

**ADDENDUM #1**

**General Board Resolutions  
Affecting  
Standing Rules**

1604:12/9/82  
December 7, 1982

**TO:** General Board

**FROM:** Executive Committee

**SUBJECT:** Making Two Committees on Policy into Standing Committees of the General Board

Counsel has advised, in light of the New York Statutes governing not-for-profit corporations, that two Committees on Policy (recognized under the statute as “committees of the corporation”) are now and have, for some time, been functioning as Standing Committees (or, “committees of the board”).

Since it is anticipated that the functions carried by these two committees will continue indefinitely, Counsel advises our taking steps to place them in the proper category for their work.

Accordingly, the Executive Committee recommends that the General Board give the attached resolution its First Reading in December 1982 and its Second Reading in June 1983.

The use of a resolution in this matter is specified by Section 712(a) of the New York Not-for-Profit Corporation Law.

Enc. 1

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.

Resolution Proposed to be Adopted by the General Board  
to Make Two Committees on Policy  
into Standing Committees of the General Board

WHEREAS, the Executive Committee of the General Board created the Committee on Policy on Standing Rules (EC505 Dec. '77) ; and the Committee on Policy on American Baptist Policy Statements and Resolutions (EC507 Dec. '77); and

WHEREAS, these two Committees on Policy have continued to function from their creation to the present, and the Committee on Policy on Standing Rules believes that the need for both will continue indefinitely; and

WHEREAS, legal counsel have advised that, since these two Committees on Policy have, by assignment, developed continuing functions, they now appear to have taken on the attributes of standing committees within the meaning of Section 712 of the New York Not-for-Profit Corporation Law, and, if the General Board believes these functions should be assigned to committees indefinitely, the General Board should provide formally for the appointment of standing committees of the General Board to carry out these functions, and

WHEREAS, the nature and function of every other Standing Committee of the General Board are described in the ABC/USA Bylaws or ABC/USA Standing Rules;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT VOTED THAT:

- (a) the functions of these two Committees on Policy be assigned to Standing Committees of this Board;
- (b) appropriate new Standing Rules be presented to this Board to create a Standing Committee to carry on the functions of each of these Committees on Policy, and
- (c) each of these committees on Policy continue to function until such time as the new Standing Rule creating its successor shall become effective.

(Voted by General Board  
6/12/83. GB1211)

AMERICAN BAPTIST CHURCHES IN THE U.S.A.

Resolution Adopted by the General Board to Establish  
this Communication Stand Committee

(I) RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH A STANDING COMMITTEE  
ON THE ABC COMMUNICATION FUNCTION

- WHEREAS, (1) the General Board uses permanent standing committees to oversee denominational functions for which it carries specific accountability (e.g. Budget Review Committee, Credentials and Caucus Committee, Planning and Evaluation Committee, Committee on Christian Unity, etc.); and,
- (2) the General Board voted, in December 1988, (GB1844) to designate the American Baptist communication function to the Office of the General Secretary as a specific accountability of the ABC/USA; and ,
- (3) it is facilitative and appropriate to establish such a General Board standing committee on communication, define its commission, and name its membership;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT VOTED to provide for such a Standing Committee on Communication within the Standing Rules including the following provisions:

- a. the communication committee shall be a standing committee of the General Board,
- b. this new committee shall have a membership of 8 to 10 persons representative of the National Boards and of communications expertise resident within the body of ABC Representatives,
- c. the committee shall advise the General Board Executive Committee regarding the denominational communication function,
- d. the committee shall be responsible for policies in the area of communication, following recommendations from the General Board, the Communication Council, and/or the Communication Advisory Group,
- e. committee staff shall be the ABC Director of Communication, ABC.

Sara-Alyce Wright, on behalf of the Executive Committee, presented the Resolution on Indemnification (1604.15:6/90) for Second Reading. (See GB2059 for First Reading.) This resolution will make operational Standing Rule 18.10, Indemnification.

