

STANDING RULES OF MISSION NORTHWEST

Article 1 – Meetings

- 1.1 Delegates from cooperating and affiliated member churches in good standing will gather in Assembly at the discretion of the Mission Northwest (M-NW) Region Board. This Assembly will conduct elections, receive reports, and consider other business. The time, place and registration fee for this meeting will be fixed by the Region Board, and announced at least 3 months prior to the meeting. The Region Board will prepare the business agenda.
- 1.2 Special session of the Assembly may be called upon with three-fourths (3/4) approval of the total Region Board, or upon written request of 20% of the member congregations in good standing.
- 1.3 Cooperating and affiliated churches in good standing are entitled to three voting Delegates for the first 150 members, and one additional voting Delegate for each additional 100 members. Churches are encouraged to send as many non-voting participants as they wish to Assembly meetings. These non-voting participants may speak, but have no vote. The *quorum* for an Assembly is 75 qualified Delegates. All members of the Region Board shall be ex officio delegates with vote.
- 1.4 All Region Board votes are decided by simple majority unless otherwise specified.

Article 2 – Membership

- 2.1 Constituency—the membership of M-NW shall be congregations that cooperate in the mission of M-NW and that have applied and been accepted into membership. Member congregations shall be categorized as either “Cooperating Churches” or “Affiliated Churches” according to the following criteria:
 - (a) Cooperating Churches shall be those member congregations that cooperate in the mission of M-NW and abide by the “Expectations for Member Congregations”, (Standing Rules, Article 2. 2) and are also Cooperating Member Churches of ABC-USA.
 - (b) Affiliated Churches shall be those member congregations that cooperate in the mission of M-NW and abide by the “Expectations for Member Congregations”, (Standing Rules, Article 2. 2) except that affiliated churches have expressed a desire to unite with M-NW without being a Cooperating Member of ABC-USA. As such they shall have all of the rights and privileges of Cooperating Churches in M-NW except they shall not be entitled to representation to ABC-USA or at conventions of ABC-USA. Affiliated Churches shall not be able to participate in the voting process on matters relating to the Covenant of Relationships between M-NW and ABC-USA.
- 2.2 Expectation for Member Congregations—member congregations of the Region shall:
 - (a) Share in and support the life, vision and goals of M-NW.
 - (b) Communicate to their constituency the Vision and Landmarks of M-NW.
 - (c) Contribute to the financial support of M-NW at a responsible level. Financial support to M-NW consists of giving through any of these means: A dedicated, ongoing and/or periodic giving to M-NW, ABC-USA’s United Mission Budget, and Specific Ministry Giving directed to M-NW. If aligned with more than one denomination, a proportionate share of the congregation’s mission funds shall be given to these groups.
 - (e) Elect delegates and support leadership serving in M-NW.
 - (f) Utilize M-NW staff personnel in pastoral search process.
 - (g) Communicate with M-NW regarding the mission and ministry of the Church through annual reports requested by M-NW.
 - (h) Encourage pastoral leader to attend a local Leadership Learning Community.

2.3 Becoming a Member of M-NW

- (a) A church applying for membership with M-NW shall be received into the fellowship as either a "Cooperating Church" or an "Affiliated Church" upon approval of a majority of the members of the Region Board at a duly called meeting.
- (b) A member congregation may change from a Cooperating Church to an Affiliated Church (or the reverse) through a congregational vote and by reapplying for membership with the new status, subject to the approval of the majority of the total members of the Region Board. Affiliated status will be discussed only with those churches expressing an interest in having a relationship with M-NW, but not with ABC-USA, or considering breaking membership with both ABC-USA and M-NW.

