II: Statement of Faith

We adopt as our statement of faith The Baptist Faith and Message as adopted on June 14, 2000 by the Southern Baptist Convention. We also believe that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God. (Gen 1:26-27). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

Article III: Membership

The Network shall consist of messengers elected and certified by churches and church-type missions cooperating with and contributing to the causes of the Southern Baptist Convention’s Cooperative Program through the Network.

Section 1. Each church shall be entitled to three (3) messengers for the first fifty (50) or less members, and one (1) additional messenger for each additional fifty (50) members, provided no church shall have more than ten (10) messengers.

Section 2. The churches and church-type missions represented by messengers shall be in friendly cooperation with the Network, sympathetic with its purpose, work, and with the Statement of Faith in Article II. Cooperating churches shall be defined as having contributed to the Cooperative Program of the SBC within the 12 months prior to the meeting in which they are attempting to vote. Among churches not in cooperation with the Network are churches which act to affirm, approve, endorse homosexual behavior, same-sex marriage, or any expression of marriage other than the uniting of one biological man and one biological woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime.

Section 3. The messengers shall be elected and certified by the churches to the Network. The Network office shall provide special registration forms for the churches at least sixty (60) days prior to the Network’s Annual Session.

Section 4. A church-type mission sponsored by one of the churches of the Network shall be entitled to one (1) messenger in addition to the messengers of the sponsoring church.

Article IV: Purpose

Section 1. This Network is purely a cooperative body and its purpose shall be to furnish a means by which its cooperating churches, in their sovereign capacity, can work together in promoting all enterprises which they collectively deem necessary in carrying out Christ's Great Commission.

Section 2. The Network shall have no ecclesiastical authority whatever over its cooperating churches.

Section 3. This Network and its Executive Board shall work in harmonious relationship with the existing state Conventions and all entities of the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article V: Meetings

This Network shall meet annually at such time and place as it may determine. Special meetings may be called, or the time and place of the Annual Session may be changed by a vote of two-thirds of Executive Board members present and voting, should an emergency justify such action.

Article VI: Officers

Section 1. The officers of this Network shall be: a president, vice-president, recording secretary, and assistant recording secretary.

Section 2. These officers shall be elected annually by the Network and shall be duly installed at the closing session of the Network's Annual Session and shall hold their respective offices until their successors are elected and installed.

Section 3. No officer, except the recording secretary and assistant recording secretary, shall be eligible to serve more than two (2) consecutive terms.

Section 4. The Network shall employ an Executive Director/Treasurer, and other salaried personnel, as needed according to current employment policies.

Article VII: Executive Board

Section 1. At each Annual Session the Network shall elect members of an Executive Board.

Section 2. It shall comprise:

- a.** The elected officers of the Network and the Executive Director/Treasurer as ex-officio members of the Executive Board;
- b.** The leader of each Association of the Network whatever the title (Executive Director, Director of Missions, Moderator, etc.) as ex-officio members of the Executive Board, if the church the leader attends is a cooperating church of the Network. If the Association leader is not a member of a cooperating church, the Association may appoint a representative from a cooperating church to serve for the same length of time the Association leader serves in that position.
- c.** The Associational representatives. So that the Executive Board may be a widely representative body, churches cooperating with each Network-recognized Association will be represented by two (2)

members for the first 25 (or portion thereof) cooperating churches in that Association and one (1) additional member for each 25 (or portion thereof) cooperating churches in that Association. Each church and Association is autonomous.

i. For the purpose of electing Executive Board members, the number of cooperating churches in a particular Association shall be tabulated at the end of the previous calendar year. Churches may not be counted in more than one Association for the purpose of determining the number of representatives to be chosen from the churches of each Association.

ii. Associations shall become Network-recognized Associations, making churches in that Association eligible for representation on the Network Executive Board, by an official vote of the Network in Annual Session upon the recommendation of the Executive Board.

d. No more than eight (8) members from any Association, exclusive of any of the elected officers of the Network and ex-officio members. The membership of the Executive Board from the churches of any Association shall fairly represent the makeup of that Association.

e. Any cooperating church, either directly or through its BCNY recognized association, will be asked to nominate their allotted representatives each year and notify BCNY by July 31. If nominations are not received by July 31, the Convention Life standing committee of the Executive Board will nominate persons to fill vacancies.

Section 3. Section 3. All members of the Executive Board shall meet the qualifications for membership set forth in Article III, Membership. Any member of the Executive Board who does not meet this requirement at the time of the Annual Session of the Network shall be disqualified from service on the Executive Board.

Section 4. No person or his or her spouse, other than ex-officio members, who receives regular remuneration directly or indirectly from this Network shall be eligible for membership on the Executive Board. Pastors who receive salary supplements shall not be disqualified from service by this section.