Upon recommendation of the Executive committee, it was

VOTED: To approve the Resolution on Indemnification:

WHEREAS:

1. The General Board, on advice of counsel, recommended and the ABC Delegates to the 1989 Biennial Meeting voted to amend the ABC By-laws by deleting Section 10 of Article XVIII, Indemnification , and
2. In anticipation of this action, the General Board voted a new Standing Rule 18.10, contingent on passage in the 1989 Biennial Meeting of the notion to amend by deletion of Article XVIII, Section 10, and
3. Standing Rule 18.10, Indemnification, provides that “By resolution of the General Board ... the ABC by ... indemnify and advance expenses to ... a Representative, member of the General Board, officer or employee of the ABC ...”, and
4. Such actions were not intended to eliminate or restrict indemnification, but rather to enhance the General Board’s power to grant indemnification in appropriate cases; and
5. Persons serving the denomination expect and are entitled to indemnification with respect to their actions in good faith;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

that American Baptist Churches in the USA (ABC/USA) shall indemnify, insofar as permitted by law, any person made or threatened to be made a party to any action or proceeding, criminal, civil or administrative, by reason of the fact that such person or such person’s testator or intestate was a Representative, member of the General Board or officer or employee of the ABC/USA or, at the request of the ABC/USA, served some other corporation or trust or in a partnership or joint venture if such person or such person’s testate or intestate (as the case may be) is found by a court of competent jurisdiction of, in the absence of a court finding, by a disinterested majority of the General Board to have acted in good faith for a purpose reasonably believed to be in the best interests of the ABC/USA and without reasonable cause to believe that such action was unlawful. Such indemnity shall include judgments, fines, amounts paid in settlement, and expense reasonably incurred, including attorneys’ fees, in defense of such action or proceeding or for any appeal therein; and, in case of financial need

during the pendency of the action or proceeding, the General Board or the Executive Committee between meetings of the General Board may, after making such a finding of good faith, advance sums to pay such expenses subject to recapture if no such finding of good faith is made at the conclusion of the action or proceeding.

## ADDENDUM #2

Texts Removed from ABC Bylaws  
for Which Cognates Exist  
in the American Baptist  
“Covenant of Relationships”

ADDENDUM #2 TO ABC STANDING RULES (September 1990)

TEXT TRANSFERRED FROM ABC BY-LAWS IN LIGHT OF COGNATE  
TEXTS IN THE AMERICAN BAPTIST  
COVENANT OF RELATIONSHIPS AND STATEMENTS OF AGREEMENT  
(C.O.R.)

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Former Article III, Section 2 of the By-laws; cf. C.O.R.  
PAGES 10-11 (Adjudication) AND 16 (Election District)

(Any difference or disagreement between the General Board and a Regional Board with respect to the boundaries of, or the assignment of Cooperating Churches to, any Election District within the area of a Regional Organization shall be resolved by Adjudication in accordance with Article XVIII, Section 6 (11) of these By-laws.)

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Former Article III, Section 2 of the By-laws, cf. C.O.R. page 16

(The by-laws of every Regional Organization shall provide that each Election District Representative elected from an Election District within the area of that Regional organization who is not a member of its Regional Board shall, upon election and for the duration of service as such Representative, be designated a voting member of such Regional Board, or an Official Observer thereto with the right to be heard but not to vote.)

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Former Article VI, Section 3 of the By-laws; cf. C.O.R. pages 13 and 17

(Each Regional Organization, under the general direction and supervision of its Regional Board, shall implement those functions in accordance with Denominational planning policy and the General Board's state expectations, and in a manner consonant with these By-laws and the Standing Rules. Within those functions, each Regional Organization shall implement American Baptist Policy Statements and Resolutions, subject to General Board review. Each Regional Organization shall design, carry out and report to the General Board on programs and projects to implement its Denominational functions.)



