



*A letter from the*  
**Council of Seven**

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*Calvary Baptist Church, Rochester*  
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*Woodland Baptist Church, Fergus Falls*  
**Vice Chairman**

**Jonathan Eads**

*Calvary Baptist Church, Rochester*  
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**Ben Simons**

*First Baptist Church, Brownsdale*

**Thomas Overmiller**

*Brookdale Baptist Church, Moorhead*

**Jim Goodew**

*Grace Baptist Fellowship, Sartell*

**Patrick Thompson**

*First Baptist Church, New Ulm*

Brothers and Sisters,

At its recent meeting, the Council of Seven recommended pursuing the necessary constitutional changes to transition from the current State Representative model described in Article VI of our constitution. The recommendation would move the MARBC toward a governance structure in which the elected council would assume primary administrative responsibility for the association, with support from partnering agencies and the possible hiring of an administrative assistant, pending approval by the messengers.

As chairman of the council, I wanted to communicate not only the recommendation itself, but also the circumstances that have led us to this point and the spirit in which this direction is being pursued.

For many years, the ministries of the MARBC and Bass Lake Camp have been strengthened through a shared arrangement supporting one individual serving in two part-time leadership roles. That arrangement allowed both ministries to benefit from faithful leadership while stewarding resources carefully. As both ministries look to the future, however, it has become clear that this shared structure will not continue in the same form moving forward.

At the 2025 Annual Meeting, the messengers directed the council to explore the possibility of a merger with the Minnesota Baptist Association. Those efforts did not progress, as the response the council received in March did not indicate any interest in pursuing merger discussions. As a result, the council believes it is important for the MARBC to move forward with greater clarity regarding its own structure and future direction.

At the same time, the association has faced ongoing financial realities that require thoughtful and responsible planning. The council believes it would not be wise to call someone into a role that we are uncertain we can adequately and sustainably support. Our desire is to act with honesty, prudence, and integrity as we consider the future.

These discussions also come during a season of transition. Darrell Friar has served the MARBC and Bass Lake Camp faithfully for many years, and  
*continued...*



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his current ministry responsibilities with the association will conclude in October of this year. We are deeply grateful for his service, leadership, and steady investment in our churches.

While these circumstances have required change, the council remains encouraged about the future of the association.

We believe there continues to be a meaningful place for fellowship and cooperation among churches that share common convictions, common mission, and a desire to strengthen one another in gospel ministry. Our association was established:

*“To provide a fellowship for all Baptist churches which subscribe to the Constitution and Articles of Faith herein contained, and to encourage and promote the establishment of Regular Baptist churches and missionary endeavor wherever possible.”*

That purpose still matters.

The council’s intent is not to retreat from cooperative ministry, but to pursue a structure that is realistic, sustainable, and better suited to our present circumstances. We envision an association where churches continue partnering together in fellowship, church health, ministry encouragement, missions, leadership development, church planting, and other shared efforts that advance the cause of Christ in Minnesota and beyond.

In the months ahead, the council will continue refining details and communicating with the churches as plans develop. We invite your prayers for wisdom, unity, and clarity, and we welcome your continued engagement as we seek the Lord’s direction together.

Thank you for your continued partnership in the gospel.

In Christ,



**Greg Linscott**

Chairman, Council of Seven

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