

## **Cape Girardeau Baptist Association Constitution**

### **ARTICLE I - NAME**

This Association shall be called “The Cape Girardeau Baptist Association” and shall cooperate with the Missouri Baptist Convention and the Southern Baptist Convention.

### **ARTICLE II – MISSION STATEMENT**

As a community of churches embracing the inerrancy of the Bible, we shall assist one another as we partner together in carrying out God’s Great Commission.

### **ARTICLE III – COMPOSITION OF THE ASSOCIATION**

**Section 1.** The Association is an autonomous family of churches, which are in friendly agreement with the principles and practices of the Association, the Missouri Baptist Convention, and the Southern Baptist Convention. Member churches of the Association affirm the Baptist Faith and Message 2000, as well as the principles and contents of this Constitution and By-Laws. The Association shall be composed of messengers, duly elected by the member churches cooperating within its fellowship.

**Section 2.** The churches of this Association shall elect messengers. Each church having fifty active members or less shall be entitled to six(6) messengers. A church shall be entitled to one (1) messenger for each additional fifty(50) active members, or fraction thereof, providing that no church shall have more than ten (10) messengers in addition to the pastor who shall be a messenger by virtue of his relation to the church.

### **ARTICLE IV - MEMBERSHIP**

**Section 1.** Member churches are Southern Baptist churches who are participating members of the Missouri Baptist Convention. Additionally, they maintain basic agreement with the spirit, statements and purpose of the Cape Girardeau Baptist Association as shared in this Constitution and By-Laws.

**Section 2.** Any Southern Baptist/Missouri Baptist Convention church desiring membership in Cape Girardeau Baptist Association shall declare their desire by making written application to the Clerk of the Association. The application will thereupon be referred to the Credentials Committee and, upon the committee’s recommendation, be voted on at the next Annual Meeting. The Credentials Committee shall ascertain that the church seeking membership of the Association shows evidence of good faith by cooperating in the work of the Association, contributing to its financial support during the year and is in agreement with the statements, purpose and spirit of this Constitution and By-Laws. The Credentials Committee shall meet with the church within a reasonable time after the application is made and will assist the church in any manner reasonably possible. The question of membership in the Association will be put to a vote upon recommendation of the Credentials Committee and requires a two-thirds (2/3) majority of voting messengers to pass. At least fifty percent (50%) of the active churches of the Association must be represented at the session when the vote is taken.

**Section 3.** The Association disclaims any authority over the churches that make up its membership; nevertheless, the Association reserves the right to refuse to continue fellowship with a member church or to refuse to allow a church to become a member if, in the judgment of the Association, said church practices the ordination of homosexuals as deacons or ministers, practices same sex marriages or other inordinate doctrine or disorderly practices which conflict with the Baptist Faith and Message(2000) of the Southern Baptist Convention. Cape Girardeau Baptist Association has also previously acted on the issue of the ordination of women as deacons or pastors, having chosen not to fellowship with churches that do so.

**Section 4.** Membership in the Association may be terminated in any one of the following ways:

1. A member church may vote to withdraw, and notify the moderator of the Association, in writing, of this decision.
2. The Association may vote to declare a church to be inactive if for two consecutive years said church fails to: contribute financially to the Association, submit an annual church letter, or show evidence of cooperating in the work of the Association. These three elements of cooperation are extremely important for the Association to function properly. Before such action is taken, the Credentials Committee will have the responsibility to contact and meet with the church in question and work toward reconciliation. If reconciliation cannot be accomplished, the Credentials Committee will recommend that the church in question be placed in an inactive status. A simple majority vote of the messengers at the next Annual Meeting is sufficient for a change to inactive status. An inactive member of the Association has no messengers at the Annual Meeting and no members on the Executive Board.
3. Churches which become affiliated with the Cooperative Baptist Fellowship (CBF), the Baptist General Convention of Missouri (BGCM), or any other denomination in conflict with the Southern Baptist Convention, or the Missouri Baptist Convention, forfeit their membership in the Cape Girardeau Baptist Association. Affiliation shall be defined as having representation or messengers elected by the church, and/or financial support approved by a vote of the church or inclusion in the church budget.
4. The Association may also withdraw fellowship from a church that becomes heretical in doctrine or practice or fails to meet member church status as outlined in this Constitution and By-Laws. Such accusation will be brought during the final session of a regular Annual Meeting and voted upon; should the motion carry with a simple majority vote of the messengers, the Credentials Committee will be given the responsibility of investigating the questioned member church. If violation is found, an attempt will be made to bring about reconciliation. Failing in this, the Credentials Committee will make appropriate recommendations to the Association at the final session of the next Annual Meeting. This gives the Credentials Committee one year to come to a conclusion.
5. Withdrawal of fellowship from a church will require a two-thirds majority of the messengers voting with at least 50% of member churches represented at that session.