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Former Article VIII, Section 3 of the By-laws; cf. C.O.R. page 36

(The Covenant of Relationships and Statements of Agreement may be amended, and any other covenant or agreement authorized by this Article VIII may be amended or terminated, in accordance with procedures state therein or in the Standing Rules.)

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Former Article X, Section 4 of the By-laws; cf. C.O.R. page 30

RE: Functions of the General Board:

[(k) set policies and criteria in consultation with the National and Regional Boards for evaluating the work of the Denominational Secretaries;)]

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Former Article X, Section 6 of the By-laws; cf. C.O.R. page 12

(The General Board at its discretion may submit any other proposed General Board action to ratification by the Regional Boards in accordance with this Section 6.)

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Former Article XII, Section 4 of the By-laws; cf. C.O.R. page 15

(Section 4. National Board Executive Committee Action. The by-laws of each corporation managed by a National Board may provide that, in extraordinary circumstances as stated consistently with the statement thereof in the Standing Rules as provided in Section 3 of this Article XII, such National Board's executive committee may adopt a resolution and may recommend such resolution to the General Board for adoption by the General Board as an American Baptist Resolution.)

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Former Article XVI, Section 2 of the By-laws; cf. C.O.R. pages 22-23 and 25-26

(Section 2. Regional Secretaries of the Denomination. The by-laws of each Regional Organization shall provide that the chief executive officer of such corporation shall be chosen in consultation with the General Secretary and shall be designated the Executive Minister of that Organization. While serving as Executive Minister, each such officer shall also serve as a Regional Secretary of the Denomination. Within the areas of their respective Regional Organizations, Regional Secretaries shall be responsible for implementing the

Denominational functions determined for their Regional Organizations by the General Board. American Baptist Policy Statements and Resolutions, and the Regional Resolutions, policy statements and functions of their respective Regional Boards. Regional Secretaries shall provide staff services for and administer, as appropriate, the Assemblies of Election Districts located within the areas of their respective Region Organizations and shall provide consultation and support to the Election District Representatives.

In consultation with the General Secretary, each Regional Board shall evaluate the work of its Executive Minister at least every four (4) years. The processes for selection and evaluation of each Executive Minister shall be embodied in a Statement of Agreement.)

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Former Article XVIII, Section 6 of the By-laws; cf. C.O.R. pages 10-11

Section 6. (10.) Adjudication. (When two or more Legislative Boards shall differ over any matter, including a determination or assignment of a Denominational function by the General Board, and shall be unable to resolve their differences through discussion, any one of the Boards involved may initiate an Adjudication by sending a written request therefor to the General Secretary. The differing legislative Boards and the General Secretary shall agree to an Adjudicator of the dispute which shall be the General Board Executive Committee or may be another American Baptist person or group. Each of the differing Legislative Boards shall state the difference in writing to the Adjudicator and appoint one person to participate with the Adjudicator in the Adjudication, without vote. The General Secretary and any member of the General Executive Council invited by the General Secretary may, with the consent of the adjudicating parties and the Adjudicator, also participate in the Adjudication, without vote. The decision of the Adjudicator shall be final.)

#### OTHER TRANSFERS

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Former Article XVI, Section 1 of the By-laws; superceded by By-laws Proposal 110 of the General Board as voted by Delegates to the 1989 Biennial Meeting

(The Denominational Secretaries, individually or as a group, shall report to the General Board through the General Secretary.)

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ADDENDUM #3

“Autonomy and Interdependence within the  
American Baptist Denomination: A Declaration”

(Adopted by the General Board of the American Baptist Churches, U.S.A.,  
December 1983)

Reprint from *The American Baptist*, June 1983

# **AUTONOMY<sup>1</sup> AND INTERDEPENDENCE<sup>2</sup> WITHIN THE AMERICAN BAPTIST DENOMINATION: A DECLARATION**

[Dec. 1983; GB1279]

## **Introduction and Historical Background**

The Church of Jesus Christ must remain free to define its own mission and structure. In this declaration we, as American Baptists, under what we believe to be the prompting of God's Spirit, offer our own understanding and self-definition of the nature and intentionality of autonomy<sup>1</sup> and interdependence<sup>2</sup> within the American Baptist denomination.

