**Bylaws of the Association**

**1.** Anyone or corporation, etc., desiring to give funds or property to this association, the board of trustees are to receive such gifts and hold them for said association until such time the association may call for them to be used in keeping with the donor as far as possible.

**2.** The incoming moderator must be a member of the association for one year before he can serve.

**3.** Each church appoint a chairman of its delegates whose duty it shall be to register said delegates of their church on arriving at the association. Each year this association shall elect an associational registrar whose duty shall be to register the delegates and visitors at the next associational setting.

**4.** The appointment of committees be distributed among all the churches as far as possible for good unity.

**5.** Be it resolved that all organizations that report in the minutes send their reports to the associational clerk 2 months before the sitting of the association.

**6.** Twenty delegates shall constitute a quorum provided not less than six (6) churches or twenty-five percent (25%) are represented, but a smaller number may adjourn from time to time.

**7.** This association shall appoint such committees, as it deems necessary with the moderator stating the duties of each committee appointed.

**8.** That these bylaws “shall not” be changed without two-thirds (2/3) majority of the voting delegates.

**9.** All board members be elected for a three-year term including trustees and the reinstating of board members for three years.

**10.** The vice moderator shall be elected, following the election of the moderator, at each annual session. The vice moderator shall assist and serve with the moderator throughout his term of office. The vice moderator shall become moderator at the end of the moderator’s term or his resignation.

**11.** **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE:**

The Executive Committee shall be composed of the Moderator, Vice Moderator, and Presbytery Moderator, and such members at large as the association deems necessary. The authority of the Executive Committee shall be limited to matters concerning the protection of property, doctrine and any other items assigned or authorized by the association to be carried out between the settings of the association.

The Executive Committee shall be empowered to make temporary appointments to fill vacancies on a board or committee until the next session of the association.

In case of a state of war, crisis, or any other national emergency, the Executive Committee may cancel any meeting of the Association by a three-fourths majority of members present. If the annual meeting of the Portland Association be canceled under said conditions, the tenure of elected officials shall be extended for the same length of time as the regular meeting of the Portland Association is postponed. Therefore, only one group shall be elected in any one year.

The Executive Committee or such committee as the association appoints shall be responsible as a trial committee in cases of church disputes. The Scripture teaches us to refrain from going to civil courts and to form councils to settle disputes and establish justice among brethren. (See Acts 15:1-32, Galatians 2:1ff, Corinthians 6:1ff).

**(A) Investigation:** When a church or congregation is engaged in doctrinal, and/or property disputes, the Executive Committee shall upon invitations from member(s) of said church, assemble themselves upon the premises of their local church for the purpose of inquiry, examination, or questioning that peace may be established in an orderly and godly manner.

The Executive Committee shall also be empowered to investigate said disputes at its own discretion when information becomes common knowledge. The purpose of this shall be only for investigation only to determine if there are sufficient grounds for further action or the possible filing of charges.

**(B) Charges:**

(1) Charges must be filed with the Executive Committee in writing and signed by member (s) of the church together with evidence to support the charges.

(2) Charges must be examined by the Executive Committee to determine if they are legitimate (pertaining to matters of doctrine, policy, ethics or morality). Personal grievances disguised as charges are not legitimate.

(3) Charges involving the minister should be turned over to the Presbytery.

(4) If the Executive Committee determines that the charges are legitimate, the accused is to have a fair and impartial hearing

(5) After the Executive Committee has met to investigate a church because of factional disputes or doctrinal and disciplinary infractions and given its decision and recommendations, the church group within the church has the right to appeal to the annual association to determine whether or not the investigation was carried out according to the polity and doctrine of Portland Association of General Baptists. Otherwise, the decision of the Executive Committee is final.

(6) Member or members of a church who are called upon to assemble themselves for the purpose of aforesaid investigation have a moral responsibility to be cooperative.

**(C) In cases whereby a church splits**, the Executive Committee is assigned the responsibility of determining and identifying the group that is the true, original church, loyal to the polity and doctrine of the Portland Association of General Baptists and General Baptists and the intent and purposes of the organization of the church. In such cases, the group determined to be the true church is entitled to all rights, privileges, real property, assets and records of the church.

**12.** The Portland Association Presbytery and Association take

an open firm stand against homosexuality being accepted in our churches, due to the fact that it is an abomination before God and a disgrace to His Church. The Portland Presbytery will not, for any reason, ordain any man to the office of minister or deacon that is a known homosexual. A minister shall not perform a same sex marriage. Ministers or deacons will not allow same sex marriages to occur within the church that they serve. Pastors, deacons, and churches shall not extend church membership to or allow the ordinances of the church to be administered to a known homosexual. We recommend to each church that if any present member of any church, openly admits being a homosexual, that member should be dealt with immediately by the church and if reconciliation cannot be made, as instructed by scripture, that the member should be dealt with as an excluded member. Any minister or deacon that knowingly violates this resolution shall have his credentials of standing immediately revoked by this body.