

# **HEARTLAND BAPTIST NETWORK CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS**

## **CONSTITUTION**

### **ARTICLE I. NAME**

The name of this organization shall be the Heartland Baptist Network (HBN).

### **ARTICLE II. DEFINITION**

Heartland Baptist Network (HBN) is a voluntary, cooperative network of churches, of like faith and practice whose purpose is to elicit and combine energies and resources necessary to their growth and development as New Testament churches.

Heartland Baptist Network is an autonomous body that is governed by messengers of affiliated churches at its annual meeting and by the Network Leadership Team when not in session.

### **ARTICLE III. MISSION STATEMENT**

The purpose of HBN is to assist in strengthening churches through cooperative participation by encouraging leadership development, mobilizing kingdom planting, and promoting church vitality.

## **BYLAWS**

### **ARTICLE I. OFFICERS.**

The officers of HBN shall be as follows:

#### **Section 1. Director of Missions**

Heartland Baptist Network shall employ a director of missions for an indefinite period of service. Responsibilities, remunerations and considerations for the position of the director of missions shall be those set out in the most recent "Personnel Policy Document" adopted by HBN. The director of missions shall serve as an ex-officio member of all standing teams and special appointed teams.

#### **Section 2. Moderator and Assistant Moderator**

The moderator shall be elected annually and shall be limited to two (2) full terms in office. The moderator shall preside over the Network Leadership Team meetings, and the Annual Meeting, and any special called meetings. The moderator shall serve as an ex-officio member of all teams and shall have the authority to call special Network Leadership Team meetings. Notice of every meeting of the Network Leadership Team shall be sent to all members of this team and all HBN churches by the clerk at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting.

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The assistant moderator shall be elected annually, shall be limited to two (2) full terms in office, and shall assist the moderator and preside in the absence of the moderator.

### **Section 3. Clerk and Assistant Clerk**

The clerk shall be elected annually, shall keep records of all meetings, and is responsible for the printing and distribution of the HBN's Annual Meeting minutes to churches in HBN and agencies of the Illinois Baptist State Association and the Southern Baptist Convention. The clerk shall gather from HBN churches their Annual Church Profile. For reporting purposes only, HBN churches shall use July 1 through June 30 as the dates for reporting local church records.

The assistant clerk shall be elected annually and shall assist the clerk and serve in the absence of the clerk.

### **Section 4. Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer**

The treasurer shall be elected annually and shall oversee the receipt and disbursement of all monies received by HBN.

The assistant treasurer shall be elected annually and shall assist the treasurer and serve in the absence of the treasurer.

## **ARTICLE II. TEAMS AND DUTIES**

### **Section 1. General Team Guidelines**

Heartland Baptist Network shall be composed of the Network Leadership Team, the Advance Team, and the Resource Team. These teams shall have both pastors and lay people as members.

To best represent the interests of all churches in HBN, an effort shall be made to have only 1 member from each church serve on any of the three teams. The members of the Network Leadership Team, other than the Resource and the Advanced Team Leaders, must not be members who attend the same church. No more than 2 team members from the same church may serve on the Resource or the Advance Teams. No more than 4 representatives from the same church may serve during the same year. If enough team members cannot be recruited to fill all the positions on the three teams, team members from the same church may be nominated to serve.

Newly elected team members and team leaders shall assume responsibilities following the Annual Meeting and shall serve until the next Annual Meeting.

### **Section 2. Network Leadership Team**

The Network Leadership Team shall have a total of 13 members as follows:

- a. Director of Missions.
- b. Moderator; if absent, shall be filled by the assistant moderator.

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- c. Clerk; if absent, shall be filled by the assistant clerk.
- d. Treasurer; if absent shall be filled by the assistant treasurer.
- e. Resource Team Leader. The Resource Team Leader shall be elected annually and shall report to the Network Leadership Team reports relevant to their meetings and duties.
- f. Advance Team Leader. The Advance Team Leader shall be elected annually and shall report to the Network Leadership Team reports relevant to the Network Leadership Team's meetings and duties.
- g. At-Large Members. Four (4) members shall be elected to a two-year (2) term and perform duties assigned by the moderator.

### **Section 3. Network Leadership Team's Duties**

- a. The Network Leadership Team shall meet at least quarterly and at such a times and places as special meetings shall be deemed necessary.
- b. The Network Leadership Team shall carry out all assigned tasks given to it by HBN during the Annual Meeting.
- c. The Network Leadership Team shall review and approve all actions taken by the Resource Team and the Advance Team.
- d. The Network Leadership Team shall be empowered to transact business on behalf of HBN between the Annual Meetings of HBN, except for:
  - 1. the buying and selling of real property;
  - 2. the calling of a director of missions;
  - 3. the borrowing of money.
- e. The clerk shall publish a written report to HBN churches following each of the Network Leadership Team quarterly meetings and shall publish a cumulative report for the Annual Meeting.
- f. The Network Leadership Team shall recommend at the Annual Meeting the date, time and location of the next Annual Meeting and the meeting dates and locations of the Network Leadership Team meetings.
- g. Any cooperating church may send observers to the Network Leadership Team meetings. An observer may speak to any issue, but only Network Leadership Team members may vote.

### **Section 4. Resource Team**

The Resource Team shall have a total of 9 members who shall serve for a three (3) year term. The Resource Team shall:

- a. Meet prior to each Network Leadership Team meeting.
- b. Nominate team members at the Annual Meeting to serve on the Network Leadership, the Resource and the Advance Teams for the next HBN year.
- c. Nominate team members at the Annual Meeting to serve as team leaders for the Resource Team and the Advance Team for the next HBN year.
- d. Nominate team members to the Network Leadership Team, the Resource and the Advance Teams for filling any vacancies that occur during the current HBN year.