Baptist history in the United States, from the founding of the First Baptist Church in Providence, Rhode Island, in 1639 until the present, reveals that Baptists have emphasized the autonomy of both local congregations and Baptist organizations. At the same time history records the cooperation and interdependence between and among congregations and a wide variety of Baptist organizations.

While autonomy has characterized Baptist life from its beginning in America, the creation of the Philadelphia Baptist Association in 1707 signaled a common desire for cooperation and mutual counsel regarding a range of issues which affected more than a single church.

The 19<sup>th</sup> century witnessed the founding of additional opportunities for cooperative Baptist undertakings. In keeping with this recognition of the interdependence of Baptists in witness and mission, Massachusetts Baptists formed the first Baptist state organization or society for mission in 1802. Thereafter, other state organizations were organized in later years, and three national societies were created respectively, for foreign missionary outreach (1814), for publication of Christian books and Sunday School materials (1824), and for home missions (1832). The painful Baptist separation prior to the Civil War resulted in two Baptist groupings, both of which have continued the dual emphasis upon autonomy and interdependence to the current time.

The first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century provided the occasion for increased cooperation and interdependence, but autonomy continued as a predominant mark of American Baptist life. When the Northern Baptist Convention was formed in 1907, very limited responsibility was assigned to the convention. The churches agreed to a single meeting time and place for general oversight of the various national societies founded and recognized by Northern Baptists. This limited step toward coordination and interdependence was advanced by the reorganizations in 1950 (when the name of the Northern Baptist Convention was changed to the American Baptist Convention) and 1961, without challenge to the autonomy of the organizations created by Baptist congregations, or to the autonomy of the congregations themselves.

Following the recommendations of the Study Commission on Denominational Structure, or SCODS, the restructuring of the national Baptist organizations in 1972 intentionally limited the autonomy of the national societies, while respecting their separate corporate identities, to facilitate greater cooperation and coordination in national expressions of Baptist life and witness. No modification of the appropriate autonomy of local congregations, associations/areas, or region/state/city organizations was implied or intended in that 1972 restructuring. At that time the Convention's name was changed to American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A.

In 1977 the scope of interdependence was broadened when the organization of American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. was modified to provide representation in the

general denominational structures for the 37 region/state/city organizations. However, this outcome, recommended by the Study Commission on Relationships (SCOR) in its report “Together in Mission,” in no manner altered the legal autonomy of the 37 region/state/city organizations. Even though the opportunities for coordination and interdependence were increased, neither by intention nor by new bylaw provisions were the appropriate autonomies of covenanting or affiliating organizations changed. Rather, these modifications recognized and clarified the nature of the relationships of the 42 cooperating American Baptist organizations (1 General, 4 National and 37 Regional or affiliating Organizations). The creation of a basic Covenant of Relationships and a series of Statements of Agreements underlines that fact. No single, all-inclusive denominational entity emerged as the “American Baptist Church.”

The period from 1639 (the founding of the First Baptist Church in America) to 1977 (the voting of the SCOR recommendations for restructuring) demonstrates the basic Baptist attempt to balance two desirable values: autonomy and interdependence. Neither has overcome the other in either theory or practice in the history of the American Baptist denomination. Both values continue to inform and guide Baptist life to this day. American Baptists have not compromised either element of this polarity. American Baptists continue to affirm these two complementary and sometimes competing values, insisting that each pole of the polarity is a necessary corrective to the other.

### **Balancing Freedom and Order**

The Statement of Purpose of American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. contains the following declarations: “In every area of their common life American Baptists, acknowledging the importance of *creative diversity*, seek such a *balance of freedom and order* as will keep all parts of American Baptist Churches in the U.S.A. open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit and at the same time enable them to work responsibly under God for maintaining its life of worship, witness, and ministry.”

