

Guidelines
for
Free Will Baptist Women's Organizations

by
Women Nationally Active for Christ
(WNAC)

of the
National Association of Free Will Baptists, Inc.

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Brief History of WNAC

June 13, 1935, a group of women met at the Black Jack Free Will Baptist Church in Pitt County, North Carolina and organized a national Free Will Baptist women's organization.

Earlier Free Will Baptist women, or Free Baptist women as they were sometimes called, in the Northeast had an organization and their own mission board sending out and supporting missionaries in India. What had earlier been the Freewill Baptist Female Missionary Society, was organized June 12, 1873 as the Free Baptist Woman's Missionary Society with the board authorized to receive funds and send missionaries. By 1920, however, that organization had turned over its assets and funds to the American Baptist group that the northeastern Free Baptists merged with in 1910.

Although the women tried to keep a Free Will Baptist women's movement alive, from 1920 to 1935 there was no national organization. Free Will Baptists were alive in the Southeast, Southwest, and Midwest. Women in Texas, Missouri, Ohio, and North Carolina knew about the women's organization in the Northeast. Some of them had helped support the missionaries and contributed funds to the Free Baptist Woman's Missionary Society.

Following the 1910 merger, local groups of women continued to organize and work for the cause of Christ. These groups used various names---Missions, Women's Home Missions, Woman's Work, Ladies' Aid Societies, Women's Missionary Society, and Auxiliaries. The earliest record we have of a group in the South is 1899. The minutes of the Glennville, Georgia church mentions an auxiliary and the pastor said he had received on his annual salary \$5.95 from "the sisters."

When the women organized in 1935, they chose the name Woman's National Auxiliary Convention. Mrs. Fannie Polston, elected the first national field secretary, stated the purpose for the organization: "to lead the women of the Free Will Baptist church into a larger share in the winning of the world to Christ." The women's organization offered all the women of the church a place of service and purposed to develop their spiritual life, increase interest in the mission task of the church, train them in systematic and proportionate giving, and unite them in a spirit of fellowship in God's service.

The five vice presidents showed the emphases at the time. The first was in charge of publications and literature. The second vice president was responsible for Christian education. The third was in charge of the missions department. The fourth was responsible for seeing that stewardship was taught and practiced. The fifth was responsible for the benevolence work.

The National Association of Free Will Baptists organized in November 1935. Thursday, November 6, the Association approved and accepted the women's national organization. WNAC has continued since that year.

In July 2014, the WNAC convention voted to petition the National Association of Free Will Baptists to become a national department. The petition was approved during the NAFWB business session. WNAC's proposed charter was adopted during the 2015 NAFWB business session. It was officially signed on October 2, 2015 during the annual WNAC board meeting.

Five Basic Things

Watchword: “Laborers Together” (I Corinthians 3:9).

Definition: A service organization of the church

Purpose: We are women seeking to fulfill the Great Commission through our God-designed roles in our homes, churches, communities, and the world.

Hymn: “People Need the Lord”

Colors: Lavender and white

OFFICER’S GUIDELINES

Any group needs someone to help guide and direct its members toward the goals it wants to accomplish. Local groups, along with district, state, and national conventions elect their own officers. These groups may add or delete suggested officers from their organization. Each local group should be structured to best meet the needs of their women.

Each officer who fills a position at any level should be a member of a Free Will Baptist church and a member of a local women’s group. Each selected should have and be growing in the following characteristics.

***Spiritual fitness**—She should have a vital, growing relationship with her Lord. She grows through Bible study, prayer, and obedience to God’s word. She should be able to say to her women, as Paul said, “Follow me as I follow Christ (I Corinthians 11:1).”

***Poise and confidence**---Poise means the person is aware of who she is, accepts herself and doesn’t let outside forces throw her off balance. This poise comes from knowing God and knowing that she is doing her work for Him. He will be final judge of her motives and accomplishments.

***Caring**---Every officer must care about the organization, her church, and her women. She must care about the command of Christ to carry the gospel to the ends of the earth. She also has a healthy concern for herself—watching her personal appearance and cultivating healthy habits.

***Loyalty**---Any officer should be loyal to her organization. Such loyalty means attending meetings, inviting others, assisting in the work, being dependable. But she should also be loyal to her church and its members.

***Humility---**Any Christian leader is marked by humility. Jesus, our leader, said of Himself, “I am among you as he that serveth (Luke 22:27).” He reminded His disciples, “Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister: And whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant (Matthew 20:26-27).” We are in the world as servants, first of God and then of others.

***Dedication---**A dedicated life for the Christian is a life set apart for God. “Present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service (Romans 12:1).” He claims our time, talents, and our very lives. The officer will show her dedication as she lives out His commands in her everyday life and in her work with women.

Coordinator/President:

- The coordinator and assistant coordinator are responsible for seeing that the women’s organization functions smoothly, that all the other officers are carrying their part of the work well. They cannot do all the work themselves. They must be leaders who motivate and encourage others to fulfill their responsibilities.
- Planning is an important part of the year’s work. The officers constitute the executive committee and are charged with the responsibility of planning the work for the year.
 - Make the meeting a comfortable, open forum so the women will feel free to make suggestions, disagree, or ask questions.
 - Provide the pastor with a copy of the plan for the year.
 - Share your plan with the church calendar committee.
 - Respect each woman as an important part of the team.
 - Be an encouragement throughout the year.
- Presiding – The coordinator is responsible for presiding at local meetings or see that her assistant is ready to preside. She should see that everything is done in an orderly fashion. She should keep it simple and let the women know what the main objective is. Business sessions should move smoothly and not take up too much time. Good planning always helps. (Reference: *Robert’s Rules of Order*)

Assistant Coordinator/ Vice-President:

- The assistant coordinator should publicize regular and special meetings of the group.
- She should involve all the members in contacting absentees and inviting prospective members.
- She should have some method for reaching each new woman who joins the church and enlisting her for the women’s group.
- She should plan special enlistment campaigns during the year. The suggested enlistment month is January.
- She should be ready to preside when needed.

