**GIBSON BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, INC**

CONSTITUTION

**ARTICLE I. NAME**

This association shall be known as the Gibson Baptist Association, Inc.

**ARTICLE II. PURPOSE**

The purpose of the association shall be:

1. To promote fellowship, harmony, and cooperation among the churches.
2. To assist churches in their work.
3. To promote missionary work at home and abroad in cooperation with the Tennessee Baptist and Southern Baptist Conventions.
4. To encourage Christian education and enterprise for the spread of the gospel and the inculcation of morality consistent with the Word of God.
5. To counsel with churches in difficulty.

**ARTICLE III. STATEMENT OF FAITH**

This association subscribes to the doctrinal statement of *The Baptist Faith and Message* adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in 2000.

**IV. MARRIAGE AND SEXUALITY STATEMENT**

We believe that the term 'marriage' has only one meaning and that is marriage sanctioned by God which joins one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture.

We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to only occur between a man and a woman who are married to each other. We believe that 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, such as adultery, fornication, homosexuality, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest, pornography or any attempt to change one's sex, 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 member churches should abide by and agree to this Statement on Marriage and Sexuality and conduct themselves accordingly.

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ.

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. MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. Churches desiring to affiliate with this Union shall petition the Association by

letter and messengers during the Annual Meeting, at which time the Association shall refer such application to the Credentials Committee and the committee shall bring whatever recommendations justifiable at the next annual meeting.

Section 2. A church shall be received into the Association by not less than a three-fourths majority vote.

Section 3. To be accepted as a member of this Association, a church must be officially aligned with no denominational body other than the Southern Baptist Convention and the Tennessee Baptist Convention.

Section 4. Each church shall endorse the articles of faith set forth by this Association, be firmly committed to the principles, policies, and programs of this Association, be expected to contribute financially to the work of the Association.

Section 5. No proceedings shall be had against any church except upon charges preferred by

a sister church, which shall first have followed the direction of Matthew XVIII, in attempting to bring to repentance.

Section 6. Churches may be dismissed by three-fourths majority vote at the annual meeting

of the Association upon the recommendation of the Credentials Committee.

**ARTICLE VI. AUTHORITY**

The association shall have no ecclesiastical authority or power over the churches to interfere with their discipline of internal affairs, but may withdraw its fellowship from any church departing from scriptural doctrine or church order.

**ARTICLE VII. ANNUAL MEETING**

Section 1. The association shall convene annually.

Section 2. Each church shall be entitled to three messengers from its membership, and for

every fifty members over 100, or a fraction thereof, it shall be entitled to one additional messenger.

**ARTICLE VIII. OFFICERS**

The association shall elect the officers duringthe annual meeting to serve through the year and the next session of annual association. The association shall annually elect by private ballot or by a two-thirds majority vote of all members present, may suspend the rules and elect by acclamationits officers.

Section 1. Moderator: The moderator shall preside over the deliberations of the association, preserve order and submit all questions to the vote of the body. The term of office for the Moderator is limited to one year and said Moderator shall not be eligible for reelection until as much as one year has elapsed from the time a successor is named.

Section 2. Assistant Moderator: The assistant moderator shall preside in the absence of the Moderator, and shall have the same powers while presiding as the Moderator. An Assistant Moderator assuming the office due to the resignation or death of the Moderator shall be eligible for one full year after filling the previous Moderator's unexpired term.

Section 3. Clerk: The clerk shall keep a correct record of the proceedings.

Section 4. Treasurer: The treasurershall receive and dispense all associational funds according to the policies and directives of this body and give a full account of the same at each quarterly executive board meeting and the annual association.

Section 5.Assistant Treasurer: In the absence of the treasurer, in the event of his or her death, or his or her inability or refusal to act, the Assistant Treasurer will perform the duties of the Treasurer.

**ARTICLE IX. EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Section 1. The executive board shall serve as the association ad interim.

Section 2. This board shall meet quarterly or upon call by the moderator.

Section 3. The board shall be composed of all pastors who are members of the churches

where they serve and one member elected by each Church.

**ARTICLE X. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the association in all matters not otherwise specified in this Constitution.

**ARTICLE XI. AMENDMENTS**

Amendments to this Constitution may be made during annual session by two-thirds majority vote, provided any proposed change is made in writing one year in advance.

BYLAWS

Gibson Baptist Association

**ARTICLE I. MEMBERSHIP**

Section 1. The Gibson Baptist Association welcomes new churches, new mission churches and church plants to become members of the Association.