That desired balance of freedom and order was modified toward greater interdependence in the reorganizations of 1972 (SCODS) and 1977 (SCOR) without, however, creating any centralized authority for all decision-making within the denomination. The areas of life and mission which were to be coordinated were described by a voluntary Covenant of Relationships and its related Statements of Agreement.

Neither the design nor the language of those documents was cast in legal terminology. Indeed, even to attempt to apply the legal concept of contract would be to demonstrate a misunderstanding of those documents because any one of the covenanting bodies may unilaterally withdraw from the Covenant of Relationships or Statements of Agreement without any sanctions stated or implied. Most significantly, the role and appropriate authority of each of the denomination’s 42 organizations and their boards of directors were recognized; for example, by affirming in the Bylaws of the ABC/USA that “Each Regional Organization shall determine its own corporate structure and decision-making procedures” (p.12), and confirming the continuing corporate status of the denomination’s four national societies or boards (p.19).

A variety of American Baptist-related institutions have defined their separate relationships to various American Baptist organizations by means of particular covenants. These related institutions include schools, national training center, colleges, universities, campus ministries, seminaries, retirement homes, hospitals, nursing homes and children’s homes. Each of these institutions is governed by an autonomous board. This declaration, however, deals with the Covenant of Relationships and its related Statements of Agreement, not those particular covenants.

The movement from less to greater interdependence has been evident in the denomination's history in the latter part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. It would be a misunderstanding, however, to interpret that movement as a rejection of the Baptist value of autonomy. Rather, American Baptists have taken several steps toward modification of a *balance* of freedom and order. Given American Baptist history and diversity, the definition of the proper "balance" could shift again in the future in response to needs and new understandings of the gospel. But while the balancing point may move back and forth - and even be perceived differently by various covenanting parties at any given time in history - the prevailing movement of Baptist history and intention includes both autonomy and interdependence, without the one overcoming the other.

### **Covenant of Relationships, Mission Funds Staff Council, and Boards**

The biblical concept of a covenant is that it is a way of relating whole persons or communities to God and to each other. It is not a legal contract to define or limit obligations or claims which contracting parties may have toward each other. A covenant creates a flexible relationship marked by trust and faithfulness to God and to each other both in action and expression. A covenant expresses a bond of brotherhood and sisterhood in Christ made possible by the Holy Spirit.

This biblical understanding of covenant informs our theological understanding of the Covenant of Relationships we American Baptist have freely created.

We here state the nature and extent of our covenants and the relationships reflected in them.

#### **A. Definition of the Covenant of Relationships**

The Covenant of Relationships is a solemn endeavor under God, among the organizations which are parties to it, to cooperate in mission in a spirit of Christian unity and love. The Covenant of Relationships is a temporal and provisional statement of the balance of freedom and order which many American Baptist organizations freely choose for working together to carry out the task of Christian mission and ministry.

Any of the 42 eligible American Baptist organizations, seeking to order its life in accordance with the Scriptures under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, is free to enter and affirm the Covenant of Relationships or free not to enter into the Covenant of Relationships. Any American Baptist organization which has entered the Covenant of Relationships is free to seek to amend it or to withdraw from it at any time.

The Covenant of Relationships is not a legally binding instrument; it creates no legal rights or legal obligations between and among the organizations which enter in or for non-parties to it. The parties to the Covenant of Relationships disclaim any intent to form a legal joint venture or association. No party to the Covenant of Relationships has any power or authority over, or any legal responsibility for, the beliefs, persons or property of any American Baptist or any other organization or its governing board or property; nor does the Covenant of Relationships create or establish any organization which has such power, authority, or responsibility.

The Covenant of Relationships is a statement of shared understandings of the appropriate relationships for American Baptist organizations as they cooperate under the Lordship of Christ in support of common mission goals and objectives.

