



Missouri State Association Of Free Will Baptists Bylaws

NAME

1. This Association shall be called the Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptist.

PURPOSE

2. The mission of the Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists is to unify local Free Will Baptist associations by equipping, encouraging, and strengthening local churches in making disciples of Jesus Christ

MEMBERSHIP

3. The Association shall be composed of the members of the various local affiliated Associations.

4. Any organized District Association of Free Will Baptists may unite with this body at any regular session by a two-thirds vote of all delegates present, providing that the following procedures have been followed:

- a. The District Association will send a letter to the State Clerk requesting membership in the State Association.
- b. The Executive Committee will examine the District Association and make the appropriate recommendation to the State Association.

OFFICERS

5. The officers of this Association shall be Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Clerk, and Assistant Clerk, who shall be elected annually at the close of each session and hold their office until their successors are elected and qualified. No officer shall serve the same office more than three consecutive years, except the clerk.

6. The officers of this body shall submit, at every session, a report of the work done for this association.

7. The Moderator shall be the principal executive officer of the Association and he shall sign, with the clerk or any other people, officer or agent of the Association there unto authorized by the General Board, any deeds, mortgages, bonds, contracts, or other instruments which the General Board has authorized to be executed, except in cases where the signing and execution thereof shall be expressly delegated by the General Board or by these By-Laws to some other officer or agent of the Association, or shall be required by law to be otherwise signed or executed. The duties of Moderator shall include presiding at the meetings of the State Association, the General Board, and the Executive Committee, and in general, to fulfil whatever responsibilities that may be commensurate with his office or delegated to him by the body or General Board.

8. In the absence of the Moderator, or in the event of his death, inability or refusal to act, the Assistant Moderator shall perform the duties of the Moderator, and when so acting, shall have all the powers of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the moderator. The Assistant Moderator shall perform such duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Moderator or by the General Board.

9. The Clerk shall keep and accurate record of all business transactions, shall superintend the printing of the minutes, and shall receive an honorarium of an amount agreed upon by this body.

10. The Clerk shall:

- a. Keep the minutes of the Association and of the General Board meetings in one or more books provided for the purpose.
- b. See that all notices are given in accordance with the provisions of these by-laws or as required by law.
- c. Be custodian of the Association records and of the seal of the Association and see that the seal of the Association is affixed to all documents the execution of which on behalf of the Association under its seal is duly authorized.
- d. In general, perform all duties incident to the office of the clerk and other duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the Moderator or by the General Board.
- e. In the absence of the clerk, or in the event of his death, inability, or refusal to Act, the Assistant Clerk shall perform the duties of the Clerk and when so acting shall have the power of and be subject to all the restrictions upon the clerk. The Assistant Clerk shall perform such duties as from time to time may be assigned to him by the clerk or by the General Board.

BOARDS

11. All standing boards shall be composed of five (5) members, exclusive of the General Board and the Missouri Missions Board. A board member shall be an active member of a Free Will Baptist Church in good standing with the Missouri State Association. No one may serve as a member of a board while employed by that board. Standing Boards include the Board of Christian Education, the Missouri Missions Board, the Retiree Ministry Board, the Youth Ministry Board, the Youth Camp Board, and the General Board.

Missouri State Association Of Free Will Baptists Bylaws con't

DUTIES

- 12.** The duties of the various standing boards shall be to:
- Plan and supervise both short and long-range programs of ministry.
 - Manage as good stewards all funds and properties entrusted to its care
 - Annually submit a detailed budget for approval by the State Association.
The budget shall include:
 - (1) Projected income along with expected sources of income.
 - (2) Projects planned and the cost of said projects.
 - (3) Maintenance along with its costs.
 - (4) Work in harmony with and toward the common vision of the entire State Association.
 - (5) A detailed explanation of any debt.
- 13.** No board shall initiate any litigation in pursuit of its ministry. Neither shall any board enter into any litigation in the pursuit of its ministry except as required because suit has been initiated against the board. The only exception is that which the State Association may authorize when the State Association is not in session.
- 14.** The personnel of each of the foregoing, exclusive of the General Board and the Missouri Mission Board shall be elected as follows: The first named for a term of one year, the second for a term of two years, the third for a term of three years, and thereafter each shall be elected for a term of five years. The members of the Missouri Mission Board shall be elected as follows: The first three named for a term of one year, the second three for a term of two years, the third three for a term of three years, and thereafter each year three members shall be elected to serve a term of three years.
- 15.** The personnel of the General Board shall be composed of the officers of the State Association, the chairman of all standing boards, and one member from each Affiliated Association, to be elected by the State body, whose term of office shall be two years and so constituted that the expiration date of the term of office of half of these expire one year and the other half the following year. This shall be determined by alphabetical order of the names of the affiliated Association.
- 16.** No person shall fill more than one office at the same time except as he may become a member of the General Board by virtue of being chairman of the board, which he is an elected member.
- 17.** Any vacancy occurring in the General Board may be filled by the affirmative vote of a majority of the remaining board members through less than a quorum of the General Board, unless otherwise provided by law.
- 18.** All board members elected by fill a vacancy shall be elected for the unexpired term of his predecessor in office.