Section 2. The Process For Membership To The Association:

1. A church desiring membership in the Gibson Baptist Association shall write an official letter of petition, complete an application for membership and submit the letter with the application to the Director of Missions or the Moderator of the Association.
2. The Credentials Committee shall serve as a watch care committee for the Association when a church petitions membership.
3. The Credentials Committee shall meet with the petitioning church to examine their soundness of faith and doctrine, their intent to cooperate with sister churches of the Association, and their relationship with the Tennessee Baptist Convention and Southern Baptist Convention. This watch care process shall be no less than six months.
4. Any church requesting membership must affirm the Baptist Faith & Message 2000, and be of like Faith and Order.
5. It is recommended that the petitioning church have a sponsoring Southern Baptist church of like faith and order. The petitioning church shall have affiliation with no other denominational body.
6. Only duly organized and constituted churches shall be considered for membership in the Association. New church plants or mission congregations may petition the Association for membership, provided that their sponsoring church has duly organized and constituted them as a church. The leadership of the new church plant or mission congregation shall meet with the Credentials Committee to verify their agreement and compliance with all requirements. The new church, after having been under the watch care of the sponsoring church, may be accepted for membership by vote of the Association.
7. The petitioning church is required to participate financially to the Association and Cooperative Program during the watch care period.
8. Members of the petitioning church are encouraged to participate in all programs, ministries, activities, Executive Board meetings and fellowship of the Association during the watch care period, but they have no voting rights and may not serve in any elected position of the Association.
9. The Credentials Committee will work with the leadership of a church which was constituted and organized from division or disharmony and with the leadership of the sister church. The purpose will be to seek a healthy working relationship and a spirit of cooperation between the two churches, the Association, and for the Kingdom’s sake. If there are no issues that require a meeting, then a letter of cooperation from the leadership of the two churches shall be acceptable.
10. The Credentials Committee shall report to the Association its recommendation at the next meeting after the watch care process has been completed. A three-fourths (3/4) vote is required for membership. If received as a member of the Gibson Baptist Association, the petitioning church shall be seated as messengers immediately and enjoy membership with all privileges and responsibilities as a sister church.

**ARTICLE II. EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Section 1. No one shall serve on the Executive Board, Committee, or hold office in this body unless he be a member of an affiliated church of the association.

Section 2. Twelve members of the Executive Board shall constitute a quorum.

Section 3. The Executive Board shall develop and adopt a book of policies, designating officers and committees, how they are to be elected, term, duties, relationship to other committees, officers and staff. These policies may be changed at any time by the Executive Board so long as two weeks or more notice shall be given in writing.

**ARTICLE III. COMMITTEES**

Section 1. General Guidelines Of Committees.

1. The Moderator and Director of Missions shall be ex-officio members of all committees and voting members of none.
2. The term of service for all standing committees shall be three years. In case of resignation or death of a member, a replacement member will be elected to fill the unexpired term. A member who has served a full rotating term (3 years) shall not be eligible for reelection until having been out of such office for one associational year. An individual shall not be eligible to serve on more than one standing committee.

Section 2. The Nominating Committee. The committee is composed of three members. The duties are as follows:

1. Nominates the teams and committees and various members, to be presented at the annual meeting of the Association.
2. Serves throughout the year to nominate persons to fill vacancies as they occur.
3. Recommends the Trustees to be elected annually at the Associational Meeting. There shall be three trustees and each trustee shall serve a three-year rotating term.

Section 3. Credentials Committee. The committee is composed of three members. The duties are as follows:

1. The Director of Missions and Moderator shall serve as *ex officio* members of the committee.
2. Give direction and counsel to churches which petition the Association for membership during the watch care period.
3. Examine churches requesting admission into the Association regarding their doctrine, operations, and denominational relationship.
4. Explain to the church the expectations regarding support, mission giving, annual church profile reports (ACP) and participation in associational activities.
5. Investigate and make recommendations concerning the dissolution of affiliation of a church when requested by the Association or Executive Board (Article I, Constitution).
6. Confirm credentials of associational messengers by providing for proper registration of messengers and visitors during each session of the annual meeting.
7. Assist the Moderator by determining voting results including vote totals.
8. Provide help to churches when requested in doctrinal matters as well as seeking to promote harmony and unity.

Section 4. Personnel Committee. The committee is composed of three members. The duties are as

follows:

1. Works with associational staff in dealing with personnel matters.
2. Reviews on an annual basis with the staff, salaries and compensation and recommends to the budget & finance committee any changes.
3. Serves with the Director of Missions in employing and replacing any staff positions.

Section 5. Budget & Finance Committee. The committee is composed of five members. The duties are as follows:

1. The Treasurer and Chairman of the Personnel Committee and three members at large shall serve as the budget & finance committee.
2. Plans and recommends to the association a ministry action budget expressing the association’s objectives for the new year.
3. An annual audit shall be conducted on all financial records of the association.
4. Two signatures shall be required on all checks.

Section 6. Constitution & Bylaws Committee. The committee is composed of five members. The duties are as follows:

1. Develop and maintain a working understanding of the document.
2. Receive from the association any questions concerning the provisions and or proposed revisions.
3. Oversee the process of preparing the wording and of presenting proposed revisions to the association.

**ARTICLE IV. TEAMS**

The association shall fulfill its mission through teams. Teams may create affinity teams as needed to accomplish their tasks. They shall be empowered to carry out the assignment given to them by the Association and Executive Board. The nominating committee shall nominate the team leaders to be elected at the annual meeting of the association. Team leaders may present to the nominating committee team members to serve on their teams. The Director of Missions and moderator shall be ex-officio members of all teams. The association shall designate the following teams as Priority Teams: Send team, Seek team, Strengthen team and Strategic Leadership team. Each priority team shall have five elected members, but anyone who has a passion to serve may be a volunteer member of a priority team at large without voting privileges. All team leaders will work with the Director of Missions to fulfill the mission and vision of the association.