Section 5. The Executive Board shall act on behalf of the Network between sessions and shall make reports of its work at the Annual Session.

Article VIII: Boards, Trustees and Committees

This Network shall have power to appoint such boards, trustees and committees as shall be deemed necessary for the handling of the affairs of the Network. The Executive Director/Treasurer shall be an ex-officio member of each such body.

Article IX: Funds

Section 1. All funds accepted by the Network for any special object shall be applied according to the designation of the donors.

Section 2. All undesignated funds sent to the Treasurer of the Network shall be distributed between this Network's and the Southern Baptist Convention's causes according to percentage agreements adopted by this Network.

Section 3. The overall financial policy of any institution or agency of the Network shall require the approval of the Executive Board or the Network. Such institutions or agencies shall finance their programs without governmental funds except for reasonable compensation for actual services by the institution or agency involved.

Section 4. Any special campaign for funds must be specifically approved by vote of the Network or Executive Board.

Article X: Amendment

All proposed amendments shall be presented to the Network in writing at an Annual Session, with action being postponed until the next Annual Session, at which time action must be taken no later than the second day of the Annual Session, with a two-thirds vote of messengers present and voting required for

BYLAWS of the Baptist Convention of New York, a northeast network of churches

By law revision on September 24, 2022, to be voted on at the Annual Session 2022

BYLAWS

The work of the Network shall be governed by the following bylaws.

Article I: Meetings

Section 1. The sessions of the Network shall be opened and closed with prayer.

Section 2. Persons who are not messengers but are invited to attend the Network shall have the privilege to speak in debate with the permission of the moderator. Such persons shall not be permitted to vote.

Section 3. No member shall speak more than twice in any single debate on the same day without permission from the body.

Section 4. The rules of order for the sessions of the Network shall be those laid down in the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order, but in cases where the meaning may not be clear, the president shall exercise his discretion, subject to the appeal of the Network.

Section 5. All resolutions presented to the Network shall be in writing and shall be referred to the Executive Team. All resolutions must be submitted in writing at least 30 days prior to the Annual Session of the Network.

Article II: Officers

Section 1. Election of officers.

- a. The officers of the Network shall be nominated from the floor and the election shall be by secret ballot when two (2) or more persons are nominated for the same office.

- b. The president shall be elected before the vice-president.
- c. When three (3) or more persons are nominated and no person receives a majority of the votes cast, a second ballot will be taken to decide between the two (2) candidates receiving the most votes on the first ballot.
- d. The President and Vice-President shall be from different Regions of the Network and the Recording Secretary, and the Assistant Recording Secretary shall be from different Regions.

Section 2. The duties of these officers shall be those required in this Constitution and the bylaws.

Article III: Executive Board

Section 1. Executive Board Configuration

- a. All Network-recognized Associations will be asked to nominate their allotted representatives each year and notify the Network by July 31. If nominations are not received by July 31, the Executive Board will nominate persons to fill vacancies.
- b. The term of office for elected members of the Executive Board shall be three (3) years. After serving one (1) full term of three (3) years, the remainder of another member's three (3) year term, or a term (or terms) as ex-officio, elected Network officer, a member may be eligible for one (1) more three (3) year term. After that, a full year must elapse before the individual is eligible for re-election. In any case, no member shall serve on the Executive Board more than six (6) consecutive years (with the exception of the non-elected ex-officio members) without at least a one-year break.

Section 2. Executive Board responsibilities:

- a. The Executive Board shall serve the Network when the Network is not in session and will report to the Network annually.
- b. The Executive Board shall seek:
 - i. To assist in the growth and ministry of the churches and their leaders.
 - ii. To strengthen the Associations.
 - iii. To promote evangelism.
 - iv. To promote the establishment of new missions and churches, and help them minister to the world and within the geographical region of the Network; and,
 - v. To secure Executive Director/Treasurer and other personnel in accordance with terms and job descriptions previously adopted in keeping with its needs and resources.

Section 3. Executive Board meetings.

- a. The Executive Board shall meet at least twice a year and at any other time it deems necessary to do its work. Such sessions shall be open meetings unless declared by the Executive Board to be a closed meeting.
- b. For a regular meeting, one fourth of its membership shall be a quorum; and for a special called meeting, one third of its membership shall be a quorum.

