

July 2025 Revision

Constitution and By-Laws for Acts² Fellowship of Churches

CONSTITUTION

ARTICLE I. NAME

The name of this Association is Acts² Fellowship of Churches (Association of Anabaptist Churches Connecting for Teaching and Training, Support and Service) herein referred to as ACTS².

ARTICLE II. PURPOSE

ACTS² is an association of like-minded congregations who enter into fellowship with one another to fulfill Jesus' prayer in John 17 that we walk together relationally in unity and oneness. The Association provides a place of relationship, connection, discernment and accountability to congregations who seek innovative, relevant and effective ways to be faithful to the Gospel and their Anabaptist heritage as they minister in the world.

ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF FAITH AND PRACTICES

We affirm the historic orthodox statements of the Christian faith regarding:

1. **GOD - The nature of God as a Trinitarian being, One nature in three persons, eternal and Almighty**, (Mt. 3:16-17; Acts 2:32-33,38; Rev. 1:4-5),
2. **JESUS CHRIST - The person and work of Jesus Christ, God's only Son** (John 1:18; 3:16; 1 Jn. 4:9), **our Lord and Savior** (Lk. 2:11; Acts 5:30-32; 1 Jn. 4:14), **including His deity** (Jn. 1:1; Phil. 2:6; Col. 2:8-10), **virgin birth** (Mt. 1:18; Lk. 1:26-37), **sin-pardoning work on the cross** (Jn. 1:29; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 2:17), **resurrection from the dead** (Lk. 24:1-8; Acts 2:22-32; 1 Cor. 15:1-8), **ascension into heaven** (Lk. 24:50-51; Acts 1:9), **intercession for the saints** (Rom. 8:34; Heb. 7:25; 1 Jn. 2:1) **promised return** (Mt. 25:31; Acts 1:10-11; 2 Thess. 1:7), **and ongoing ministry in and through His body and bride, the Church** (Eph. 5:25-32).
3. **THE HOLY SPIRIT - The presence and ministry of the Holy Spirit** (John 14:15-18; Acts 2:38-39; 1 Cor. 12:7-11),
4. **THE BIBLE - The sixty-six books of the Bible, in the original language are the only inspired and therefore the inerrant Word of God. The Bible is the final authority for all we believe, and how we are to live** (Pr. 30:5; Mt. 24:35; 2 Tim. 3:16-17),
5. **FINAL DESTINY - The final state of the righteous and of the wicked: the blessedness of Heaven for believers and eternal suffering in Hell for unbelievers** (Mt. 25:31-46; Lk. 16:19-31; Rev. 20:11-15).

We affirm the following Scriptural understandings of:

1. That there are only two biological human sexes, male and female, as established by God at creation (Gen. 2:21-24), and one's gender corresponds to their biological sex.
2. The sanctity of marriage between one biological male and one biological female and that sexual intimacy is only to be enjoyed within the covenant of marriage (Lev. 18; 1 Cor. 6:15-20; Heb. 13:4),
3. The sanctity of all human life from conception until death (Gen. 1:27; Ex. 20:13; Ps. 139:13-16),
4. The importance of the care of the poor and weak (Gal. 2:10),
5. The importance of the witness of the church to go into the world to evangelize and make disciples (Matthew 28:19-20).

We value Anabaptist and Pietist emphasis on:

1. Believers' baptism (Acts 2:38),
2. The importance of discipleship and following Jesus in daily life (Mt. 28:19-20; Lk. 14:25-35; Rom. 1:5),
3. The church as a gathered community (Heb. 10:25) of encouragement, accountability and equipping (Eph. 4:14-16),
4. The need for peaceful, non-violent resolution of conflict: personal, corporate, national, and global (Mt. 18:15-17; 1 Cor. 6:1-8),
5. The priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2:4-5; Rev. 1:6),
6. The importance of living transformed lives in the world (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:23-24),
7. The present reality of the kingdom of heaven breaking into this world, with the beliefs, practices, priorities and values of the reign of God (Mt. 6:10; Jn. 18:36; 2 Cor. 10:3-4).

ARTICLE IV. AUTONOMY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

We value both the autonomy of the local church and voluntary, mutual submission of leaders to one another in Christ, acknowledging that the tension that lies between these two ideals fosters integrity and maturity, leading to relational accountability.

ARTICLE V. PARTICIPATING CONGREGATIONS AND PASTORS

We value the autonomy of the local church along with the accountability of the greater Church. Participation in ACTS² shall consist of congregations and pastors who affirm the Constitution and Bylaws of ACTS² and desire to be in fellowship with other congregations who do likewise for the purpose of fellowship, accountability, training, support and mutual service for the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Participation is voluntary and non-binding. Congregations may be members of other Christian affiliations. ACTS² is not a denomination, but an association of like-minded congregations.