19. Any member of the standing boards of the State Association who does not put forth any interest in or function on said board for the period of one year, shall have his office declared vacant and a new member be elected by this Association to fill his unexpired term of office.

20. The general board shall have power to act in behalf of, and for the State Association from one regular session to another, and shall have power to elect such officers as may be necessary to carry out the plans and undertakings of the State Association. The General Board shall have the rights to employ an Executive Director who shall serve as treasurer of the Association except in cases where this responsibility shall be expressly delegated by the General Board or by these by-laws to some other officer, agent, or board of the Association. He shall make an annual financial report to the Association.

21. The General Board shall have the power to fill any irregular vacancies that may occur in its own body and shall have the power to fill any irregular vacancies that may occur in any department of work between sessions of the State Association. It shall be the duty of this Board to make written reports of all its work to each session.

22. An Executive Committee consisting of seven members of the General Board shall be composed of the Moderator, Assistant Moderator, Clerk of the State Association, and four other member to be elected by the General Board; two members to be elected for a two year term and two members to be elected for a one year term and then two members to be elected each year thereafter, whose duty it shall be to act on all matters coming within the scope of the work of the Board when said Board is not in session. It shall also plan and execute the program for the annual sessions of the Missouri State Associations. The Executive Committee shall serve as the Budget Committee.

23. A majority of the number of the General Board members shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business at any meeting of the General Board, but if less than such a majority is present at a meeting, a majority of the Board members present may adjourn the meeting from time to time without further notice.

24. An act of the majority of the Board members present at a meeting of the General Board at which action on any Association matter is taken shall be presumed to have assented to the action taken unless his dissent shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting.

25. A Board member of the Association who is present at a meeting of the General Board at which action on any Association matter is taken shall be presumed to have assented to the action taken unless his dissent shall be entered in the minutes of the meeting.

26. The General Board may authorize any officer or officers, agent or agents to enter into any contract or execute and de-

Missouri State Association Of Free Will Baptists Bylaws con't

liver any instrument in the name of or on behalf of the Association and such authority may be general or confined to specific instances.

27. Any person or agent elected or appointed by the General Board may be removed by the General Board whenever in its judgment the best interest of the Association would be served thereby, but such removal shall be without prejudice to the contract rights, if any, of the persons so removed.

28. By resolution of the General Board, the Board members may be paid their expenses, if any, of attendance of each meeting of the General Board. No such payment shall preclude any Board member from serving the Association in any other capacity and receiving compensation therefore.

29. The General Board shall provide an Association seal which shall be circular in form and shall have inscribed thereon the name of the corporation and the state of incorporation and the words "Corporate Seal."

COMMITTEES

30. **The Moderator and Executive Director shall appoint a Nominating Committee, Credentials Committee, and Resolutions Committee annually. Whenever it deems necessary, the General Board may appoint an Audit Committee to review the financial condition of the state's ministry boards.**

31. All resolutions and reports shall bear the name of all the members of the committee who favor them, and if the names be not a majority of all members of such committee, then the clerk shall not read the resolutions or report.

REPRESENTATION

32. The standing delegates of this Association shall be all ordained Free Will Baptist ministers and their wives, all ordained deacons, and associational Clerks, provide they are members in good standing in a Free Will Baptist Church that is in good standing in a recognized district association in this State Association

33. The number of elected delegates to the State Association shall be seven delegates from each affiliated District Association, one delegate from each church, plus one delegate for fifty members or larger fraction thereof. Each church which represents must be a member of a District Association holding membership in this body.

34. This Association may correspond be messenger or otherwise with other religious bodies.

VOTING

35. Those entitled to vote at any annual or special meeting of this State Association shall be elected delegates and the standing delegates as defined By-Laws 33-34. and each delegate or standing delegate shall be entitled to one vote.

36. A majority vote shall be final upon all subjects except to amend the By-Laws, receive Quarterly Meetings or Associations, and the changing of the members of the committees appointed by the Moderator, then it shall require a two-thirds majority.