Section 4. The Executive Director/Treasurer shall serve as the chairman of the Executive Board and of its teams. The President of the Network shall serve as the vice-Chairman of the Leadership Team and the Vice President shall serve as the vice-Chairman of the Management Team. The Recording Secretary shall serve on the Leadership Team and the Assistant Recording Secretary shall serve on the Management Team.

a. Executive Team

- i. The Executive Team shall consist of the Executive Director/Treasurer and the elected officers of the Network, plus a previously elected officer of the Network.
- ii. The Executive Team will serve the Executive Board and make Executive decisions on behalf of the Executive Board when it is not in session.
- iii. The Executive Team decisions shall be reported to and subject to review by the Executive Board at its next scheduled meeting.
- iv. The Executive Board members shall be divided into two (2) Standing Teams, as follows.

b. Leadership Team

- i. This team shall comprise two persons from each Association and shall include the Association leader (Executive Director/DOM/Moderator/or other title), and an elected member of the Executive Board as determined by each Association.
- ii. This team shall meet once each quarter as determined by the Annual Calendar.
- iii. This team shall seek God, develop relationships with team members, and determine means to empower the advancement of the Network movement.
- iv. This team shall evaluate submissions from the annual strategies of the Associations to determine alignment with the three priorities:
 - a) Church Planting/Revitalization
 - b) Evangelism
 - c) Leadership Solutions
- v. This team shall decide on the allocation of resources and oversee the evaluation of those efforts.

c. Management Team

- i. This team shall comprise the remaining members of the Executive Board as elected at the Annual Session.
- ii. This team shall relate to, and serve in an advisory role to, Network staff assigned to ministries related to Stewardship, Cooperative Program Promotion, and/or Communications.
- iii. This team shall suggest and/or recommend actions in the areas of Stewardship, Cooperative Program Promotion, and/or Communications they deem appropriate for the churches of Network.
- iv. This team shall perform the responsibilities assigned to it by Article IV, Section 2 of these bylaws.
- v. This team shall perform such other responsibilities as may be assigned by the Network Executive Board.

Section 5. Members shall attend meetings of the Executive Board unless providentially hindered and in such cases, notification shall be given to the Board. Two (2) such consecutive absences without notification will be recognized as a resignation.

Section 6. If vacancies occur on the Executive Board or among officers between meetings of the Network, the Board shall be empowered to fill the vacancies until the next Network meeting.

Section 7. The Executive Board shall not incur any indebtedness for any period in excess of five (5) years without the approval of the Network at its next scheduled meeting or a special meeting authorized under Article V of the Network's Constitution.

Section 8. Finances.

- a. The Executive Board shall present a proposed budget each year at the Annual Session for the purpose of financing the program projected for the next calendar year.
 - i. The Basic Budget will be the operating budget of the Network. It will include all personnel and program expense for the succeeding year. The Income section of this budget will include actual expected revenues from all sources for the next year. The Cooperative Program income projected in the recommended budget will not exceed the income for the current year. This Cooperative Program income projection will be based on the Cooperative Program income for the twelve (12) months prior to budget preparation.
 - ii. A Challenge Budget may be adopted with the Basic Budget. This budget will be the Cooperative Program goal beyond the Basic Budget's allocation for the Cooperative Program. It will be based on a realistic percentage increase over the previous year's Cooperative Program income and will be divided into segments on a percentage basis. Funds received in excess of the Challenge budget will be managed by the Executive Team.
 - iii. The Total Budget will be the sum of the Basic and Challenge Budgets and will be the budget goal for the year.

- b. All financial obligations as budgeted are to be paid by the treasurer for the Network out of available funds. An annual audit shall be made.
- c. Cooperating Baptist churches in the geographical area of the Network shall be asked to support the budget by giving a regular percentage of their unassigned offerings through the Cooperative Program and an offering designated during the Week of Prayer for Network Missions.
- d. Any expenditures in excess of the budget amount in one given year must be first approved by the Executive Board.
- e. Restricted funds, those funds received for specific purposes and restricted by the party providing financial resources to be managed by the Network, including restricted funds carried over into another year, are to be used in the year in which they are provided or in the year immediately following the year in which they are provided. If not used for their intended purposes, their funds will be returned to the party providing them or redirected on written approval from the donor.
 - i. The Executive Board will receive a written report in each September meeting on the activity planned or completed in each of these funds.
 - ii. Each donor will receive at year-end a report of the activity during that year in the restricted funds which he or she provided.

Article IV: Committees

Section 1. In advance of the Annual Session, the President shall appoint a Committee on Credentials and Enrollment whose duties it shall be to provide registration materials for messengers and visitors. This committee shall make a report to the assembled messengers upon the call of the president and shall pass on the credentials of all messengers.

Section 2. In advance of the Network Annual Session, The Executive Board shall:

- a. Nominate, for election by the Network in Annual Session, a preacher and alternate preacher for the next year's annual sermon.
- b. Nominate, for election by the Network in Annual Session, persons to fill vacancies on the committees and boards of the agencies of the Network
- c. Plan and recommend the Order of Business for the Annual Session of the Network
- d. Recommend to the Network for its approval the dates and meeting places for future Annual Sessions for not more than 5 years in advance.

Article V: Amendment

The bylaws may be altered by a two-thirds vote of the messengers present and voting in the first or second session of the Annual Session of the Network.