

The Tennessee Baptist Convention Constitution

Revised November 16, 2022

Article I. THE NAME

The name of this body is “The Tennessee Baptist Convention,” hereinafter “the Convention.”

Article II. COMPOSITION

The meetings of the Convention shall be composed of messengers who are members of cooperating Baptist churches. Cooperating Baptist churches are those that (a) subscribe to and support the principles, programs, and policies of the Convention; and (b) in the fiscal year immediately preceding the annual meeting of the Convention, contribute financially (1) through the Cooperative Program, or (2) through the Tennessee Baptist Convention portion of the Cooperative Program without restriction or designation. Each cooperating Baptist church shall be entitled to two messengers. Each cooperating Baptist church shall also be entitled to one messenger for each one hundred members or fraction thereof beyond the first one hundred, subject to a maximum of ten messengers from any one church. A messenger shall be a member of the church by which he or she is elected.

Article III. PURPOSE

The mission of the Convention is to fulfill the Great Commission by assisting, encouraging, and strengthening affiliated churches to reach the evangelistic, educational, missionary, benevolent, and other ministry goals in a cooperative relationship with the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article IV. LIMITATION

The Convention shall have no ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the churches or associations cooperating with and contributing to the objects of the Convention; nor shall it act as advisory counsel in case of differences between the churches or associations; nor shall it interfere with the constitution of any church or association.

Article V. MEETINGS

The Convention shall meet annually, unless providentially hindered, for the purposes of corporate worship, conducting the business of the Convention, electing leadership for Convention ministries and other purposes. Special meetings of the Convention may occur when properly called as described in Bylaw I.

Article VI. OFFICERS

The officers of the Convention shall be a president, a vice president, a second vice president, and a treasurer.

Article VII. TENNESSEE BAPTIST MISSION BOARD (TBMB)

Tennessee Baptist Mission Board, a nonprofit religious public benefit corporation, shall have charge of all the educational, missionary, benevolent, and other interests of the Convention. During the interim between meetings of the Convention, TBMB shall have all the powers of the Convention except as limited by this constitution, the bylaws of the Convention, and specific action taken by the Convention in session.

Article VIII. BYLAWS

The Convention may adopt such bylaws, not in conflict with this constitution, as it deems advisable, provided that any proposed amendment shall be processed in accordance with provisions contained in Bylaw IX.

Article IX. AMENDMENTS

- A. This constitution, except Article IV which remains forever intact, may be amended at any annual meeting of the Convention by a vote of two thirds of the messengers present and voting provided:
 - 1. that any proposed amendment not originating with the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws shall have been submitted in writing to the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws by a member of a cooperating Baptist church at least sixty days prior to the annual meeting at which it is to be presented. The sixty-day notification requirement may be waived by an eighty percent vote of the messengers, present and voting;
 - 2. that any such proposed amendment, and any proposed amendment originating with the Committee on Constitution and Bylaws, shall be published by the committee in the *Baptist & Reflector* at least thirty days prior to the annual meeting at which it is to be presented, and such proposed amendment shall also be printed in the *Book of Reports* for that annual meeting, but the proposed amendment must be offered as a motion at the annual meeting by a messenger or the committee on the first session of the annual meeting;
 - 3. that any such amendment must be considered for vote no earlier than the second session of the annual meeting;
 - 4. that any amendment shall be approved by the messengers to the annual meeting at which it is presented and by the messengers at the next annual meeting.
- B. The Committee on Constitution and Bylaws may communicate with anyone submitting an amendment, suggesting ways to improve the language before it is published. The committee may make recommendations to the messengers concerning amendments proposed by messengers.