



ASSOCIATION OF BIBLE CHURCHES INTERNATIONAL

PO Box 953, Ocklawaha, Florida USA 32183

ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE OF ABCI

ABCI is a fellowship of Bible Believing churches dedicated to the Biblical mandate of the Great Commission (Matthew 18:19-20 *"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*)

Instead of relying upon complicated man-made guidelines, we respect the independence of each member church, and require that our own structure shall be simple and focused upon bringing glory to the Only Savior.

This organizational structure exists to benefit the Biblical ministries for the Lord Jesus. It is not designed to become an association which takes valuable time and effort and focus away from God's mandate to all true churches of the Lord--and that mandate is the Great Commission.

Each local church is an independent body of Believers that governs their own ministries. Each local associated church has voluntarily agreed to join with other churches of like doctrines and beliefs.

Associated churches work together to fulfill the mandate from Jesus to bring souls to the Savior and edify those who have found forgiveness and new life through faith in Jesus Christ.

ABCI has a stated Doctrinal Beliefs, to which all local associated churches must agree.

ANNUAL MEETINGS.

While an "annual meeting" would be ideal, from a practical approach, there are many reasons why this might be impossible to accomplish. Political issues, epidemics, and financial limitations could hinder such regular, in-person meetings. Therefore meetings can either be made once every two years, or they may be held annually by means of virtual communications (such as through Zoom, or other internet technologies).

Whenever possible, once each year, every associated church shall select and send two representatives who are members in good standing of that church. A date and location for this meeting shall be announced by the International Representative least two months before the scheduled meeting. He shall determine the frequency and type of meeting (an in-person meeting, or a virtual, online meeting). Any expenses involved in either the in-person meetings or the virtual meetings shall be the responsibility of the local associated church.

THE PURPOSE.

The purpose of the "annual meeting" is to bring local churches together in cooperation so that the Gospel may be known more effectively. This should be a time of good fellowship, discussion of common issues among the brethren, and an edifying time in the Word.

The International Representative shall plan the events of the Annual Meeting so that the representatives will be challenged by the Word of God, and return to their local churches with greater dedication and enthusiasm and prayerful plans for the ministry of the Lord Jesus.

A major purpose of the Annual meeting is so local representatives may prayerfully and diligently seek ways to more effectively share the Gospel.

Where funds are available, the representatives at each Annual Meeting shall determine how they shall be used in the spreading of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

REPRESENTATIVES.

Each associated church shall send two representatives to the annual meeting. The International Representative shall preside over the meeting in a fair and impartial manner. Upon the return of the local church representatives, they shall share with the congregation the blessings and encouragements which came from the Annual Meeting.

BISHOPS.

A bishop, or more than one bishop, may be chosen by the representatives during the ABCI Annual Meeting.

If the churches cannot agree on a candidate, or no qualified candidate is available, no bishop should be chosen. When needed, a bishop shall be chosen by majority vote from among churches associated with ABCI at the Annual Meeting. He must be in full compliance with the Biblical standards stated in 1 Timothy 3:1 *This is a true saying, If a man desire the office of a bishop, he desireth a good work.*

2 A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach;

3 Not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre; but patient, not a brawler, not covetous;

4 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity;

5 (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)

6 Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil.

7 Moreover he must have a good report of them which are without; lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil.

DUTIES OF BISHOPS.

A bishop must be an effective minister of the Gospel. He should be an Elder and a current or previous pastor, so that pastors of the local churches will be assured that their pastoral situations can be understood.

A Bishop shall minister Godly wisdom in matters of disputes within a local church that are not solved by Biblical strategies within the local church. He shall have authority to impose solutions and judgments regarding situations that are not resolved in a reasonable time. He shall offer his prayerful advice to churches seeking to grow. He shall be a friend and a spiritual help to the pastors.

A Bishop shall remain in that Biblical office unless he resigns, dies, is physically incapable of performing his duties, or is removed by the majority of ABCI representatives who have determined that he no longer represents the Lord's interests accurately, or by statement from the ABCI Director indicating a doctrinal or behavioral disqualification.

A Bishop shall oversee several churches, according to his ability and the desires of the ABCI representatives. The number and location of churches for each Bishop shall be determined by the ABCI representatives.

THE INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE

An ABCI INTERNATIONAL REPRESENTATIVE shall be appointed by Dr. Ed J MacWilliams, Director of ABCI. It shall be the duty of the International Representative to maintain communication with the local churches, to establish an Annual Meeting program which shall encourage, make plans for greater outreach, and coordinate these efforts with the local representatives.

ABCI shall have the authority to allow local churches or the ABCI organization to ordain pastors, bishops, and evangelists.

ABCI shall recognize proven Biblical Apostles or prophets from within its membership.

COMMITTEES.

OUTREACH COMMITTEE. Shall work with other member churches to develop evangelistic programs. The Committee members shall be chosen by vote at the Annual Meeting and shall serve for one year, unless re-elected. Members of any and all committee(s) must be members of ABCI churches in good standing, and maintain both the doctrines and practices of the ABCI Association.

COMMITTEES may be selected and established on a temporary or permanent basis by the vote of local representatives at the Annual Meetings.

A complete report of the Annual Meetings, Bishop activities, and local church issues to the ABCI Director each year or more often as required.