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- e. Prepare and present a proposed budget for the next calendar year, to be voted on at the Annual Meeting, and submit detailed quarterly reports to the Network Leadership Team for review during their regularly scheduled meetings.
- f. Review the Constitution and the Bylaws of HBN annually, recommending any proposed changes to be voted on during the HBN Annual Meeting.

## **Section 5. Advance Team**

The Advance Team shall have a total of 9 members who shall serve for three (3) year terms. The Advance Team shall:

- a. Assess the needs, projects and events of member churches and leaders as requested.
- b. Plan, coordinate and conduct various HBN events, activities, or mission trips.
- c. Oversee all HBN resources and equipment available for use by member churches.
- d. Recommend the purchase of additional HBN resources and equipment for use by member churches.
- e. Meet prior to each Network Leadership Team meeting.
- f. Develop and implement strategies to assist member churches in the areas of leadership development, mobilizing kingdom planting and promoting church vitality:

### **1. Leadership Development**

- Pastoral Cohorts/Clusters
- Deacon Ministry
- Strategic Planning Training
- Assessing Leaders' Gifts, Talents, and Strengths

### **2. Kingdom Planting**

- Mission trips
- Disaster relief
- Church planting

### **3. Church Vitality**

- Sunday School/Small Groups
- Evangelism
- VBS
- Prayer Walking
- Worship
- Conflict Resolution
- Pastoral/Staff Searches

## **ARTICLE III. MEETINGS**

All HBN meetings shall be opened and closed with prayer and all meetings shall be governed in all its deliberations by Robert's Rules of Order not covered by the Constitution or Bylaws.

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## **Section 1. Annual Meeting**

- a. Heartland Baptist Network shall meet at least annually to conduct business and to elect team members to the Network Leadership, the Resource and the Advance Teams.
- b. The Network Leadership Team shall determine the date, time and location of the Annual Meeting.
- c. The program for the Annual Meeting shall be presented in writing to the Network Leadership Team for approval one (1) month prior to the Annual Meeting.
- d. The clerk shall send, as soon as published, copies of the annual minutes to the Southern Baptist Historical Library and Archives (Nashville, TN); the Illinois Baptist State Association Historical Library; and the Abraham Lincoln Presidential Library (Illinois State Historical Library); and to other agencies upon request.

## **Section 2. Messengers**

Messengers to the Annual Meeting are duly elected by the cooperating churches. Each church may elect messengers based on the following:

- a. Five messengers for the first 50 resident members or less
- b. One messenger for each additional 50 resident members or major fraction (26 or more)
- c. All members of the Network Leadership Team are automatically messengers and will be counted toward the total number of messengers representing one church as defined in this section.
- d. A church shall have no more than ten (10) messengers.

## **Section 3. Special Called Meetings**

When necessary, the moderator may call a special meeting. Written notice (electronic notification may be substituted if accepted) shall be sent by the clerk to all members of the Network Leadership, the Resource, and the Advanced Teams, member churches, as well as messengers. These notifications shall be sent 14 days and 7 days prior to the meeting date.

## **ARTICLE IV. DOCTRINE**

Heartland Baptist Network acknowledges the value of the Baptist Faith and Message which was written in 1925 as well as all its revisions in 1963 and 2000.

## **ARTICLE V. AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution and Bylaws may be amended at any Annual Meeting of HBN by two-thirds majority of the messengers present, provided twelve (12) hours notice has been given.

## **ARTICLE VI. SERVICE OF PROCESS**

Process may be served upon the registered agent (Director of Missions) or any officer of HBN.

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## **ARTICLE VII. AFFILIATION**

The Network Leadership Team shall review requests from churches that desire to affiliate with HBN. Churches wishing to cooperate and have messengers seated in HBN Annual or Special Called Meetings shall observe the following:

- a. Any church desiring affiliation with HBN shall present a petitionary letter at least sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Meeting. This letter shall set forth facts concerning its organization, the articles of faith and the name(s) of its duly elected messengers.
- b. This letter shall be referred to the Team on New Churches of HBN. The Team on New Churches shall be composed of five (5) members, including both pastors and laypersons and shall be appointed by the moderator to consider petitionary letters.
- c. A favorable report and recommendation from the Team on New Churches shall be acted on at the first session of the Annual Meeting. Providing this recommendation receives a two-thirds majority vote of the messengers present, this church shall be admitted into the affiliation of HBN and its messengers given the hand of fellowship by the moderator and seated as accredited messengers. Unfavorable reports on petitionary letters by the Team on New Churches shall not require any action by HBN.
- d. New Churches organized and others desiring affiliation between Annual Meetings may be received into the fellowship and watch care of HBN's Network Leadership Team upon satisfactory evidence of their correctness of faith and order, by the Team on New Churches, but their affiliation to HBN remains subject to the final approval at the HBN Annual Meeting.
- e. HBN shall have no ecclesiastical authority over any church; but when it appears that any church affiliated with HBN is out of harmony with HBN as to faith, practice or order, HBN may withdraw fellowship. Such matters shall be handled by a Fellowship Team, appointed by the moderator. Recommendations by the Fellowship Team shall be made to the Network Leadership Team.
- f. Visitors may be invited to be seated during the Annual Meeting, but shall not have the right to vote on any question.

## **ARTICLE VIII. FINANCES**

1. The budget year for HBN shall run concurrent to the calendar year.
2. No collection shall be taken at any meeting sponsored by HBN or any of its organizations. However, this shall not preclude worship offerings at the Annual Meeting or any designated funds originating with any HBN entity. All such funds shall be channeled through the HBN Treasurer.