#### **B. Statement of Agreement on the American Baptist Mission Fund**

The Statement of Agreement on the American Baptist Mission Fund sets forth the principles for cooperation in raising and allocating the mission monies which constitute the American Baptist Mission Fund. That Statement of Agreement creates no legally binding rights or obligations among the parties to it or for any non-parties.

The American Baptist Mission Fund is constituted by the voluntary gifts of American Baptist congregations to support the mission and ministry of various denominational organizations. In the statement of agreement on this Mission Fund provisions are made whereby contributions may be shared with all mission participants or may be restricted to a few or even one mission participant. The parties to the Agreement have a sacred duty and are accountable to the whole denomination to see that all monies in the Fund are used for the purposes for which they are given.

### **C. The General Staff Council**

The General Staff Council is a non-legislative assembly of professional staff members (primarily chief executive officers) of covenanting and of affiliating organizations which are parties to the Covenant of Relationships and/or the Statement of Agreement of the American Baptist Mission Fund. The General Staff Council provides a forum for the discussion by its members of matters of concern to American Baptists, fosters collegiality and accountability among its members, and nurtures a spirit of unity and cooperation. Actions and statements of the General Staff Council are advisory in nature, and when duly adopted, they express the mind of the General Staff Council.

### **D. American Baptist Organizations**

Each American Baptist organization is autonomous, and the board of directors of each has legally defined powers and responsibilities with respect to the management of its affairs and property, none of which is altered by the Covenant of Relationships.

When the covenanting bodies cooperate under the Covenant of Relationships, their responsibilities are defined by that Covenant. The governing boards of these bodies have no power or authority under the Covenant of Relationships over the beliefs, actions or property of any individual American Baptist or any other American Baptist organization or its governing board. No governing board has authority to give directions or orders to any individual American Baptist, to any local congregation, or to any other American Baptist organization.

American Baptist boards in inter-board relationships have no power to legislate in the legal sense. When, under the Covenant of Relationships, these boards enact Policy Statements and Resolutions, they have only the power and the responsibility to express the sense of their members, duly elected and duly delegated pursuant to the Covenant of Relationships, on matters of concern and importance to American Baptists. When Policy Statements and Resolutions are adopted by a board, they express the mind of that board, and the covenanting parties agree to give them due respect and weight and be guided by them in a spirit of unity and cooperation under the Lordship of Christ.

Staff members of American Baptist mission bodies are accountable under law to the governing boards of the organizations which employ them. The Covenanting parties (but not the affiliating organizations) affirm that their respective staffs are also expected to act under the Covenant of Relationships in a spirit of cooperation. However, no board has authority to hold accountable or to give directions or orders to any staff member employed by another organization.

## **American Baptist Covenants and Baptist Freedom**

The history of the United States clearly demonstrates the leadership of Baptists in the establishment and preservation of the separation of church and state. Baptist life and thought recognize the right of each religious group within our nation to determine its own faith, polity, life, and lines of authority.

The creation of understandings among American Baptists regarding the degree of autonomy and interdependence between and among American Baptist organizations is, essentially, a theological undertaking. Only American Baptists have the right or the power to interpret or to alter those understandings contained within American Baptist Covenants, Statements of Agreement, and corporate documents. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution prohibits government from deciding for any religious body that body's beliefs, mission, or organization. Therefore, we as American Baptists declare that government agencies and others external to American Baptist life and mission have no authority or competence to interpret or change the self-understanding of American Baptists or the documents and statements in which we have set forth that understanding.

### **Conclusion and Commitment**

Recent American Baptist reorganizations, continuing discussion of our denominational relationships, and the on-going debate regarding separation of church and state have combined to call for this statement. Our Baptist successors will have the liberty to modify, in light of the Scriptures and under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, each and every American Baptist document - including this declaration - as may be deemed helpful to American Baptist life and mission.

Accordingly, in this year of our Lord 1983 the undersigned organizations do hereby affirm and declare this brief declaration to be consistent with each organization's understanding of the nature of American Baptist autonomy and interdependence, and each directs that the date of its affirming action be affixed hereto.