**Section 5.** Missions of member churches shall meet all of the requirements of a member church.

## **ARTICLE V - GENERAL OFFICERS AND ASSOCIATIONAL COUNCIL**

The General Officers of the Association shall be automatic members of the Associational Council and shall consist of a Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer. Associational Council members are as follows:

Director of Missions	Administrative Assistant
Personnel Committee Chairperson	Finance Committee Chairperson
Church Planting Center Representative	Missions Development Chairperson
Church Development Committee Chairperson	Pastoral Ministry Director
Peaceful Valley Baptist Camp Representative	Disaster Relief Unit Leader
Prayer Ministry Director	Christian Life Commission Director
Baptist Collegiate Ministries Representative	WMU Director

The Associational Council will serve as a strategy and planning entity, producing a comprehensive plan to fulfill the mission of the Association which will include, in part, calendaring events for the coming year. This information will be printed in the Book of Reports and shared at the Annual Meeting. Each Council member shall ensure their area of focus is considered in this process as well as assist member churches in the development of ministries according to their particular area of focus. Each member of the Council shall submit a budget request to the Budget/Finance Committee for the funding to accomplish their goals.

The Associational Council shall also serve in an advisory capacity to the directors of camps and retreats at Peaceful Valley Baptist Camp and for other leaders in the association as issues come up throughout the year.

The Associational Council may call a special Executive Board meeting when they deem necessary. Additional Council members may be requested by the Associational Council and, upon Executive Board approval, the Nominating Committee will nominate someone to fill the position.

## **ARTICLE VI - COMMITTEES AND AUXILIARY MINISTRIES**

**Section 1.** At the first session of the Annual Meeting the Moderator shall appoint the following committees: Obituaries; Time, Place and Preacher; Program; and Nominating. Each committee shall have four (4) members, and the Moderator will choose one of these four members to chair the committee.

**Section 2.** The Program Committee shall prepare an agenda and select program personnel to be presented at the Annual Meeting and shall complete its work at least 30 days prior to the Annual Meeting.

**Section 3.** The Nominating Committee, which shall serve throughout the Associational year, shall make nominations for all General Officers, Associational Council Members, Camp Directors, and committees/boards not appointed by the moderator.

1. The Nominating Committee will present the following committees to serve on a three year rotating basis, also choosing one chairperson for each committee :

- Personnel/Administrative (6 members)
- Finance (6 members plus the Treasurer, Moderator, and Vice-Moderator)
- Credentials (6 members)

Association Building & Grounds (4 members)

Missions Development (4 members plus WMU Director, Men's Ministries Director, and a representative from the Disaster Relief Unit)

Church Development Committee (9 members consisting of a person for each emphasis: Family Ministry, Youth Ministry, Children's Ministry, Evangelism, Discipleship, Stewardship, Worship, WMU, and Men's Ministry)

Each Committee's Chairperson is responsible for preparing a report of their respective committee's activities to be included in the Book of Reports.

2. The Nominating Committee shall make nominations for any vacancies on the Baptist Collegiate Ministries of Southeast MO (BCM) Board according to the number allotted to the Cape Girardeau Baptist Association for that year by that entity's articles of incorporation. The BCM Board shall present a report of the Board's activities to be included in the Book of Reports.
3. The Nominating Committee shall solicit nominations from the Church Planting Center of Southeast MO (CPC) Board for any vacancies on that Board to be voted on by the association. The CPC Board shall present a report of the Board's activities to be included in the Book of Reports.
4. The Nominating Committee shall make nominations for any vacancies on the Peaceful Valley Baptist Camp (PVBC) Board according to the number allotted to the Cape Girardeau Baptist Association for that year by that entity's articles of incorporation and bylaws. The PVBC Board shall present a report of the Board's activities to be included in the Book of Reports.

**Section 4.** Other work groups which the Association may deem necessary for immediate or limited needs and not continue annually, shall be appointed or elected by the Association, the Executive Board or the Associational Council.

**Section 5.** The Director of Missions and the current Moderator shall work at their discretion with all committees.

**Section 6.** The Director of Missions, with the help of the Personnel/Administrative Committee, shall prepare and submit for approval to the Executive Board, job descriptions and procedures for all committees, employees, and nominated positions held in the Association. These descriptions and procedures will be kept on file at the Association Office and may be changed and clarified when needed with Executive Board approval.

**Section 7.** The Personnel/Administrative Committee shall also function as a search committee when the Director of Missions position is vacant. They will present a candidate to the Executive Board for consideration and vote. A candidate must receive two-thirds majority of vote from those present with at least fifty percent of the member churches represented. The Director of Missions shall be responsible for hiring to fill vacancies in any other positions approved by the Executive Board.