BY-LAWS

Section 1 - ASSOCIATION OF ACTS² FELLOWSHIP OF CHURCHES (ACTS²) RESPONSIBILITIES

- A. ACTS² shall be Board-led, meaning that while the Board will seek counsel and input from partnering congregations, the authority for all final decisions lies with the Board.
- B. ACTS² shall hold no authority over congregations or their leaders beyond their participation in the Association.
- C. ACTS² does not require 'dues' but gladly accepts donations from any congregation affiliated with ACTS². All funds will be solely used for ministry purposes of ACTS²
- D. All gifts and funds of ACTS² shall be deposited in such banks, trust companies as the Board may select.
- E. An annual financial report will be made available to all partner congregations and individual contributors upon request.

Section 2 - CONGREGATIONAL PARTICIPATION

- A. Congregational participation in ACTS² shall occur by affirming the Purpose, Statement of Faith, and Core Values of the Association, by a decision of its officiating body, and then receiving approval from the Association. A congregation may choose to disconnect from the Association by the decision of its officiating body. Or the Association may ask a congregation to leave the Association due to discrepancies with the Purpose, Statement of Faith or Core Values of the Association.
- B. Congregational appointed representatives are recommended to participate in scheduled meetings.

Section 3 ORDAINED PASTOR PARTICIPATION

- A. ACTS² does not ordain or hold ordination of clergy. However, pastors who are ordained, yet whose congregations are not members of ACTS² may participate in ACTS² by affirming the Purpose, Statement of Faith, and Core Values of the Association; and then receive approval from the Association. An affiliated pastor may choose to disconnect from the Association, or the Association may ask a pastor to leave the Association due to discrepancies with the Purpose, Statement of Faith or Core Values of the Association.
- B. Participating ordained pastors, whose congregations are not affiliated with ACTS², may serve on the ACTS² Board

Section 4 - BOARD MEMBER QUALIFICATIONS

- A. Board members shall affirm the Constitution and Bylaws without reservation to ACTS². B. No salaried employee or spouse of any salaried employee shall be eligible to serve as a Board member.
- C. Board members shall meet as needed.
- D. Board members shall be from a participating congregation or a participating ordained pastor.

Section 5 - **THE FISCAL YEAR**

The fiscal year shall begin January 1st and end December 31st.

Section 6 - **BOARD MEMBER NUMBER AND TENURE**

- A. Board membership shall be made up of at least five (5) members but not to exceed nine (9) members.
- B. Board officers shall be elected at the last board meeting of the fiscal year. The term of service for all Board members shall be three (3) years. Board member terms are open ended.
- C. Terms of service upon the Board should be staggered in such a manner that no more than one-third of the full Board members will complete their term of service in any given year.

Section 7 - **BOARD MEMBER COMPENSATION**

- A. Board Members shall receive no compensation for their services.
- B. The Board may authorize the reimbursement of expenses incurred by any Board Member in the performance of official business for ACTS² or the Board.

Section 8 - **BOARD MEMBERS RESPONSIBILITIES**

- A. The Board shall oversee the continuing operation of ACTS² and oversee ACTS²'s business affairs. The responsibilities of the Board shall include, but not be limited to, making policy, acting on matters of personnel including hiring and firing pursuant to other provisions of the Constitution and Bylaws, and overseeing the general purpose of ACTS².
- B. The Board shall elect annually its own secretary, treasurer, chair and any other position deemed needed by the Board.
- C. The Board shall meet to discuss business and make plans to provide spiritual leadership and coordinate direction for Association activities.
- D. A majority of the Board must be present at a Board meeting to transact any business. With prior consent, a Board member may attend and give approval electronically via Zoom or its equivalent.
- E. The Board may authorize any officer directed by these By-Laws to enter into any contract on behalf of the Association. All checks, drafts, or orders for payment of money issued in the name of the Association, shall be signed by the Treasurer plus one other officer so determined by the Association.
- F. Amendments to these articles and/or By-Laws, if any, shall be made at a meeting of the Board called for such purpose, by a two-thirds (2/3) approval of the Board who are present at the meeting. Notice of the meeting and of the proposed amendment shall be given to each Board member at least thirty (30) days before the date of the scheduled said meeting.

Section 9 - **RULE OF GOVERNANCE**

- A. The adoption of the By-Laws supersedes previous rules and decisions of the Association.
- B. Decisions of the Board will be made using a biblical model of prayerful, spiritual discernment resulting in consensus. In the rare times when consensus cannot be reached, the Board chair may call for a vote using the guidelines of Robert's Rule of Order.

Section 10 - **NEW BOARD MEMBERS**

A. New Board Members

1. Vacancies on the Board shall be deemed to exist in the case of a member's expiration of term, resignation before expiration of the term, death, or removal from the Board.
2. Nominations for Board Members.
 - a. Candidates for the Board shall be nominated by the Board after seeking suggestions from participating congregations or participating ordained pastors.
 - b. Such candidates must be interviewed prior to appointment to determine interest, suitability, and eligibility. All candidates shall meet the qualifications of Board members as set forth in these Bylaws.

