Constitution

Article I – Name

This body is to be known as the Gasconade Valley Baptist Association.(GVBA) This body shall be incorporated and registered with the Missouri Secretary of State. The Treasurer shall be the registrar. The address shall be 4300 Highway B, Bland, MO 65014.

Article II – Statement of Faith

We believe The Holy Bible is the inspired word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. The Association subscribes to "The Baptist Faith and Message" as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000.

Article III – Purpose

The purpose of this Association shall be to enable churches to be in fellowship and to assist them in fulfilling their mission and ministry in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. In fulfilling this purpose, we join in cooperative partnership with the Missouri Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article IV – Statement on Marriage and Sexuality

Due to the changing moral climate in America, we feel it necessary to include a specific statement on our beliefs concerning the nature of marriage and human sexuality.

We believe the term "marriage" has only one meaning: The joining by God of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality, including adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's gender, or disagreement with one's biological sex, is sinful and offensive to God.

We believe that in order to preserve the function and integrity of the Association, it is imperative that all persons employed by GVBA in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers eternal salvation and restoration to all sinners who confess and repent of their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ alone.

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect, and dignity. Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture.

Article V – Fiscal and Statistical Year

The Associational fiscal year shall extend from October 1 to September 30 of the following year, thus, all treasurer's accounts and reports, and the budget shall be made and kept in accordance therewith. All other statistical reports of the Association and churches shall extend from August 1 to July 31 of the following year and shall be sent to the clerk of the Association, or entered into the Missouri Baptist Convention website, not later than August 15 of each year.

Article VI – Membership

Section 1. This body shall consist of churches and missions of Gasconade Valley Baptist Association.

Section 2. Any church desiring to unite with this Association shall, through duly elected messengers, present the church's credentials: 1. Organization, 2. Articles of faith, 3. Information concerning membership, including how members are received, to the Director of Missions of GVBA. The Credentials Committee shall review the church's request for membership and make recommendation based upon the process outlined in the GVBA's Operations Manual, (see Operations Manual, pg. 30). If passed upon by the Credentials Committee and accepted by the Association, it shall be a member of this body.

Section 3. Any church failing to report to the Association for two years in succession may be dropped at the option of the Association.

Article VII – Officers

Section 1. Director of Missions (DOM): He shall serve as director over the work of the Association, as described in the GVBA Operations Manual (see Operations Manual, pg. 17).

He shall have the authority to call special meetings of the Executive Board, with the consent of the Administrative Committee of the Association.

The DOM shall be elected by a special Executive Board meeting provided each board member has been notified by the clerk two weeks prior to the meeting.

Section 2. General Officers: The general officers of this body shall be the moderator, assistant moderator, clerk and treasurer. These serve on the Associational Council.

A. Qualifications:

To hold an office in this body a person is required to be a member in good standing of one of the churches or missions of this Association. When this qualification ceases to apply to anyone holding office, a board meeting of the Association has the authority to declare that office vacant.

B. Election and Responsibilities:

1. The **Moderator** shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for presentation and election to the Association and shall take office at the closing session of the annual meeting. The moderator is elected for a one-year term and may succeed himself/herself for a second one-year term. The duties of the moderator shall consist of those responsibilities outlined in the GVBA Operations Manual, (see Operations Manual, pg. 20).
2. The **Assistant Moderator** shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for presentation and election to the Association. The assistant moderator shall take office at the closing session of the annual meeting. The assistant moderator is elected for a one-year term and may succeed himself/herself for a second one-year term. The duties of the assistant moderator shall consist of those responsibilities outlined in the GVBA Operations Manual, (see Operations Manual, pg. 21).
3. The **Clerk** shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for presentation and elected by the Association. The clerk shall take office at the closing session of the annual meeting with the right of succession. The duties of the clerk shall consist of those responsibilities outlined in the GVBA Operations Manual, (see Operations Manual, pg. 22).
4. The **Treasurer** shall be nominated by the Nominating Committee for presentation and elected by the Association. The treasurer shall take office at the closing session of the annual meeting with the right of succession. The duties of the treasurer shall consist of those responsibilities outlined in the GVBA Operations Manual, (see Operations Manual, pg. 23).

Section 3. Other Officers and Directors: The other Officers shall be Sunday School Director, Church Revitalization Director, WMU and Women's Ministry Director, Men's Ministry Director, Stewardship Education Director, Music Director, Evangelism Director, Camp Program Director(s), Missions Development Director, Youth Director, Trustee Chairman, Pastoral Ministries Director, Prayer Director, and Friends of the BSU Representative. These shall serve on the Associational Council.

