

THE MINISTERS COUNCIL of the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware

BYLAWS

Article I. NAME

This organization shall be known as The Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches of Pennsylvania and Delaware (ABCOPAD).

Article II. PURPOSE

The purpose of this organization is to:

- A. Promote mutual support, ethical behavior, and personal spiritual growth among its members;
- B. Motivate members, as stewards of the Christian Gospel, to grow in professional competence;
- C. Provide opportunities for discussion of issues that affect the members regarding their professional vocations, including their personal and family situations;
- D. Participate in the ABCOPAD Region Board through representation appointed by the Ministers Council Executive Committee; and
- E. Participate in the ABC/USA Ministers Council Senate through representation appointed by our Ministers Council Executive Committee.

Article III. AFFILIATION

This organization shall affiliate and cooperate with The Ministers Council of the American Baptist Churches in the USA (ABCUSA).

Article IV. MEMBERSHIP

Section A. Membership Eligibility.

Active membership is open to all ministerial leaders (ordained, commissioned, certified, or licensed) serving in American Baptist related churches and institutions in the ABCOPAD Region, to national or general staff persons at the ABCUSA Mission Center in Valley Forge, and to American Baptist ministerial leaders residing in the ABCOPAD Region.

Section B. Membership Status.

1. Active members shall be those whose annual dues are paid.
2. Life membership is granted upon retirement from a position as a ministerial leader provided that person was an active member of an American Baptist Ministers Council three of the last five years of his or her ministry. Life members shall be considered active members. They shall not be required to pay annual dues, but may choose to do so.

Section C. Membership Ceasing.

Membership in the ABCOP AD Ministers Council ceases when either eligibility requirement named in Section A or B.1. is not met.

Section D. Membership Year and Dues.

The member year is the calendar year. Annual dues shall be the amount established by the Executive Committee and approved by the ABCOPAD Ministers Council for its use, plus the amount required by The Ministers Council of ABC/USA for its use.

Section E. Valley Forge Chapter.

1. The Organization. Although all American Baptist ministerial leaders living in Pennsylvania and Delaware have many common concerns and interests as colleagues in ministry, it is recognized that the persons employed as national or general staff at the ABC/USA Mission Center have some professional needs different from pastors. Therefore, those ABCOPAD Ministers Council members may be organized to function as a separate Valley Forge Chapter. Because of the proximity and of interests more in common with national and general executive staff persons, eligible persons of Eastern College and Eastern Baptist Theological Seminary may also become members of the Valley Forge Chapter.
2. Function and Liaison. The Valley Forge Chapter will collect national and local Ministers Council dues from its active members, maintain its own treasury and conduct its own business, underwriting its own expenses. It shall provide a Chapter representative to meetings of the ABCOP AD Council and Executive Committee.

Article V. OFFICERS.

Section A. Officers, Executive Committee, and Elections.

The officers of the ABCOPAD Ministers Council shall be a president, a first vice president, a second vice president, a secretary, and a treasurer. The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers plus three members-at-large elected from the membership, a representative appointed by the Valley Forge Chapter, and a staff representative appointed by the Region Minister. All terms of office shall be two years.

Elections shall be held during the Council business meeting that is held immediately preceding the ABCOPAD biennial convention (Article VI, Section A). The new officers shall assume their duties upon adjournment of the biennial convention that immediately follows their election. Nominees to the Executive Committee shall have been members of the ABCOPAD Ministers Council for two years prior to their election. Nominees to the offices of president or vice president shall have served a previous term on the Executive Committee. Maximum service on the Executive Committee shall not exceed eight consecutive years

Section B. Duties of Officers

1. The president shall preside at all meetings of the ABCOPAD Ministers Council and of the Executive Committee, and shall be an ex-officio member of any appointed committees.
2. The first vice president shall act in the absence of the president, and shall be chairperson for planning the annual retreat for the Council members. (See Article VI. Section C.)
3. The second vice president shall act in the absence of the president and first vice president, and shall be responsible for promoting and sustaining membership, both active and life members.
4. The treasurer shall receive dues and provide names of the members to the second vice president, shall maintain bank accounts and pay expenses as authorized by the executive committee, shall forward dues for the ABCUSA Ministers Council, and shall have records audited annually by May 31. The auditing shall be done by two members, appointed by the president.
5. The secretary shall give appropriate notice and record the minutes of the Council and Executive Committee meetings, prepare the minutes of the biennial meeting for printing in the published records of the biennial meeting of ABCOPAD, and shall maintain orderly records to transfer to a new secretary when duly elected.

Section C. Nominating Committee.

A nominating committee of three persons, at least one of whom shall be a member of the Executive Committee, shall be appointed by the president six months in advance of the business meeting to be held immediately preceding the ABCOPAD biennial convention. Taking into consideration geographical representation, the various kinds of ministerial leadership, and the need for continuing Executive Committee experience, the committee shall submit a list of nominees to the president no later than one month prior to the business meeting at which elections are to be held.

Section D. Vacancies and Successions.

Vacancies may be filled by appointment of the president until the next business meeting, at which time the appointees or new nominees shall be elected to fill unexpired terms. No officer may serve in any office that would retain her or his person on the Executive Committee more than eight years.

Section E. Executive Committee.

1. The Executive Committee shall meet regularly at least twice a year. Additional meetings may be held at the call of the president and secretary.
2. The Executive Committee shall consider, propose, activate, or implement any program, research, event, newsletter, etc., that will service the membership in order to fulfill the purpose of the organization.
3. The Executive Committee shall appoint representatives to the Region Board and committees as required by Region policy. All appointees shall be members of the ABCOPAD Ministers Council. The Executive Committee shall appoint Senate delegates to a term of four years, in accordance with the bylaws of the *ABCUSA* Ministers Council; the number of delegates shall be determined by our previous year's active membership.

Article VI. MEETINGS AND QUORUM.

Section A. Business Meetings.

Business meetings of the Council shall be held at each annual retreat (Article VI. Section C.) There shall be a business meeting, at a time determined by the Executive committee, immediately preceding the opening of the biennial convention of the ABCOPAD. The president will arrange the place of the Ministers Council meeting in cooperation with the committee arranging facilities for the convention.

Section B. Quorum.

The presence of twenty-five active members shall constitute a quorum.

Section C. Annual Retreats.

An annual retreat for members shall be held in the spring, usually within one month following Easter, at a place to be selected by the executive committee.

Article VII. Amendments.

These bylaws may be amended at any annual business meeting, providing that (a) notice of a proposed amendment has been sent to all active members forty-five days in advance of the meeting, (b) a quorum is present, and (c) the vote of two-thirds of the active members present and voting is affirmative.