2.4 Affiliation Procedure for Becoming a Member of M-NW

- (a) The interested church will forward a letter to the Executive Minister requesting membership.
- (b) M-NW will send an informational packet and required forms from the Executive Minister.
- (c) When the information is in order, the Executive Minister will notify a nearby Mentor Pastor or M-NW Consultant who will schedule a meeting between church leaders and a small team of nearby M-NW pastors and/or leaders formed for this purpose (investigative group). Of particular importance will be evidence that the applying church is fulfilling, or will fulfill, the "Expectations for Member Churches."
- (d) The investigative group will report the results of the meeting to the Executive Minister with either a recommendation "to accept" or "not to accept" into M-NW membership.
- (e) If the results are "to accept", the Executive Minister will present the motion along with relevant information at the next Region Board meeting.
- (f) A simple majority vote by the Region Board is needed to accept the applicant church as a Cooperating Member with M-NW and ABC-USA or as an Affiliated Member with M-NW. The Secretary will notify ABC-USA of the action of the Region Board.

2.5 Good Standing and Not in Good Standing

Churches that regularly and annually fulfill the requirements of the Expectation for Member Congregations are considered to be in "Good Standing". A church that fails to fulfill the Expectations for Member Congregations for more than two years will be considered "Not in Good Standing" by review and vote of the Region Board. This action will result in the revocation of their voting privileges and cancellation of their apportioned delegates with regard to M-NW business. This action will be considered only after M-NW staff and leaders have made a reasonable effort to encourage the full participation of the church. The action will identify the specific cause(s) of the problem as well as remedial actions to resolve the problem. Likewise, the Region Board may reinstate the voting and representation privileges of a church when evidence of renewed cooperation is presented. "Not in Good Standing" will serve as a required intermediate step to dismissal. The Region Board may adopt other procedures short of Not in Good Standing and Dismissal.

2.6 Withdrawal or Closure Procedure

A church may withdraw from M-NW and ABC-USA (or report its closure) as follows:

- (a) The church will notify the Executive Minister by letter signed by the pastor and church officers of the date and action of the church.
- (b) The Executive Minister will conduct an investigation to assure that the bylaws of the church were followed; that there is no M-NW interest in the property; and, that there are no outstanding debts to M-NW nor ABC-USA.
- (c) Assuming there are no barriers to withdrawal (or closure), the Executive Minister will report the findings at the next Region Board meeting.
- (d) A majority vote will acknowledge the letter to withdraw (or close). The Executive Minister will report the action to ABC-USA.

2.7 Dismissal of a Member Congregation

The Region Board can dismiss member congregations if the member congregation has not demonstrated for a period of two (2) years its support of and participation in the Region as required in Expectations for Member Congregations (see 2.2). Prior to taking a vote for dismissal, the Region board shall consult with the congregation to encourage re-engagement with M-NW. Dismissal requires approval of 2/3 of the Region Board.

Article 3 – Staff

- 3.1 The Executive Minister is charged to assist, lead and inspire all clergy of M-NW in carrying out the purposes of M-NW, to pursue goals established by the Region Board, and to perform such duties as are needed for the legal and effective work of M-NW. The Executive Minister is accountable to the Region Board. The Region Board will establish clear limitations and boundaries for the Executive Minister and monitor performance.
- 3.2 While the Executive Minister also assumes certain ex officio duties with ABC-USA, these duties must not interfere with M-NW responsibilities.
- 3.3 The Executive Minister, with the input and advice of the Personnel and Nominating Team (PNT), may add or dismiss other staff as deemed necessary within the limitations and boundaries set forth by the Region Board (3.1).
- 3.4 The Executive Minister supervises and assigns responsibilities to all staff and employees within the parameters of the Region Board approved Personnel Policies and Practices Manual. The Region Board will not circumvent the Executive Minister in directing staff. While advice from Region Board members is encouraged, no Region Board member will assume authority to instruct or direct staff. Likewise no council, commission, or team will assume the authority of the Executive Minister over staff.

Article 4 – Region Board

As provided in the Bylaws, M-NW shall be governed by a Region Board.

