

**AMERICAN BAPTIST  
RESOLUTION ON CONTINUING EDUCATION**

The changing structures of society place new and heavy demands upon the church and call for a ministerial leadership that is committed and competent. To proclaim the gospel today and to support the people of God in their ministries throughout the world requires strong, sensitive, well-informed and able leaders. The education and the training of all ordained, commissioned or lay persons who serve the churches in a ministerial capacity can never be considered complete. Consequently, plans for an extensive involvement in continuing education experiences are essential.

We, therefore, recommend that all ministerial leaders within the American Baptist Churches adopt a life-long plan for continuous learning and growth by:

- a. developing regular habits of study, observation and evaluation in their normal routine of service;
- b. seeking selected experiences of study, training and involvement that will further their knowledge and skill as ministers;
- c. engaging in regular sabbatical practices; and
- d. in some instances, making plans for accredited graduate study.
- e. We further recommend that all local churches, societies, agencies and institutions of the American Baptist Churches implement this plan by:
  1. recognizing and encouraging study or attendance at educational conferences equivalent to a minimum of ten days per year (this time to be in addition to regular vacation leave);
  2. providing financial assistance for each professional staff member's continuing education by budgeting for this purpose at least \$300 per year;
  3. providing that this study leave and financial assistance be cumulative up to three years;
  4. providing for a sabbatical study leave equivalent to a minimum of one month, not to exceed six months (this time to be in addition to regular vacation leave);
  5. planning time and allocating funds for sabbatical study leave every five years.

We further commend to American Baptist churches, agencies and institutions the careful study of the document, "Continuing Education for Ministry: Goals, Standards, Policies, Financial Aid," approved and adopted by The American Baptist Board of Educational Ministries, the Ministers Council, The Ministerial Leadership Commission, Valley Forge, PA, November 1975.

Adopted by the American Baptist Convention - 1967

Affirmed as an American Baptist Resolution by the Executive Committee of the General Board - September 1983

Modified by the Executive Committee of the General Board - September 1993.  
(General Board Reference # - 8121:9/83)

Modified by the Executive Committee of the General Board - September 2001.

Modified by the Executive Committee of the General Board - September 2005

POLICY BASE

American Baptist Statement of Purpose

--to guide, unify, and assist American Baptists in their witness in the world, in preparing members for the work of ministry, and in serving both those within and outside the fellowship of Christ;"