Secretary:

- Good records preserve histories that people will be reading 100 years from now. The secretary's records are historical diaries or journals that will reveal the women of today to the women of tomorrow.
- The secretary's position is important for the present by keeping accurate, brief, and complete records.
- She should keep correct addresses and telephone numbers of all members.
- She is responsible for the annual report to the district. The forms are available from www.wnac.org or by calling the WNAC office at 1-877-767-7662. The accuracy of the local report will be reflected in the district, state, and national reports. These reports become a part of the permanent record of FWB women's work.

Treasurer:

- The treasurer for a women's group is trusted with the responsibility of caring for money women have given to God's work and disburses accordingly.
- She may teach women to be obedient, generous, and cheerful givers.
- Balancing the books requires accuracy and making regular deposits, disbursing funds, and submitting reports regularly.
- She should encourage the women to support district and state projects, the Together Way Plan, special offerings, and designated giving.
 - February – The Welch Fund
 - April – World Missions Offering
 - May – Emphasis Offering for WNAC
 - September – The Rest of the Family Offering
 - November – Mission North America Offering
- She should forward funds each month to the designated place using the forms available from the WNAC office or downloadable on the website (www.wnac.org).

Prayer / Missions Chairman:

- The missions chairman is charged with the responsibility of keeping FWB missions and missionaries, both North American and International, before the women. Prayer cards are available from the North American and International Missions offices.
- Plan the weeks of prayer.
- Involve the women in writing notes of encouragement and sending birthday cards to missionaries.
- Encourage women to give to the Provision Closet. Home and international missionaries may choose household items from the closet. Gift cards to national, not regional, chains are always great for the missionaries. Cash received is kept in a separate account to meet special needs of missionaries.

Service Chairman:

- Help women serve in their homes, churches, and communities.
- Discover service opportunities available in the local church and community.
- Share testimonials when possible.

Study Chairman:

- Plan annual studies that teach women to read critically like the more “noble” Jews in Berea.
- Be willing and ready to teach.
- Invite guest teachers.

Field Representative (district and state):

- Organize new groups in her district/state.
- Keep in touch with and encourage new groups.
- Promote adopted projects.

Offerings for Weeks of Prayer

World Missions Offering

- Formerly called the Laura Belle Barnard Offering.
- *Touching the Untouchables* chronicles Miss Barnard’s ministry and will be advantageous in acquainting women with her.
- This offering underwrites partnership ministries of the International Missions department.
- Utilize the packet of information sent to each auxiliary from International Missions.
- Encourage women to fill a WMO coin bank during this emphasis.
- Be creative in challenging women to give.

Mission North America Offering

- Formerly called the Lizzie McAdams Offering.
- Acquaint women with Mrs. McAdams and her contributions to Free Will Baptists.
- Utilize the packet of information sent to each group from North American Ministries.
- Be creative in challenging women to give.

Alice Lupton Offering

- This offering supports state home mission works.
- Check with the state mission board for missionaries, special projects, and other financial needs.

Plan ahead. Involve your entire church family, including the homebound "pray-ers." Promote. Publicize.

WNAC Membership Fees

WNAC has an annual membership fee of \$15.00 allowing each member to be part of an international network of women striving for the same purpose and goals. Together we can accomplish much more than if we work separately. The current dues of \$15 were set in 2005. Receiving Together Way (co-op) funds does not underwrite the total financial obligations of the office. Listed below are the major functions of the WNAC office.

- Maintain the Steward Provision Closet for missionaries to shop free of charge for home/school supplies.
- Promote WNAC
 - Locally: emphasis cards, ads in denominational publications, visiting state meetings/retreats, etc.
 - Internationally: Bible Institutes, partnerships, women's retreats, etc.
 - Maintain a social media presence: Facebook; Twitter; Pinterest; E-blasts
 - Maintain our website (www.wnac.org)
- Coordinate/administer all national meetings
- Provide support system for local, district, and state WAC groups
- Seek to enroll new local WAC groups
- Publish *Treasure* quarterly, a Bible study guide for women
 - Assume all costs not covered by the subscription price set in 2005. (\$12/year or \$11/year for 5 for more to one address)
 - Design, publish, and promote Bible studies for use in WAC meetings and on individual basis.
- Promote special weeks of prayer
 - Pre-Easter before World Missions Offering (International Missions) in April
 - Pre-Thanksgiving before Mission North America Offering in November
- Receipt all monies given to missions or designated projects and disburse funds according to each WAC's instructions.
- Administer funds providing student scholarships for students
 - Cleo Pursell Foreign Student Scholarship (students studying at our Bible institutes in their native language)

- Dr. Mary R. Wisehart Student Scholarship (young ladies studying at one of our FWB colleges)
- Miley International Student Scholarship (international students studying at one of our FWB colleges in the United States)
- Set and manage the WNAC annual budget: travel, rent, utilities, printing, postage, insurance, salaries, etc.

Please call or email anytime you have questions.

- 877-767-7662
- 615-760-6150
- elizabeth@nafwb.org
- phyllis@wnac.org

This thought was shared by one of our WAC members:

“I consider the membership fee an offering I give to a ministry I believe in and want to see continue.”

WNAC Emphasis Offering

Local groups contribute funds to support the operation of the national WAC office. The suggested Emphasis month is May allowing local WAC groups to promote WNAC to the entire church body.