- 4.1 Region Board Membership—the membership of the Region Board will include:
 - (a) The officers of M-NW (President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary). The election of the President and Vice-President may take place either by the delegates in the Assembly of M-NW, or through an electronic ballot sent to the governing board of each church in good standing with M-NW. A simple majority of the voting delegates in Assembly, or a simple majority of electronic ballots from churches in good standing will suffice for appointing officers.
 - (b) Nine representatives will serve three-year rotating terms, and will be eligible to serve a second term for a total of 6 consecutive years. After a minimum of one year respite, a person may be nominated to serve again. Effort will be made to elect representatives with sensitivity to a balance of geographic, clergy, lay, male & female representation. The Region Board, local geographical units or a local member congregation may submit names to the PNT of the Region Board for consideration as Region Board members. During a fall Region Board meeting, the PNT will submit the names of nominees to the Region Board for election by the Region Board.
 - (c) Each of the ten representatives will be assigned service on one of the three standing teams (Planning and Process, Personnel and Nominating, or Budget and Finance). The Secretary will prepare and maintain a schedule to assure equal representation on all three divisions.
 - (d) All M-NW representatives to the National Program Boards of ABC-USA will be appointed by the Region Board through nomination by the PNT and serve on the Region Board *ex officio*.
 - (e) Each Region Board member must
 1. be a participating member in good standing of an M-NW church (whether Cooperating or Affiliated);
 2. support M-NW's vision, landmarks and policies;

3. support M-NW's leadership;
 4. commit to attending all regular and special meetings of the Region Board.
- (f) All Region Board members will be seated only after their qualifications have been certified by the PNT. They may assume their board seat January 1 of the year after their election.

4.2 Region Board Responsibilities and Authority

The Region Board shall:

- (a) Between Assembly meetings, transact all of the business of M-NW not otherwise provided for and such business as may be referred to it by the Assembly.
- (b) Hire, receive the resignation of, or terminate employment of the Executive Minister and then appoint an Interim or Acting Executive Minister when the position becomes vacant.
- (c) Develop and publish M-NW goals in consultation with the Executive Minister. Established goals will be implemented by the Executive Minister and other staff.
- (d) Assist, encourage and support the accomplishment of M-NW's mission.
- (e) Fill any vacancies on the Region Board when they occur, maintaining the proper makeup of representation.
- (f) Adopt, amend and repeal M-NW policies and procedures.
- (g) Determine the definition, size, composition and apportionment of geographical units.
- (h) Consider, modify and adopt M-NW's annual budget.
- (i) Authorize any capital funds campaigns.
- (j) Sell, purchase and manage property and investable funds of the corporation (see M-NW Bylaws).
- (k) Admit or disaffiliate churches.
- (l) Set the date and place of its meetings.
- (m) Conduct such business as required of it by ABC-USA, including the appointment of representatives and actions on covenants and agreements.
- (n) Assure that legal requirements by local, state, or federal governments are met.
- (o) Appoint a Program Committee to plan the Assembly of M-NW.

4.3 Region Board Organization

The members of the Region Board will be distributed into three standing teams with the following responsibilities:

- (a) Process & Review Team (PRT) shall:
 1. Be chaired by a Region Board member appointed by the Executive Committee.
 2. Review all ABC0-NW policies for consistency in form, language and alignment with M-NW vision before presentation to the Region Board for vote.
 3. Collaborate with the Executive Minister in proposing annual M-NW goals to the Region Board.
 4. Assist the Executive Minister in arranging for regular Region Board training.
 5. Evaluate Region Board process.
 6. Evaluate all M-NW events in light of stated M-NW goals.
 7. Meet as needed at the call of its Chair or the Executive Minister.
- (b) Budget and Finance Team (BFT) shall:
 1. Be chaired by the Treasurer.
 2. Is responsible for monitoring the financial resources and budget of M-NW.
 3. Assume the power to act and responsibility for: loans to congregations, the M-NW investment portfolio, property management, and the acceptance of bequests.
 4. Review any plan for the sale or purchase of real estate, and present it to the full Region Board with their recommendation.
 5. Review any plan for M-NW indebtedness or fund-raising, and present it to the full Region Board with their recommendation.
 6. Encourage the giving of bequests and annuities to M-NW.
 7. Accept bequests and property gifts to M-NW.
 8. Arrange for independent audits/reviews of all M-NW accounts.
 9. In consultation with the Executive Minister, prepare annually a proposed budget for M-NW and submit this budget to the Region Board.

