

ARTICLE I

Name

The Ohio Association of Regular Baptist Churches Inc.

ARTICLE II

Purpose

Section 1

The OARBC is a network of independent Baptist churches in Ohio that are united in doctrine and fellowship for the sake of the gospel of Christ and that subscribe to the Doctrinal Statement and Constitution of the association.

Section 2

The OARBC exists:

- To stimulate our fellowshipping Baptist churches to passionately propagate the gospel of Christ both near and far using biblically appropriate methods (Acts 1:8).
- To foster a deep sense of oneness and camaraderie among our fellowshipping Baptist churches so as to provoke them to love and good works both within and beyond our fellowship of churches (John 13:34-35; Hebrews 10:24-25).
- To encourage our fellowshipping Baptist churches to be doctrinally balanced both by teaching sound Bible doctrine and by separating themselves from worldliness and false doctrine (Romans 16:17-18; Titus 2:1, 11-14; 2 Timothy 3:14-17).
- To motivate our fellowshipping Baptist churches to populate Ohio with other Baptist churches that embrace these purposes.

Section 3

These stated purposes shall be carried out by (but not exclusively)

- The work of a State Representative
- The work of the Council of 12
- An official means of communication with the churches of the association.

ARTICLE III

Doctrinal Statement

Section 1 - THE SCRIPTURES

We believe in the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as verbally inspired by God and inerrant in the original writings, embracing all matters which the Biblical authors address; and we believe that they are of supreme and final authority for faith and life.

II Timothy 3:16, 17; II Peter 1:19-21

Section 2 – GOD

We believe in one, true, living God; an infinite, omniscient, omnipotent, omnipresent Spirit, the Creator and Supreme Ruler of Heaven and earth, inexpressibly glorious in holiness and worthy of all possible honor, confidence and love and that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, equal in every divine perfection and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

Genesis 1:1, 2; Proverbs 30:4; Matthew 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 1:1-4; Acts 5:3, 4; II Corinthians 13:14

Section 3 - JESUS CHRIST

We believe that Christ is absolute Deity, that He is both human and divine, both true God and true man; that He existed from eternity and is co-equal with God the Father and God the Holy Spirit; that He was born of a virgin and lived a sinless life; that He provided a substitutionary atonement for sinful man, that He died on the cross, was buried, and arose bodily from the grave; that He ascended bodily into Heaven and intercedes now for the saints; that He will return literally to earth after the Tribulation to set up His millennial reign.

Matthew 1:20, 21; 28; Mark 16; Luke 1:26-28; 24; John 1:1, 2, 14; 10:30; Acts 1:11; I Corinthians 15:4; II Corinthians 5:21; Philippians 2:5-8; Hebrews 4:15; 9:26; I John 5:20

Section 4 - HOLY SPIRIT

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a Divine person, equal with God the Father, and God the Son; that He was active in creation; that He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment; that He is the agent in the New Birth; that He baptizes all believers into the body of Christ at conversion; that He indwells, seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses, sanctifies, fills, and helps the believer.

We believe that the Holy Spirit gives gifts to all believers. We also believe that the sign/revelatory gifts of the Holy Spirit have fulfilled their purpose for the church age and are not applicable to the work of the Holy Spirit today.

Psalm 139:7-12; John 14:16-17; 16:13-14; Romans 8:9; I Corinthians 6:19; 12:8-10, 28-30; 13:8-10; 14:1-40; Hebrews 2:2-4.

Section 5 – DEVIL AND SATAN

We believe in the reality and personality of Satan, the Devil; and that he was created by God as an angel but, through pride and rebellion, became the enemy of his Creator; that he became the unholy god of this age and the ruler of all the powers of darkness and is destined to the judgment of an eternal justice in the lake of fire.

Matthew 4:1-11; II Corinthians 4:4; Revelation 20:10

Section 6 - THE CREATION

We believe in the Biblical account of Creation, including angels, physical universe, and man, and that this is a literal, historical account of the direct, immediate, creative acts of God, without any evolutionary process.

Genesis 1:26,27; 2:7-9,16,17; 3:1-19; Psalm 148:2, 5; Colossians 1:16

Section 7 - FALL OF MAN

We believe that man, created in the image of God, was innocent but that he voluntarily sinned and thereby incurred not only physical death, but also that spiritual and eternal death which is separation

from God and that all human beings are born with a sinful nature and are sinners in thought, word, and deed.

Genesis 3:6; Romans 1:18, 32; 3:10-19; 5:12-19

Section 8 - THE VIRGIN BIRTH

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ was miraculously conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, and that He is both true God and true man.

Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-35; John 1:14; Philippians 2:6-11

Section 9 – SALVATION

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures as a representative and substitutionary sacrifice and rose again for our justification and that all who believe in Him are justified on the grounds of His shed blood and are saved by grace through faith wholly apart from human merit and works.

Acts 13:39, 16:31; Romans 3:21-28; 10:9-13; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:3-8

Section 10 – GRACE AND THE NEW BIRTH

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sins is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, nor by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life.

John 1:12, 13; 3:3, 6-8; Acts 16:30-33; Romans 6:23; II Corinthians 5:17, 19; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 2:1; 5:9; Colossians 2:13; II Peter 1:4; I John 5:1

Section 11 – JUSTIFICATION

We believe that justification is the judicial act of God, wherein He declares the believer righteous because of the imputed righteousness of Christ, and that it is given not because of works but only through faith in the Redeemer's shed blood.

Romans 3:24; 4:5; 5:1-9; Galatians 2:16

Section 12 – SANCTIFICATION

We believe that sanctification is the divine setting apart of the believer unto God, accomplished in a threefold manner; first, an eternal act of God, based upon redemption in Christ, establishing the believer in a position of holiness at the moment he trusts the Savior; second, a continuing process in the saint as the Holy Spirit applies the Word of God to the life; third, the final accomplishment of this process at the Lord's return.

John 17:17; I Corinthians 1:30; II Corinthians 3:18; Ephesians 5:25-27; I Thess. 4:3-4; 5:23-24; Hebrews 3:1; 10:10-14; I John 3:2; Jude 23,25; Revelations 22:11

Section 13 – SEPARATION

We believe in personal separation from all practices and influences of the world which hinder a Spirit-filled life. We believe in biblical separation from all forms of ecclesiastical liberalism, apostasy, and compromise. We acknowledge the freedom and responsibility of each autonomous local church to apply these separation principles according to its understanding of Scripture.

Romans 6:1-14; 12:1; I Corinthians 6:14; 7:1; Galatians 5:16-25; Colossians 3:1-17; James 4:4; I Peter 2:11; I John 2:15-17

Section 14 - SECURITY OF THE SAINTS

We believe that all who are truly born-again are eternally kept by God.

John 10:28, 29; Romans 8:35-39; Philippians 1:6; Jude 1

Section 15 - THE LOCAL CHURCH

We believe that the local church is an organized body of immersed believers, associated by covenant and/or doctrinal statement, observing the ordinances of Christ, having the offices of pastor and deacon exercising the gifts, rights and privileges and responsibilities given them by the Word and that it has the absolute right of self government, free from outside interference and is directly responsible to God.

We believe that the church, which is His body, includes all New Testament believers from Pentecost to the Rapture.

We believe the mission of the church is to glorify God, edify believers, and seek to evangelize the lost.

Matthew 18:15-17; 28:19,20; I Corinthians 1:2; 7:17; 10:31; 11:16; 12:28; Ephesians 1:12, 22, 23; 2:14,15; 4:11,12; 5:23-32; I Timothy 3:1-15

Section 16 - BAPTISM AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

We believe that baptism and the Lord's Supper are the two ordinances of the local church, that they are not sacraments to bestow a special grace to the believer. Rather, they are memorials that symbolically remind believers of the sufferings of Christ.

We believe that baptism is the single immersion of a believer in water to show forth our identification with the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, through Whom we died to sin and rose to a new life; that baptism is to be performed under the authority of the local church and that it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership.

We believe that the Lord's Supper is the commemoration of His death until He come, and should be preceded always by solemn self-examination.

Matthew 3:16; 28:16-20; John 3:34; Acts 2:41, 42; 8:36, 38, 39; Romans 6:3-5; I Corinthians 11:23-28; Colossians 2:12.

Section 17 - RIGHTEOUS AND WICKED

We believe that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that only those who are justified by faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and sanctified by the Spirit of our God are truly righteous in His esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

We believe in the bodily resurrection of all dead; the saved to a life of eternal glory and blessing in heaven with God; the unsaved to eternal judgment of conscious suffering in the lake of fire.

Genesis 18:23; Proverbs 14:32; Malachi 3:18; Matthew 7:13,14; 25:34-41; Luke 9:21; 16:25; John 5:28,29; 8:21; Romans 6:17,18,23; 7:6; I John 5:19; Matthew 10:28; 18:8,9; 25:41-46; Mark 9:43-49; John 5:28,29; II Thessalonians 1:6-9; Revelation 10:6,11-15; 21:1-8

Section 18 - CIVIL GOVERNMENT

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment for the interests and good order of human society; that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed. However, we believe that civil government has no right to legislate or seek to control matters of religious faith or practice.

