

# **Constitution of the Lampasas Baptist Association**

## **Article I**

### **Title of the Association**

This organization shall be known as the Lampasas Baptist Association and shall conduct all business and activities under that name.

## **Article II**

### **Purpose of the Association**

The Lampasas Baptist Association's purpose shall be to fulfill the Great Commission as commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ. We will be a voluntary fellowship of churches helping one another accomplish their mission in cooperation with one another and other Baptist entities.

## **Article III**

### **Confession of Our Faith**

Southern Baptist churches must have a common bond on which to base their purpose and actions. Southern Baptist people believe certain truths that bind us together in mutual and cooperative efforts for the Lord. These truths are found in the Bible and we believe the Bible is the standard by which we are to conduct our lives. Therefore, it is appropriate that this constitution for an association of Baptist churches contain a statement of fundamental and important truths that we, as a Christian people, hold in respect and love.

**Section 1:** The Lord, our God is one God – the one and the only true and living God. He exists in the form of three persons: God, the Father; God, the Son; and God, the Holy Spirit. God is the eternal "I AM." He is the self-existent one who reveals Himself to man, in His own way and according to His own will. We believe that God is love and never does wrong and never fails to keep his promises.

**Section 2:** The Holy Scripture of the Bible is the written word of God and is the unerring rule of faith and practice. Holy men of God wrote this Word of God, our Bible, as God inspired them to write.

**Section 3:** Adam was created with the freedom and ability to choose between right and wrong. His sin brought death, condemnation and moral depravity to all mankind. The only remedy for sin is in the Lord Jesus Christ. God promises forgiveness of sin to those who believe in Jesus and confess their sins.

**Section 4:** We believe that Jesus has existed eternally with the Father and the Holy Spirit. When the fullness of time was come, God sent His Son, born of the virgin Mary. Jesus was made in the likeness of man and took upon himself the form of a servant that he might die on the cross and bring forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all who believe in Him and accept Him.

**Section 5:** Regeneration, sanctification and justification are possible only by the birth, life, death, resurrection and mediation of Jesus Christ.

**Section 6:** Salvation is by grace through faith and cannot be earned or deserved by any person. It is a free gift of God through Jesus Christ.

**Section 7:** Baptism is for believers only and is a true baptism only if it is by immersion. Believers must show evidence of their faith before baptism. Only those who believe and who have been baptized have a right to claim membership in a local Baptist church and to participate in the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

**Section 8:** We believe that the New Testament Church, The Body of Christ, consists of believers and exists to fulfill Christ's command to go and make disciples of all people. The head of the Church is Jesus Christ. The Church is the Kingdom of God as well as the local, autonomous body of believers, each being of many parts but only one head.

**Section 9:** In the future there will be a resurrection of the bodies of the just and the unjust. Every person shall stand before the Judgment of God to receive their rewards or their judgment. The happiness of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked will be eternal.

**Section 10:** The Holy Spirit dwells among us, abiding in every true believer and in His churches. The Holy Spirit convicts people of sin and causes them to turn to Christ for salvation.

**Section 11:** Jesus is the one and only High Priest and is now sitting at the right hand of God making intercession for every believer. Through Him we have the blessed privilege to come boldly to God's throne of grace at any time. Through His mediation we are reconciled to God. The faithful seeker can know the truth and the truth shall make us free.

**Section 12:** As believers in Christ and followers of Him, we are obligated and privileged to carry out the Great Commission that Jesus gave to us. We are to seek to win the lost to know Jesus Christ and then to teach them to be obedient disciples of Him.

## **Article IV**

### **Membership**

**Section 1:** This association shall be composed of messengers of Southern Baptist churches who follow the statement of beliefs cited in this constitution and who seek fellowship and cooperation with other Baptist churches.

**Section 2:** The acting body of this association shall be composed of messengers elected by the member churches on the basis of two messengers for the first 25 resident members and then one messenger for each 25 resident members up to a maximum of 10 messengers.

**Section 3:** Churches desiring membership in the association shall petition the Credentials Committee at least 90 days prior to the annual meeting. The letter of petition shall include a statement of policy relative to their affiliation with the state and national conventions; a statement of faith and belief; and the evidence of mission support through local, state and national convention channels. The letter of petition will also state the reasons for desiring membership in the association.