10. Meet as needed at the call of its Chair or the Executive Minister.
- (c) Personnel and Nominating Team (PNT) shall:
 1. Be chaired by a Region Board member appointed by the Executive Committee.
 2. Function as the M-NW nominating committee, including: presenting officers to the Assembly for election and certifying the qualifications of Region Board members.
 3. Approve staff policy statements as written by the Executive Minister for final approval by the Region Board.
 4. Evaluate Executive Minister performance based on established annual M-NW goals (see 4.3 (a) 3). An annual review of the Executive Minister's performance will be based on the attainment, or failure to attain, these goals, as well as compliance with M-NW policy.
 5. Give advice to the Executive Minister when needed with regard to the hiring or dismissal of all full-time staff. The PNT will review job descriptions to ensure compliance with M-NW policies.
 6. Work with the BFT to establish annual salaries and benefits for the Executive Minister.
 7. Serve as the final court of appeal for grievances by any full-time staff person, except the Executive Minister (the full Region Board retains that authority).
 8. Meet as needed at the call of its Chair or the Executive Minister.
 9. Shall ensure the Executive Minister notify the PNT in a timely manner regarding personnel issues.

Article 5 – The Executive Committee

- 5.1 Shall be composed of the President, Vice-President, Secretary, and Treasurer, the chairs of the PRT and the PNT.
- 5.2 Shall function for the Region Board between regular sessions of the Region Board, except in the calling of the M-NW Executive Minister.
- 5.3 Determines in consultation with the M-NW staff how the responsibilities of the Executive Minister will be fulfilled by the appointment of an Interim or Acting Executive Minister and/or the realignment of staff responsibilities, in case of the vacancy of the office of Executive Minister or his/her inability to serve.

Article 6 – Duties of the Officers

- 6.1 President
 - (a) Presides over the meetings of the Assembly, biennial, special sessions or otherwise.
 - (b) Chairs the Region Board and the Executive Committee.
 - (c) Signs, with the Secretary, all legal documents as instructed by the Assembly, Region Board, the Executive Committee, or BFT.
 - (d) Appoints the members of all teams not otherwise provided for, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee. He/she shall serve as an ex officio member with a vote on all teams or committees, attending those he/she deems necessary.
 - (e) Serves as the official representative of M-NW unless otherwise specified.
- 6.2 Vice President
 - (a) Succeeds the president in his/her absence or inability to fulfill the duties of his/her office.
 - (b) Serves as vice chair of the Region Board and the Executive Committee.
 - (c) Becomes the nominee for President contingent upon recommendation by the PNT.
- 6.3 Chairperson for the Process and Review Team
 - (a) Presides over meetings in the absence of the President and Vice President.
 - (b) Serves as chair of the PRT.
- 6.4 Chairperson for the Personnel and Nominating Team