Exodus 18:21,22; II Samuel 23:3; Psalm 72:11; Daniel 3:17,18; Matthew 10:28; 22:21; 23:10; Acts 4:19,20; 5:20; 23:5; Romans 13:17; Philippians 2:10,11; Titus 3:1; I Peter 2:13, 14,17; Revelation 10:16

Section 19 - FUTURE EVENTS

We believe in the imminent "Blessed Hope," the Rapture of the church before the Tribulation, when "The Lord shall descend from heaven" to catch up His bride to meet Him in the air and to participate in the Judgment Seat of Christ and the Marriage of the Lamb in Heaven; that the Tribulation will begin on the earth simultaneously, culminating in the literal return of Christ to earth at the end of the Tribulation, the setting up of His millennial reign which is followed by the eternal state, including the new heaven and the new earth.

Isaiah 7:14; 9:6; John 14:1-3; I Corinthians 15:42-58;
I Thessalonians 4:13-18; Revelation 1:5-7; 19:11-16; 20:1-6

ARTICLE IV Fellowship and Voting Privileges

Section I

Any independent, non-affiliated Baptist Church may submit a written application to the secretary expressing agreement with Constitution and Doctrinal Statement of the Association and be received into fellowship upon a majority vote of the messengers present at the next annual meeting. All applications must include applying church's Doctrinal Statement and certification of a recognition council, consisting of OARBC churches.

Section 2

The secretary shall present the application to the Council of 12 for consideration. At the recommendation of the Council, the application shall be presented to the Association at the first evening session of the Annual Conference for consideration. Approval by vote of the Association shall entitle the messengers from said church to vote in all subsequent sessions.

Section 3

If for any reason the Association should refuse to accept said application, it shall be referred back to the Council for further consideration and may, at the direction of the Council, be presented again at any subsequent session.

Section 4

Each Association church shall designate three of its members as voting messengers who shall be entitled to vote at all sessions of the Annual Conference.

Section 5

Fellowship in the Association can be terminated by:

- A. Action of the local church by notifying the secretary in writing of such desire.
- B. Recommendation from the Council of 12 at the Annual Conference because of unscriptural doctrine, unbaptistic practices, or prolonged disinterest, and approved by the majority vote of the messengers at Annual Conference.

ARTICLE V Meetings

Section 1

The Association shall hold an Annual Conference for the purpose of preaching, fellowship, and the transaction of business. The date and place of the Annual Conference shall be determined by the Council of 12.

Section 2

Special meetings of the Association may be called by the Council of 12, or by the written request of 25% of Association Churches.

Section 3

The Chairman of the Council shall moderate the business meetings. In his absence the Vice Chairman shall do so.

ARTICLE VI Officers

Section 1

The officers of the Association shall consist of a Council of 12 men from the Association churches. Four shall be elected annually to serve three years. Any member of Council completing two consecutive terms shall be ineligible for election for one year.

Section 2

A. Method of Election

Nominations:

Each church in the Association shall receive a nomination ballot twelve (12) weeks prior to the Annual Conference. Each church may nominate up to six (6) individuals from the Association membership for election to the Council of Twelve. The names of these nominees shall be sent to the secretary of the Council and must be received by the secretary not later than 30 days prior to the Annual Conference.

The secretary shall tabulate all nominations and determine the six (6) receiving the highest number of votes. In the event of a tie the nomination shall be decided by a method of random

selection approved by the Council of Twelve. These nominees shall be contacted as to their willingness to serve. Should any decline, the person receiving the next highest number of votes shall be contacted until six (6) are willing to serve. Each nominee shall affirm they are in agreement with the OARBC Articles of Faith.

Election:

An election of members to the Council of Twelve shall be held during the Annual Conference. A ballot of the six (6) nominees shall be presented to the Association Messengers. A vote may be cast for up to four (4) of the six (6) nominees on each ballot. A ballot with votes for more than four (4) of the six (6) nominees shall be not be counted. Ballots shall be cast during the Annual Conference at a time and place designated for that purpose. Four (4) members receiving the highest number of votes among the six (6) nominees shall be elected to serve a three year term on the Council of Twelve.

Tabulating Ballots:

The Council secretary shall appoint three (3) tellers to count the ballots and report the result of the election.

Tiebreaking:

In the event of a tie, the outcome shall be decided by a method of random selection approved by the Council of Twelve.