- B. Appointment of Board Member. Any vacancy on the Board of Directors may be filled by a majority resolution of the remaining Board Members. In the instance of an unexpired term, each Board Member so appointed to hold the vacated position shall hold office until the expiration of that term. Otherwise, the newly appointed member shall serve a full term.

C. Resignation or Dismissal from the Board

1. Any Board member may resign from office. He or she shall tender the resignation in a letter to the Board Chair.
2. Any Board member may be removed from the Board, for excessive absence from regular and special meetings of the Board, or whenever such removal in the judgment of the Board would be in the best interest of ACTS². Removal shall require a two-thirds vote of the Board.
3. Dismissal from the Board shall be a matter of "last resort." Any unpleasantness surrounding such action shall be dealt with quickly and take into account the dignity and personal privacy of the individual in question.
4. In the event a Board member who has left the Board was an officer, another member shall be designated by majority resolution of the Board to assume the responsibilities of the office now vacant.

Section 11 - **INDEMNIFICATION**

As an organization incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania, to the full extent permitted by stated statutes, or by other provisions of the law, every director or officer of the association, or

other persons who have undertaken or are about to undertake any liability on behalf of the association or any company controlled by it, and their heirs, executors and administrators, and estate and effects respectively, shall at all times be indemnified and saved harmless out of the finds of the association, from and against all costs, charges and expenses whatsoever which director, officer or other person incurs in any action, suit claim or proceedings brought or prosecuted against said person, or in respect of any act, deed, matter or thing done or permitted by said person, in or about the execution of the duties of his or her office or in respect of any such liability; and all other costs, charges, or expenses as are occasioned by his or her own willful neglect or fault. The indemnification provided by this article shall continue as to a person who has ceased to be an officer or director and shall inure to benefit of the heirs, executors, administrators, and estate and effects, respectively, of such indemnification party.

Section 12 - **MISCELLANEOUS**

- A. Account Books, Minutes, Etc. The Board shall keep correct and complete books and records of account and shall also keep minutes of the proceedings of its Board and committees. All books and records of ACTS² may be inspected by any Board member for any proper purpose at any reasonable time.
- B. Designated Contributions. ACTS² may accept any designated contribution, grant, bequest, or devise consistent with its general tax-exempt purposes, as set forth in the Articles of Incorporation. As so limited, donor-designated contributions will be accepted for special funds, purposes, or uses; and such designations generally will be honored. However, ACTS² shall reserve all right, title, and interest in and to, and control of, such contributions, as well as full discretion regarding the ultimate expenditure or distribution thereof in connection with any special fund, purpose, or use. Further, ACTS² shall retain sufficient control over all donated funds (including designated contributions) to ensure that such funds will be used to carry out ACTS²'s tax-exempt purposes.
- C. No Private Inurement. ACTS² is not organized for profit and is to be operated exclusively for the promotion of social welfare in accordance with the purposes stated in the Articles of Incorporation. The net earnings of ACTS² shall be devoted exclusively to charitable, religious/educational purposes and shall not inure to the benefit of any private individual. No Board Member or person from whom ACTS² may receive any property or funds shall receive or shall be entitled to receive any pecuniary profit from the operation thereof, and in no event shall any part of the funds or assets of ACTS² be paid as salary or compensation to, or distributed to, or inure to the benefit of any Board Member; provided, however, that (a) reasonable compensation may be paid to any Board member while acting as an agent, a contractor, or an employee of ACTS² for services rendered in effecting one or more of the purposes of ACTS², (b) any Board Member may, from time to time, be reimbursed for such Board Member's actual and reasonable expenses incurred in connection with the administration of the affairs of ACTS², and (c) ACTS² may, by resolution of the Board, make distributions to persons from whom ACTS² has received contributions previously made to support its activities to the

extent such distributions represent no more than a return of all or a part of the contributor's contributions.

- D. References to Internal Revenue Code. All references in these Bylaws to provisions of the Code are to the provisions of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, as amended, and shall include the corresponding provisions of any subsequent federal tax laws.
- E. Severability. The invalidity of any provision of these Bylaws shall not affect the other provisions hereof, and in such event these Bylaws shall be construed in all respects as if such invalid provision were omitted.

Section 13 - **AMENDMENTS OF THE BYLAWS**

The Board of Directors shall have power to alter, amend, or repeal the Bylaws or adopt new Bylaws by a two-thirds approval of the Directors. Changes to ARTICLE III Statement of Faith and Practices require a three-fourths approval of the Board.

Amended and Approved: December 3, 2024

Amended and Approved: July 2025