A. **Election and Responsibilities:** All Officers and Directors listed in Section 3 of Article VII shall be nominated by the Associational Nominating Committee and presented to the annual meeting so that these officers may be approved at that time.

The responsibilities of the above listed officers are outlined in the GVBA Operations Manual:

1. Friends of the BSU Representative – page 28
2. Chairman of Trustees – page 36
3. Missions Development Director – page 39
4. Sunday School Director – page 40
5. Men's Ministry Director – page 41
6. Music Director – page 42
7. Church Revitalization Director – page 43
8. Evangelism Director – page 44
9. Pastoral Ministries Director – page 45

10. Stewardship Education Director – page 46
11. WMU and Women's Ministry Director – page 47
12. Youth Director – page 48
13. Camp Program Director(s) – page 49
14. Prayer Director – page 50

Section 4. Honorariums: The clerk's honorarium shall be paid when the minutes are in the hands of the printers. The honorarium shall be paid to the treasurer at the close of the Associational year.

Section 5. Trustees shall consist of six members placed in nomination by the Nominating Committee. They are to serve a three-year rotating term with one-third rotating off each year. The Nominating Committee will designate a chairperson from those having served at least one prior year.

The trustee duties shall consist of those responsibilities outlined in the GVBA Operations Manual, (see Operations Manual, page 36).

Article VIII – Committees

Section 1. Annual Committees: The moderator shall appoint each of the following committees at the fourth quarter Executive Board meeting as outlined in the GVBA Operations Manual.

A. Memorial Committee – page 33
B. Time, Place and Preacher Committee – page 37

These committees shall serve for the annual Associational meeting at which they are appointed and are dissolved at the close of the annual meeting.

Section 2. Standing Committees: shall consist of:

1. Administrative Committee – page 24
2. Annual Meetings Program Planning Committee – page 25
3. Associational Council – page 26
4. Audit Committee – page 27
6. Budget Committee – page 29
8. Credentials Committee – page 30
9. Constitution and By-Laws Committee – page 31
10. Nominating Committee – page 34
11. Resolutions Committee – page 35

All committee members shall be nominated and elected according to the GVBA Operations Manual.

Section 3. The moderator and the DOM shall be ex-officio members of all committees, (see Operations Manual, page 8, Items 4 & 6).

Article IX – Relation Between Churches, Etc.

As an Association we disclaim any ecclesiastical authority over churches in fellowship with the Gasconade Valley Baptist Association but maintain the right to withdraw fellowship from any church that departs from Baptist faith and practice as defined in either the 1963 or the 2000 statements of the *Baptist Faith and Message* adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention.

Article X – Meetings

Section 1: Bi-annual Meetings: The Association shall meet bi-annually in September (annual meeting) and April (mid-year meeting), dates to be determined for the following year by recommendations of the Time, Place, and Preacher Committee and approved by messengers at the annual meeting. In case of need between sessions of the Association, the Executive Board is authorized to change either time or place of meeting. The mid-year meeting shall take the place of the third quarter Executive Board Meeting.

Section 2. Messengers:

A. The pastor of each church and mission, all officers of the Association, and the Executive Board members shall automatically be messengers to the annual and mid-year meetings by reason of their position.
B. Each church with 200 members or fewer may send to the annual and mid-year meeting of this body three messengers (this is in addition to the pastor, Executive Board member, and any other elected Associational officer within the church).

Each church with more than 200 members may send to the annual and mid-year meeting one additional

messenger for each additional 100 members or major fraction thereof, providing no church shall have more than five messengers (this is in addition to the pastor, Executive Board member, and any other elected Associational officer within that church).

Each church is entitled to an equal number of alternate messengers, their names being included on the annual church profile. These have a vote only in the absence of a messenger. Those messengers and alternates listed on the annual church profile shall serve at both the annual and mid-year meetings.

Section 3. Motions: Only messengers may present motions and vote.

Article XI – Executive Board

The business of the Association shall be carried on between annual meetings of the Association by an Executive Board.

Section 1. Membership:

A. Pastors who are serving churches and missions of the Association.
B. One Board Member from each church, elected by the church, or one duly elected alternate Board Member to attend Board Meetings and vote only in the absence of the Board Member.
C. The general officers and department directors listed in Article VII, Section 3.
D. The Director of Missions.
E. A representative of the Board of Trustees.

Section 2. Duties: the Board shall carry on all business of the Association between annual meetings of the Association. The Board shall submit an annual report of its transactions to the Association.