MEETINGS

37. The sessions of the Association shall convene as decided upon annually by the General Board.

38. The membership of the State Association may designate any place, either within or without the State of Missouri, for any annual meeting. Any special meeting may be called by the General Board. A wavier of notice signed by all members entitled to vote a meeting may designate any place, either within or without the State of Missouri, unless otherwise prescribed by stature, as the place for holding of such meeting. If no designation is made, or if a special meeting be otherwise called, the place of the meeting shall be the principle office of the corporation of the State of Missouri.

39. In the event the necessity arises from war, or pestilence, or any cause which prevents a regular meeting of the State Association, whether such a condition is of a local or general condition, then the General Board shall be privileged to call and act with full authority in all matters pertaining to the general welfare of the State Association, providing whatever transaction passed shall be by two-thirds vote of the members present, and providing that such transactions shall not conflict with the purpose and edicts of the By-Laws of the State Association.

40. Special meetings of the Association for any purpose or purposes, unless otherwise prescribed by statute, may be called by the General Board, and shall be called by the Moderator at the request of not less than fifty percent of all the delegate members duly elected by District Associations affiliated with the Association.

41. All committees and standing boards shall be permitted to take official votes on any item of business within the scope of their work by mail or by telephone conference call, provided such action is called by a chairman of a board or committee and has been proposed by at least two members of the board or committee.

42. Ten or more ordained ministers or deacons from ten or more affiliated Associations belonging to the State Association shall constitute a quorum to transact business.

43. All business meetings shall be opened by singing, reading a portion from God's Word, and prayer, and shall be closed with prayer.

44. Special Meetings of the General Board or the Executive committee shall be called when necessary by the Moderator, with the written consent of three other members of the Executive Committee. Special Meetings of the Executive Committee shall also be called upon written request of a majority of its members.

Missouri State Association Of Free Will Baptists Bylaws con't

45. Notice of any special meeting should be given at least fifteen days previously thereto be written notice delivered by the most convenient manner. Any Board member may waive notice of any meeting. The attendance of a Board member at a meeting shall constitute a waiver of notice of such meeting, except where a Board member attends a meeting for the express purpose of objecting to the transaction of any business because the meeting is not lawfully called or convened.

46. Unless otherwise provided by law, whenever any notice is required to be given to any member or Board member of the Association under the provisions of these By-Laws or under the provisions of the articles of incorporation, a waiver thereof in writing, signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice whether before or after writing, signed by the person or persons entitled to such notice whether before or after the item stated therein shall be deemed equivalent to the giving of such notice.

DISCIPLINE

47. The State Association shall not usurp any authority over the Quarterly Meetings or Associations that shall be under its supervision, but shall be an advisory body to help them.

48. The fiscal year of the Association shall begin on the first day of January, and end on the 31st day of December each year.

49. All checks, drafts, or other orders for the payment of money notes other evidences of indebtedness issued in the name of the Association, shall be signed by such officer or officers, agent or agents or the Association and in such manners as shall from time to time be determined by resolution of the General Board.

50. No loans shall be contracted, and no evidence of indebtedness shall be issued for which the State Association shall be legally or morally responsible except as approved by the Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists while in session, or by the General Board while in session.

51. The General Board by a majority vote of the voting delegates of the State Association shall be authorized to create or to increase any bonded indebtedness of the Association.

52. The General Board of the Association shall be authorized by a majority vote of the voting delegates of the State Association, to sell, lease, exchange, mortgage, pledge, or otherwise dispose of all, of the property and the assets of the Association.

53. All funds of the corporation not otherwise employed shall be deposited from time to time to the credit of the Association in such banks, trust companies, or other depositories as the General Board may select.

54. The salaries of employees shall be fixed from time to time by the General Board.

55. The meetings of the State Association and the General Board shall be governed by the rules of parliamentary law as set forth in Robert's Rules of Order, except in the case of those rules which are superseded by some rule of this organization.

56. The Clerk or Assistant Clerk, or in their absence the senior minister in age, shall call the Association to order for business, and call the Moderator or Assistant Moderator to the chair, and if neither moderator or assistant moderator is present, then the senior minister in age shall act as chairman to open the floor for nominations and carry out the election of a moderator pro-tem.

57. All business, except routine, shall be brought before the body by committee, but shall any committee refuse or fail to present to this body the business given it by any delegate of this Association, then such business may be presented to the body by any delegate, but cannot be discussed unless by a majority vote of this body.

58. Anyone desiring to speak shall rise and say "Brother Moderator" but shall speak no further until he or she is recognized by the Moderator.

59. No one shall speak more than five minutes, or more than twice, on the same subject without the consent of the Moderator.

60. Any delegate of this body can appeal from the decision of the Moderator of the Association, and by a majority vote thereon, the objection shall be sustained or rejected.