- (a) Serves as chair of the PNT
- 6.5 Treasurer
- (a) Serves as chair of the BFT.
 - (b) Provides for the receiving and holding all monies and evidences of property owned by the M-NW and committed to his/her care by the Region Board and shall make appropriate reports.
 - (c) Periodically reviews vouchers issued for the payment of funds.
 - (d) Provides a report to M-NW at each Assembly.
- 6.6 Secretary (Executive Minister)
- (a) Serves as Primary Vision Caster for M-NW and exercises primary supervision, direction and control over M-NW's activities and affairs.
 - (b) Serves as Senior Consultant for M-NW.
 - (c) Serves as Chief Executive Officer.
 - (d) Assures that accurate minutes are kept of the meetings of all Assembly and Region Board meetings.
 - (e) Prepares the minutes of M-NW's Assembly for publication.
 - (f) Keeps all records of the Region Board and of the Executive Committee.
 - (g) Signs, with the President, all legal documents as instructed by the Assembly and Region Board.
 - (h) Prepares notices for Assembly and special sessions of M-NW Church meetings, and for meetings of the Region Board and of the Executive Committee; informs persons of their appointment to an office and/or Region Board and committee membership.
 - (i) Acts as the primary representative of M-NW, deciding where M-NW needs to be represented and seeing that persons are assigned to represent M-NW.

Article 7 – Procedure for Calling an Executive Minister

In the event of a vacancy, the Region Board shall appoint an Executive Search Committee. The then current Chair of the PNT will Chair the Executive Search Committee. In addition, three other members from the Region Board, and three persons not affiliated with the Region Board, but members of cooperating or affiliated churches will be appointed. Regardless of their respective terms of office, all will serve until the Region Board appoints an Executive Minister, or until dismissed by the Region Board. The committee will cooperate with the appropriate office of ABC/USA in the search, but will reserve for itself the final recommendation. Only recognized American Baptist clergy in good standing will be considered for the office of Executive Minister.

Article 8 – Standing Rules Relating to M-NW in Assembly

- (a) All motions, resolutions or recommendations shall be written, signed by the maker and given to the Secretary.
- (b) All members of M-NW churches may speak to the question, although only delegates are allowed to vote.
- (c) Ministers, missionaries and others who are not members of M-NW, but who have been invited to attend, may speak to the question but may not vote.
- (d) Debate shall be limited to three minutes per speaker. No one may speak in debate more than twice on the same question in the same session, unless a specific ruling otherwise by the chair or appropriate action by the body in session makes other provisions.
- (e) No one may speak a second time on the same question if another who has not spoken requests the floor.
- (f) Christian civility and consensus will be the general rule of conduct for all meetings. At any time, at the Chair's discretion or when any two voting members request, the most recent edition of *Democratic Rules of Order* by Francis will be used to order the meeting and make decisions.
- (g) The Chair may warn, then order the removal of disruptive guests or members.
- (h) A majority vote shall be required for election to office.

Article 9 – Electronic and Remote Communication

All electronic and remote communication by M-NW and its Region Board and Ministries Teams must comply with Idaho Law.

- 9.1 Voting on actions of the Region Board, Executive Committee or Teams may be taken via electronic mail provided:
- (a) A permanent printed record of the electronic communication is maintained in the archive of the Committee or Team.
 - (b) A printable response is received from each member of the Committee or Team.
- 9.2 Members of the Executive Committee, Ministry Teams or any task force appointed by the Region Board or Executive Committee may participate in a meeting via conference telephone or remote communication (i.e. Skype) provided:
- (a) A record is kept in the minutes for the meeting of each attendee, whether in physical attendance or electronically.
 - (b) All attendees are provided with any printed materials necessary for consideration and action at the meeting and all are allowed adequate opportunity to participate in discussion of issues before them.
- 9.3 Assembly Meetings
When poor weather, issues of expense or such time when meeting as an Assembly is not practical to conduct important business, the Region Board may choose to conduct official voting through electronic or remote means. The particular issue to be voted on; the process and procedure for voting, will be formulated and explained to all Cooperating and Affiliated Churches by the Region Board through the Executive Minister by means of postal and/or electronic mail with enough time given for all churches to participate.

Article 10 –Amendments

These Standing Rules may be amended by a majority vote of the Region Board provided a written letter of intention to amend has been mailed to each Region Board member at least three weeks in advance of the time of the meeting where action is to take place.