B. Vacancies

When a vacancy occurs on the Council within six months following the Annual meeting, it shall be filled by the man who received the next highest number of votes in the previous election. In the event of a tie, alphabetical order shall determine the one elected. Vacancies occurring after six months shall be filled at the next annual election of the Council.

C. Organization

At the Annual meeting of the Association the Council shall convene after the ratification (Section A) and shall organize, electing a Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Youth Chairman, Program Chairman, and any other chairs deemed necessary to carry out the work of the Association. The Chairman of the Council shall moderate the Annual Conference. The Council shall be publicly announced and presented at the Annual Conference.

D. Salaried Personnel

No salaried personnel of the Association is eligible to be elected to the Council of 12.

Section 3 – Responsibilities of the Council

- A. The Council of 12 is responsible for implementing the purpose of the Association as stated in Article II, Section 3 and approving all activities held in the name of the Association
- B. The Council, through the office of Treasurer, shall be responsible for the receipt and disbursement of Association funds.
- C. The Council is authorized to acquire personnel to carry out the purpose and work of the Association. This may include volunteer, non-salaried, as well as salaried, personnel.
 1. Salaried positions deemed necessary for the Association shall be approved by the churches by a written referendum or upon a recommendation at the Annual meeting preceded by written notice to the churches 60 days before the meeting.

2. Personnel to fill salaried position shall be acquired by the Council and ratified by the voting messengers at the Annual Conference.
 3. All salaries shall be determined by the Council.
- D. The Council shall present an annual printed report of their activities at the Annual meeting.
- E. The Treasurer shall present an annual printed report to the Association.
- F. The Council may examine and recommend to the Association agencies for approval by the Association. Such recommendations shall be based on agreement with the Doctrinal Statement of the Association and in areas that will promote the purpose of the Association.

Section 4 – Meetings of the Association

The Council of 12 shall meet at least twice each year and more frequently if deemed necessary by the Chairman, officers, or majority of the Council. Date and place of the meetings to be at the discretion of the Council.

Expenses to attend these meetings shall be paid from Association funds.

The Council may, if desired, invite observers to attend the regular Council meetings.

ARTICLE VII Association Ministries

Section 1 – Official Organ

The OARBC shall maintain an official means of communication with the churches of the Association. The organ shall be published on a regular basis by the State Representative or an editor appointed by the Council.

The discontinuance of this official organ shall be by vote of the churches upon recommendation of the Council of 12.

Section 2 – State Representative

The Council of 12 shall maintain the position of State Representative as funds are available. The State Representative shall serve at the discretion of the Council of 12.

Responsibilities of the State Representative are as follows:

Editor of the The Link..

Work with Association churches as invited to do so.

Work with independent, non-affiliated Baptist churches as requested and seek, if possible, to encourage them to become a part of the Association.

Maintain an office for the Association. Office expense to come from Association funds.

As requested, to work with churches seeking pastors, assistants, etc.

Upon invitation, to counsel with churches and pastors.

Endeavor to solidify the Association and implement programs that will be beneficial to Association churches and pastors.

Section 3 – Camps

Three camps are associated with the Ohio Association of Regular Baptist Churches. These are Camp Patmos, Kelley's Island, Ohio; Scioto Hills, Scioto Furnace, Ohio; and Skyview Ranch, Millersburg, Ohio.

ARTICLE VIII Amendments

This Constitution may be amended at any Annual meeting by a two-thirds vote of the messengers present and voting, provided a one-year notice has been given in writing and a public reading of the proposed amendment has been given at the previous Annual meeting.

ARTICLE IX Dissolution

In the event of the dissolution of the Ohio Association of Regular Baptist Churches, all assets shall first be used to satisfy all debts in full. The Council of 12 or appointed legal counsel shall be responsible to distribute the remaining assets, in conformity with the requisite of the Internal Revenue Service, to any other non-profit religious corporation that is in agreement with the Doctrinal Position (ARTICLE III) of the Ohio Association of Regular Baptist Churches.

A revised Constitution, except for ARTICLE III - Doctrinal Statement, was adopted by the Ohio Association of Regular Baptist Churches in session at Annual Conference, October 21, 1987 at Grace Baptist Church, Cedarville, Ohio. ARTICLE III - Doctrinal Statement, was adopted on October 17, 1989, at Annual Conference in Nottingham Baptist Church, Willoughby Hills, Ohio. Each was effective immediately. All previously adopted bylaws and amendments thereto which are in conflict with those presently adopted are revoked by this action.

This constitution was again updated at the Annual Conference, Oct. 22, 2013, Emmanuel Baptist, Toledo. This copy supersedes all previous copies.