61. No one shall leave the Association when in a business session without the consent of the moderator.

62. The moderator shall stop all discussion when not carried on in a Christian spirit, or when he thinks it is likely to lead to discord or division.

63. All business coming before this Association shall be decided by secret ballot when a majority of voting delegates are in opposition to an open vote.

64. We believe that any form of homosexuality, lesbianism, bisexuality, bestiality, incest, fornication, adultery, pornography, pedophilia, and/or elective gender changes are sinful perversions of God's gift of sex. (Gen. 2:24; Gen 19:5; Gen 26:8-9; Lev. 18:1-30; Rom. 1:26-29; I Cor. 5:1; 6:9; I Thess. 4:1-8; Heb. 13:4). Any District Association which sanctions such conduct will not be accepted or retained as a member of the Missouri State Association of Free Will Baptists.

65. We believe that human life begins at conception and that the unborn child is a living human being. Abortion constitutes the unjustified, unexcused taking of unborn human life. Abortion is murder. We reject any teaching that abortions of pregnancies due to rape, incest, birth defects,

Missouri State Association Of Free Will Baptists Bylaws con't

gender selection, birth or population control, or the mental well-being of the mother are acceptable. (Job 3:16; Psalms 51:5; 139:14-16; Isa. 44:24; 49: 1, 5; Jer. 1:5; 20:15-18; Luke 1:44) Any District Association which sanctions such conduct will not be accepted or retained as a member of the Missouri State Association of Free Baptists.

66. We believe that Paul's statement in I Tim. 3:2, 12 and Titus 1:6, namely "The husband of one wife," be looked upon as making ineligible as pastors or deacons anyone who has been divorced and remarried, or who marries a divorced woman, regardless of the cause of the divorce or the guilt or innocence of either partner.

We believe that said persons, whose marital status disqualifies them to be pastors or deacons, not be discouraged in their Christian lives or Christian service, but that they be encouraged to live faithfully for Christ and serve Him in the ministry of the local church; and that such be reminded that pastors and deacons are the only church officers for whom the "husband of one wife" prohibition is given.

While certainly it is the ideal for all believers, it is biblically insisted upon as a requirement for deacons and pastors.

While not insisting that this bylaw be made retroactive, we do establish this standard to be upheld for all new candidates for pastors or deacons.

67. We believe the Bible defines marriage as the union of one man and one woman in an exclusive covenant commitment. No person may be a standing delegate if he knowingly conducts or officiates at a wedding or similar service for any union that does not meet the Biblical definition of marriage. A church or district association is not in good standing if it knowingly permits its properties or ministers to facilitate weddings where the union would not meet the Biblical definition of marriage. A district association is not in good standing if it licenses or ordains any person who affirms or encourages sexual relations outside of Biblical marriage. (Genesis 2:22-24; Proverbs 18:22; Matthew 19:4-6; Hebrews 13:4-7)

AMENDMENTS

68. These By-Laws may be amended at any regular session by a two-thirds majority vote after the proposed amendment has laid on the table one day.

THE FREE WILL BAPTIST CHURCH COVENANT

Having given ourselves to God, by faith in Christ, and adopted the Word of God as our rule of faith and practice, we now give ourselves to one another by the will of God in this solemn covenant.

We promise, by His grace, to love and obey Him in all things, to avoid all appearance of evil, to abstain from all sinful amusements and unholy conformity to the world, from all sanction of the use and sale of intoxicating beverages, and to "provide things honest in the sight of all men."

We agree faithfully to discharge our obligations in reference to the study of the Scriptures, secret prayer, family devotions, and social worship; and by self-denial, faith, and good works endeavor to "grow in grace and the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ."

We will not forsake the assembling of ourselves together for church conferences, public worship, and the observance of the ordinances of the Gospel; nor fail to pay according to our ability for the support of the church, of its poor, and all its benevolent work.

We agree to accept Christian admonition and reproof with meekness, and to watch over one another in love, endeavoring to "keep the unity of the Spirit" in the bonds of peace, to be careful of one another's happiness and reputation, and seek to strengthen the weak, encourage the afflicted, admonish the erring, and as far as we are able, promote the success of the church and of the Gospel.

We will everywhere hold Christian principle sacred and Christian obligations and enterprises supreme; counting it our chief business in life to extend the influence of Christ in society, constantly praying and toiling that the kingdom of God may come, and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

To this end we agree to labor for the promotion of educational and denominational enterprises, the support of missions, the success of Sunday schools, and evangelistic efforts for the salvation of the world. And may the God of peace sanctify us wholly, and preserve us blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.