**Section 4:** The Credentials Committee will review the application of the petitioning church and when assured that the petitioning church meets all of the prerequisites for membership will recommend the petitioning church for membership at the next annual meeting. The Credentials Committee shall recommend that a petitioning church be placed under observation for a period of one year before a final recommendation for membership is made. An exception to the one-year period of observation may be made in the case of a church having a mission of an established church of the association. The committee may recommend the one-year observation period be waived and the petitioning church admitted to the association without the one-year observation period.

**Section 5:** Should the prerequisites for membership not be met, the Credentials Committee will recommend that membership be denied to the petitioning church. In either case, the Credentials Committee will provide their findings to member churches so that they may be fully informed and prepared to vote on the committee's recommendation. When voting to accept the recommendation from the Credentials Committee, a two-thirds majority of the elected messengers present and voting will be required.

**Section 6:** When, in the judgment of the association, a church becomes corrupt in faith and practice, all possible efforts, in love and concern, will be made to correct their errors. Should these conciliatory efforts fail, the association will take such action as is necessary to protect the good name and reputation of the association and of the member churches. Withdrawal of Associational fellowship is to be the action of last resort and must have a two-thirds majority of the elected messengers present and voting to be approved.

**Section 7:** Missions sponsored by the association are afforded a special relationship and as such are invited to participate in all Associational activities and events. Mission pastors and lay leaders will be eligible to be nominated for positions of service and ministry and mission members shall be welcome at all Associational events. The mission may send observers to associational planning and business sessions, however, they are without voting privilege in associational affairs. It is the policy of the association to foster relations with mission churches and encourage them for eventual membership in the association.

## **Article V**

### **Relationships**

With respect to the relationships of the association to the other entities, the following principles apply.

**Section 1:** The churches of the association are encouraged to establish and maintain relationships with each other in the spirit of kindness, love and mutual cooperation for the work of the Lord. An underlying premise is that all we have has been given to us as stewards that we might share with others as needs arise. What may be impossible for one part of the body becomes possible with the assistance of the other parts of the body.

**Section 2:** The association shall establish and maintain lines of communications with the various elements of the Baptist General Convention of Texas and directors of associational ministries are encouraged to maintain ties with counterpart offices.

**Section 3:** The association shall communicate as needed with the Southern Baptist Convention and its agencies.

**Section 4:** The association shall communicate as necessary with other associations.

**Section 5:** The association may cooperate with other entities, provided the overall purpose of the association is observed.

**Section 6:** A special relationship shall exist with the Director of Missions of the Tri-Rivers Baptist Area, who works to coordinate and facilitate the activities of the Coryell, Hamilton and Lampasas Associations. Directors of associational ministries may avail themselves of the services offered by the area missions center staff for contacts, resources and ministry information.

**Section 7:** The association and all associational ministries will refrain from establishing any relationships with any other group, or individual, that would not be in keeping with the highest standards of propriety or would in any way cast doubt upon the purpose and reputation of the association.

## **Article VI**

### **Tasks of the Association**

The following tasks are derived from the approved purpose statement of the association. This article practically states the nature of the work to be carried out through the cooperative efforts of member churches and shall constitute the standard against which all associational promotions and programs shall be measured. As churches identify ministry tasks/needs and discover common interests, teams will be formed to address the need. These teams can be long-term or short-term and will have the freedom to carry out the ministries, as they deem necessary. The Director of Missions will assist in the formation of these teams.

**Section 1:** Assist and encourage the advancement of the churches of the association in all areas of church life.

**Section 2:** Assist and encourage the growth of God's Kingdom with special emphasis on mission development.

**Section 3:** Provide for cooperation among churches to bring about together what may be otherwise impossible to accomplish.