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<sup>1</sup> *Autonomy*- in the Baptist (free church) tradition, is the unencumbered capacity of each local congregation and of each organization created by local congregations and/or their members to exercise full rights of self-government in all matters of faith and practice.

<sup>2</sup> *Interdependence* in the Baptist (free church) tradition in exercising self-government in matters of faith and practice, is reckoning confidently upon one another; relying on one another: as individual believers, as local congregations, as organizations created by local congregations and/or their members; and laboring together for the well being and general good of Christ's Body, the Church, as members one of another.



ADDENDUM #4

“Qualifications, Functions, and Commitments of Representatives”

[Appendix IV.C of Doc. #1414.4:6/93 (and #1414.4A:6/93)  
Voted by the General Board, June 1993 (GB2480)]

## **QUALIFICATIONS, FUNCTIONS AND COMMITMENTS OF REPRESENTATIVES**

### **QUALIFICATIONS:**

1. Commitment to Jesus Christ and the whole mission of the church to evangelize, educate and encourage.
2. Understanding of and respect for the purpose, history, diversity and tradition of the ABC/USA and its ministries.
3. Active membership in a contributing ABC/USA church and Region and demonstration of individual commitment to support its missions financially.
4. Regular participation and involvement in board and committee meetings and willingness to contribute your unique skills and abilities.
5. The ability to listen, negotiate and reconcile while seeking to discern the mind of Christ and to build up this community of faith.
6. The ability to lead as well as serve, to envision the future as well as plan for it.
7. The desire to study and grow in your Christian faith and your understanding of the work of Christ in our world today.
8. The ability to communicate to others the goals, programs and ministries of the ABC/USA.

### **TIME COMMITMENT:** You should plan to spend at least

- two and one half days plus travel time for initial orientation (late March or early April of first year)
- five days twice per year plus travel and preparation time for meetings (Mid-June and late November or early December)
- two to three days per year for communication, interpretation and advocacy in your Region
- quarterly meetings of your Region Board and annual or biennial Region meetings
- other time as is mutually agreed on for extra committee, commission or task force meetings.

### **FUNCTIONS:**

1. Active learning and policy making. You will receive reports from staff, proposals for budgets, readings for policy statements and resolutions and letters from your constituency. It is vital that you take responsibility for your own education on these matters so that the decisions we make are responsible and informed. The General Board is the primary policy making body of the ABC/USA. This includes electing persons to offices and committees, voting on budgets and policies and program direction.
2. Evaluation and oversight. Representatives are responsible for holding denominational staff accountable to our policies and program direction. All evaluation should be done candidly, constructively and directly.
3. Affirmation and encouragement. Staff members and missionaries work on behalf of all of us. It is our role to encourage and pray for each of these, including the work of the local church. Words of appreciation, questions for clarification, suggestions and resources are all appropriate ways to fulfill this function. Your active participation in committee meetings will also provide encouragement.
4. Envisioning and creative input. We are a “think tank” to envision the future God has planned for us. We are more than the sum of our parts as we energize each other with ideas, reflections and visions. In this way, the Holy Spirit can work through our diversity to bring a unity of mission. This in turn determines the direction of our denomination and each of its ministries.
5. Communication and constituency relations. We are also channels for two-way communication between our constituencies and denominational leadership. It is our task to be interpreters of the actions of the General Board and advocates for the work of our denomination as a whole. Each of us has particular spheres of activity (church, Region and other bodies) in which we can exercise this role; we represent the denomination in those spheres. Acting as a messenger from constituents involves an exercise of judgment: it is important that widely held views and other significant elements of opinion be reported; but every individual letter a Representative receives cannot be afforded General Board time.
6. Financial stewardship. Each Representative has a responsibility to contribute personally and to aid in the task of raising mission dollars. Such a responsibility comes with membership on any board of any organization. It is denominational policy to expect that we tithe and promote tithing in our churches.

4/28/93