The Administrative Committee of the Executive Board shall act in emergency situations for and on behalf of the Executive Board between meetings of the Executive Board, and when meeting in an emergency situation at the call of the moderator, shall be required to have a quorum of at least five members present of which three members shall be other than the moderator and assistant moderator, however the moderator or assistant moderator must be present.

Section 3. Quorum: Ten members shall constitute a quorum to transact business before the Board.

Section 4. Officers: The general officers of the Association shall be the officers of the Board.

Section 5. Meetings: The Executive Board shall meet at least once each quarter and upon the call of the moderator, DOM, or Administrative Committee, as is deemed necessary.

Section 6. Motions: Only members of the Executive Board may present motions and vote.

Article XII – Facilities Use Policy

The Gasconade Valley Baptist Association's facilities were provided through God's benevolence and by the sacrificial generosity of member churches. Our Association desires that its facilities be used for the fellowship of its member congregations and to bring God glory. Although the facilities are not generally open to the public, we make our facilities available to approved non-members as a witness to our faith, in a spirit of Christian charity, and as a means of demonstrating the Gospel of Jesus Christ in practice.

But facility use will not be permitted to persons or groups holding, advancing, or advocating beliefs or practices that conflict with the Association's faith statement, which is summarized in, among other places, the Association's constitution and bylaws. Nor may Association facilities be used for activities that contradict, or are deemed inconsistent with, the Association's faith statement. The DOM, or the GVBA trustees, are the final decision-makers concerning use of Association facilities.

Therefore, in no event shall persons or groups who hold, advance, or advocate beliefs, or advance, advocate, or engage in practices that contradict the Association's faith statement use any of the Association's facilities. Nor may Association facilities be used in any way that contradicts the Association's faith statement. This policy applies to all Association facilities because the Association sees all of its property as holy and set apart to worship God. (Col 3:17.)

Article XIII – Gasconade Valley Baptist Association Camp

Section 1. Name: This shall be known as the *Gasconade Valley Baptist Association Camp.*

Section 2. Purpose: The purpose of the camp shall be to provide a Christian environment for the promotion of evangelism, missionary activities, religious education, wholesome recreation, character building, fellowship, inspiration, and for any purpose that the Association may consider helpful toward furthering the program of the churches and their spiritually.

Section 3. Control: This camp shall be controlled and operated by the Gasconade Valley Baptist Association.

Section 4. Camp By-laws:

1. Churches and Associational organizations using the facilities of the camp shall be required to pay for the lights and other accrued costs to be determined by the DOM or trustees.
2. The camp by-laws may be amended at any annual meeting or mid-year meeting, by a two-thirds majority vote of the messengers in attendance, provided notice of such amendment shall have been given in writing to all Executive Board members at least one month before the meeting at which the changes will be voted upon.

Section 5. Camp Rules:

1. Decent and proper dress shall be worn at all times at camp.
2. Any group using the camp facilities must clear this calendar date and time with the DOM or the chairman of the trustees.
3. To keep the sanctity of the Lord's Day ever before us, recreational activities at camp on Sunday shall not be of the nature to desecrate the Lord's Day. Recreational games and fellowship between churches is permitted on Sunday afternoon.
4. Any group using the camp must clean the facilities they used before leaving.
5. Hunting shall not be allowed during any camp or church activity at the camp site.
6. There shall be no profanity, tobacco, non-prescribed and illicit drugs, marijuana, or alcoholic beverages allowed on the site at any time.
7. The DOM or the trustees shall be responsible for enforcing these camp rules and interpreting them to the people using the camp site and facilities.
8. Since the dwelling at the camp is adjacent to the camp buildings and entrance, the occupants' privacy shall be respected at all times.
9. Background checks (to be renewed every two years) will be required of all Camp Staff. Camp Staff includes Camp Director(s), Cabin Leaders, Recreational Staff, Bible Study Teachers, Rotation Leaders, Camp Pastor, Camp Nurse, Camp Cook, and any other leaders as deemed necessary.

Section 6. The trustees shall make quarterly reports to the Association of all money spent on the upkeep of the buildings and grounds of all Associational properties.

XIV – Dissolution

The Association may be dissolved by a vote of two-thirds of the messengers present at a called or regular meeting of the Association. The intent to make such a motion must be given to the moderator and DOM at least one month before the meeting. Any motion of dissolution must include the transfer of the financial assets and of the property of the Association to some new Missouri Baptist association or to some other Missouri Baptist Convention or Southern Baptist entity.

Article XV – Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any annual meeting or mid-year meeting, by a two-thirds majority vote of the messengers in attendance, provided notice of such amendment shall have been given in writing to all Executive Board members at least one month before the meeting at which the changes will be voted upon.