

Greetings:

This information has been sent to you for your viewing and input on the future direction for the Associations that make up our Convention of Atlantic Baptist Churches. In response to CAB Councils request, the Association Moderators from across Atlantic Canada have met twice over the past couple of years to discuss items of concern and necessary direction seen for the future years as our Convention has undertaken a period of staff restructuring, etc. This document is a “White Paper” that was put together to summarize the discussion and presented to Council.

Please look this document over and come to the Association Council meeting slated for Oct. 20th at 9am at the Annapolis Royal Baptist Church to add your thoughts & comments as there will likely be another meeting or two, to set things in motion to assist the Associations in getting things in place to have further involvement in CAB matters.

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A Proposal for Convention’s Associations of Churches

1.) Because the Bible teaches us to be interdependent (Hebrews 10:24-25) and because in more recent years Associations have struggled to find their focus and purpose, and because our Convention will need “people on the ground” to implement our mission and ministry goals, we propose that associations of churches design their work in partnership with Convention initiatives.

2 (a.) Because we recognize that every association of churches will be unique with its own ethnic and geographical opportunities for mission, its own concerns and passions for ministry, and its own resources and spiritual gifts to offer, ...we propose that associations of churches start by prayerfully choosing their own mission or ministry goal to work on with Convention. We offer the following examples:

Example #1. One of our current Associations which is already providing Pastoral Care might choose to work with Convention personnel and resources to further develop their model and then share it with other associations of churches.

Example #2 An association of churches may choose to identify an area in their province or region that is unchurched or under churched. They may then determine to work with Convention personnel and resources to provide a ministry presence in that area.

(b) When associations of churches succeed in implementing their chosen mission or ministry in a God directed and God empowered way, we anticipate there will be many stories to share with the rest of Convention.

(c.) When an association of churches has effectively implemented one mission or ministry goal they would then be ready to prayerfully choose another.

3. Because we recognize the value of geographical associations but also realize that churches develop natural affinities with each other, we propose that churches associate for maximum effectiveness in mission and ministry. These may be constitutionally structured Associations, smaller clusters of churches, or, wider church affinities which may cross current Association parameters. (For example; churches could develop an affinity through their common participation in the NCD, Alpha Canada, etc.) Local pastors and Association leaders could work with Convention personnel (staff or volunteers) to determine which associations of churches would have the greatest potential to achieve shared mission and ministry goals. We envision the Convention growing stronger as affinities develop between associations of churches. An association with an effective model of mission or ministry may want to share their model with other associations of churches which may be eager to learn from them.

4. We envision Convention growing stronger as associations of churches host ministry events (pastoral care retreats, conflict management seminars, parent training events, etc.) that people from other associations of churches may choose to attend.

5. Because we have discovered that the healthiest Associations are lay-led, we propose that Convention help to train and resource lay leaders who may be gifted for the association's chosen mission or ministry.

6. (a) Because we believe associations of churches are called primarily to be actively engaged in mission and ministry but have many administrative responsibilities such as chaplaincies, camps, licensing, ministry grants, ministry placement, etc.....we suggest new proposals be made for dealing with administration issues.

(b.) We propose that whenever ongoing administrative work for these or other issues is required at the association level, people other than those involved in the association's chosen mission/ministry focus, be recruited to manage them. (For example: An association of churches could have a mission/ministry team and an administrative team)

7. Because some churches and Associations are already working together to provide salaried ministry positions at the Association level... we propose that associations of churches remain open to the possibility of hiring ministry leaders who can then engage and direct volunteers in their chosen mission or ministry.