**Section 8.** The Disaster Relief Unit Leader shall prepare a report for the Book of Reports.

## **ARTICLE VII - EXECUTIVE BOARD AND/OR CORPORATION**

The Executive Board, which shall be the corporate entity of the Association, shall maintain its incorporated status under the laws of the State of Missouri.

**Section 1. MEMBERSHIP** - This body shall be composed of one representative from each church or mission elected by the church and approved at the Annual Meeting, plus the Pastors of all active member churches and missions. All members of the Associational Council shall be members of the Executive Board during the year that they hold office. If a church is without a pastor, they may elect an additional Executive Board member to serve until they call a new pastor.

**Section 2. CORPORATION OFFICERS AND BOARD OF DIRECTORS** - The Chairman/President of the corporation known as the Cape Girardeau Baptist Association shall be the current Moderator. The Secretary of the corporation shall be the current Clerk. The Treasurer of the corporation shall be the current Treasurer. The Board of Directors of the corporation shall be the Executive Board.

**Section 3. DUTIES** - The Board shall serve the Association as its corporate entity; it shall carry out any directives assigned to it by the Association at the Annual Meeting and, in cooperation with the churches, shall seek to promote the work of the churches.

**Section 4. DIRECTOR OF MISSIONS** - The Executive Board shall employ a Director of Missions who shall be answerable to the Board. The Director of Missions shall serve the Board and the churches of the association in seeking to fulfill the mission of the association.

## **ARTICLE VIII - ANNUAL MEETING**

The Association shall meet annually at such time and place as it may select. Should a postponement of the Annual Meeting become necessary, the Executive Board may call a meeting at such time and place as it may deem best. The Executive Board may call a special meeting of the Association at any time, provided prior notice is given to the churches of the Association.

## **ARTICLE IX - TENURE OF OFFICE**

All officers are to serve one-year terms at the will of the Association. The Moderator and Vice-Moderator may serve only two one-year terms in succession.

## **ARTICLE X - AMENDMENTS**

This Constitution may be amended only at the Annual Meeting by a two-thirds vote of those present. Such amendments, however, must be presented to the Executive Board in writing at least ninety days before the Annual Meeting and a copy of the same shall be sent to all the churches and missions at least sixty days before the Annual Meeting. A Constitutional Review Committee may be instituted at the discretion of the Association at any Annual Meeting and will be appointed by the moderator.

## **ARTICLE XI - DISSOLUTION OF THE ASSOCIATION AND DISPOSITION OF PROPERTY**

In the event of the dissolution of the Cape Girardeau Baptist Association, all property of the Association, real, personal and mixed of whatsoever kind or location, shall be transferred to another non-profit organization of similar kind and purpose. Dissolution of the Association shall occur if the Association, by official action, votes to dissolve as a corporate entity. Upon such action, the President/Chairman of the corporation is authorized to sign all necessary documents to convey the property to the non-profit organization designated by the Association.

## BY-LAWS

- 1) The meetings of the Association shall be opened and closed with prayer.
- 2) The officers of the Association shall be elected at the close of each Annual Meeting to serve one year or until the close of the next Annual Meeting.
- 3) The Moderator shall perform the usual duties of presiding officer, such as to preserve order, put questions properly brought before the body, speak on all points of order in preference to other members, but not to vote except in case of a tie. The Moderator shall be an ex-officio member of all committees.
- 4) Only a duly elected messenger from a member church may speak to a question, make a motion, or vote at the Annual Meeting unless the body approves otherwise by simple majority.
- 5) Only a member of the Executive Board may speak to a question, make a motion, or vote at an Executive Board Meeting unless the body approves otherwise by simple majority.
- 6) The Clerk shall attend the meetings of the Association, keep correct minutes of the proceedings and prepare the same for publication, for which he/she shall receive such compensation as the Board so directs.
- 7) The Treasurer and the Executive Board shall receive and take care of the funds of the association, and pay out such amounts as ordered by the Executive Board, in keeping with the budget as prepared by the Finance Committee and approved by the Association. The Treasurer shall be compensated as the Board so directs.
- 8) The Executive Board shall hold title to any real property which the Association may own, and shall perform such other duties in connection therewith as may be designated by the Association.
- 9) Any procedural question that may arise, not provided for in this Constitution and By-Laws, shall be decided according to Robert's Rules of Order (Most Recent Edition). The Association may employ a licensed Parliamentarian if it is felt necessary by the Associational Council or the Executive Board.
- 10) The decision of the Moderator on all points of order shall stand as the judgment of the body, unless reversed by a vote of the Association. Any duly elected messenger shall have the right to appeal the decision of the chair to the whole body.
- 11) These By-Laws may be altered or amended at any Annual Meeting in the same manner as the Constitution. See Constitution, ARTICLE X.
- 12) For the Executive Board to reach a quorum, at least one-third of the churches of the Association must be represented.