Section 1. The Send Team

*The Send Team mobilizes churches and volunteers to be on mission in their setting and around the world. Matthew 28:19 “Go, therefore…”*

1. Encourages churches to engage in missions in all areas (Acts 1:8: Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, the Uttermost).
2. Recommends to the association or Executive Board the association’s mission partnerships and mission initiatives.
3. Equips churches to do missions through training and resources.
4. Seeks to guide the association in mission activities and ministries to ethnic groups in the association.
5. Leads the disaster relief ministry of the association.
6. Promotes the Wingo Mission offering of the association and other mission offerings in cooperation with the WMU.
7. Develops the guidelines for use of the Wingo Funds.
8. Recommends to the annual meeting the goal for the Wingo offering, and the percentage distribution of Wingo funds.
9. Includes the WMU Director who is a voting team member.
10. Submits ministry plans to the strategy team for review.
11. Presents any requests for funds to the finance committee by providing a ministry plan.
12. Reports to the Executive Board meetings and annual meetings of the association.

Section 2. The Seek Team

*The Seek Team leads the association of churches to evangelize the lost and reach the unreached for Christ. Matthew 28:19 “…make disciples of all nations…”*

1. Plans and promotes associational evangelistic projects, ministries and activities.
2. Provides training in evangelism to help churches fulfill the Great Commission.
3. Plans and promotes the cooperation of churches to minister at major community evangelistic events to share the gospel.
4. Encourages churches to be involved in evangelistic efforts in their local communities.
5. Supports and promotes evangelism programs, events and activities of the Tennessee Baptist Convention as well as the North American Mission Board.
6. Guides churches to identify needs for church plants and assists them in starting new churches.
7. Develops strategies to reach new people.
8. Submits ministry plans to the strategy team for review.
9. Presents any requests for funds to the finance committee by providing a ministry plan.
10. Reports to the Executive Board meetings and annual meetings of the association.

Section 3. The Strengthen Team

*The Strengthen Team helps churches to be vibrant, healthy, revitalized growing disciples of Jesus Christ. Matthew 28:20 “teaching them to observe all things…”*

1. Identifies churches in need of strengthening and offers assistance.
2. Assists and encourages churches to become healthy strong congregations.
3. Prays for God to strengthen and revitalize churches of the association.
4. Encourages church leaders to grow in their relationship with the Lord and provides opportunities for leadership skills development.
5. Facilitates training and support networks for pastors, staff, ministry leaders, their wives and families.
6. Serves churches by providing relevant resources and training to assist in developing the overall health and growth of churches.
7. Facilitates ministry partnerships between churches of the association.
8. Develops a strategy for strengthening each church identified and contacted.
9. Organizes appropriate training events and conferences that strengthen churches.
10. Submits ministry plans to the strategy team for review.
11. Presents any requests for funds to the finance committee by providing a ministry plan.
12. Reports to the Executive Board meetings and annual meetings of the association.

Section 4. Strategic Leadership Team

*The Strategic Leadership Team shall be composed of the priority team leaders, moderator and assistant moderator. The Strategic Leadership Team facilitates all teams to strategically plan, coordinate and pursue the mission of God for our churches. The Strategic Leadership Team supports, guides, and facilitates the work and ministry of the association. Acts 1:8 “…and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”*

1. Leads the association in strategy planning and implementation.
2. Reviews all ministry plans of the priority teams in order to coordinate the calendar and avoid conflicts in scheduling.
3. Presents the Strategic Ministry Plan to the finance committee of the association for budget planning.
4. Presents any requests for funds to the finance committee by providing a ministry plan.
5. Reports to the Executive Board and annual meetings of the association as needed.
6. Develops, maintains, updates and executes a Policies and Procedures Manual which must be approved by the association or Executive Board.
7. Presents recommendations for new or revised policies and procedures to the association or Executive Board for approval.
8. Plans the Annual Meeting of the association.
9. Maintains and updates the Articles of Incorporation as needed.
10. Seeks professional advice on matters needing legal counsel as directed by the Executive Board or association.
11. Maintains adequate insurance coverage in all aspects of the association’s ministry.
12. Ensures that all ministries under the association’s umbrella follow and are in compliance with the association’s policies & procedures, as well as insurance policy requirements.
13. Handles all issues related to the assets of the association such as the building, properties and contents etc.
14. Works with the associational staff to provide equipment and resources for office use.

**ARTICLE V. PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORITY**

The rules contained in the current edition of *Robert’s Rules of Order Newly Revised* shall govern the association in all matters not otherwise specified in these bylaws.

**ARTICLE VI. AMENDMENTS**

These Bylaws may be amended at any regular business session of the Association by two thirds (2/3) of those eligible, present and voting.

Bylaws Amended on October 22, 2020