**Section 4:** Promote fellowship among the church congregations.

**Section 5:** Encourage collaboration in planning for associational educational, evangelistic and missionary efforts.

**Section 6:** Serve the Lord willingly and gladly by laboring together in associational projects.

**Section 7:** Carry out, faithfully, the Great Commission in every detail.

## Article VII

### Governing the Association

**Section 1: Authority.** The authority of this association comes from the member churches and is expressed by the written and spoken will of the membership by the elected messengers. Authority is vested in the Leadership Team of the association and delegated to the officers of the association, to include program directors and committee chairpersons in order to fulfill the duties of the offices to which they are appointed. Formal authority is expressed by the decisions made by the association-in-session. The Leadership Team of the association exercises practical authority. In all cases, the exercise of authority will be consistent with the stated purpose of the association.

**Section 2: Association-in-session.** The association shall meet annually at a place and at a date and time decided at that meeting for the forthcoming year. Elected messengers from each church shall represent the membership of the association. Associational reports will be presented and matters of business, as appropriate, will be decided during this session.

- (1) Messengers. Each member church shall be entitled to two messengers for the first twenty-five resident members and one additional messenger for every twenty-five resident members up to a maximum of ten messengers. The number of resident members in a church will be the number contained on the annual report of the church. Messengers may be elected in two ways. They may be elected to represent the church at the annual meeting and all other meetings for that particular associational year. The second way is that messengers may be elected to represent the church for a particular meeting and are elected for that purpose only. In either case their election must be a matter of record and a letter attesting to their election provided the Credentials Committee upon request.
- (2) Meetings. A part of the business session of each annual meeting will be the selection of the place and time of the next annual meeting. The meetings shall be planned to provide adequate time to communicate matters of information and concern to the membership and to allow a time of fellowship and congregational worship. The elected messengers present at the time of the annual meeting constitute a quorum for the sake of deciding associational issues. Special meetings of the association-in-session may be called with fourteen days notice to the member churches. If matters arise that must be dealt with by the membership instead of the Leadership Team, and are not urgent, the next regularly scheduled meeting of the association may be called into business session to decide the issue at hand. In this case, the elected messengers in attendance will constitute a quorum, providing all churches were notified fourteen days in advance of the special meeting.

**Section 3: Associational Council.** The Associational Council consists of the Moderator, Vice-Moderator, Clerk, Treasurer, and the Director of Missions. The Council develops and implements a coordinated annual plan that is custom-fitted to the needs and opportunities of the Association. The Council will meet annually during the month of May to prepare a proposed Calendar for the Association for the next 18 months beginning in October of each year. The council proposes a coordinated annual calendar and budget that meets the needs and opportunities of the Association and submits them to the Leadership Team for review and modification as

necessary, prior to the Annual Meeting.

**Section 4: Leadership Team.** The Leadership Team consists of all of the members of the Association Council, all pastors of member churches, and two elected members at large from each church. The Leadership Team is the association ad interim, and is authorized to transact any and all business pertaining to the association during the interim between annual meetings. The moderator will chair the meetings of the Leadership Team and, in concert with the Director of Missions, will oversee the work of the associational ministries. The Leadership Team will meet at regularly scheduled times or, when deemed appropriate, upon the call of the moderator. The leadership team will submit the budget and calendar for approval at the annual meeting.

## **Article VIII**

### **Administration Officers and Committees**

**Section 1: Administrative Officers.**

- (a) Moderator. The moderator shall be elected to office by an affirmative vote of the messengers present and voting at the annual meeting. The moderator shall plan for and preside over the annual meeting, any called meetings of the association-in-session, and meetings of the Leadership Team.
- (b) Vice Moderator. The vice moderator will be prepared to assume the duties of the moderator when necessary and will otherwise assist the moderator and will work to develop fellowship and mutual care among the member churches and church leaders.
- (c) Clerk. The clerk shall record and keep in permanent form all transactions of the association-in-session. The clerk will make this information available to others when requested to do so.
- (d) Treasurer. The treasurer shall be responsible for receiving, accounting, safeguarding and disbursing association funds. The treasurer will prepare and present periodic reports as to the financial condition of the association.
- (e) Leadership Team Secretary. The secretary to the Leadership Team will record and keep in permanent form all transactions of meetings of the Leadership Team. This information will be made available to others when requested to do so.

**Section 2: Service of Administrative Officers.** Administrative officers of the association shall be nominated and elected to two-year terms of office. The term of office begins immediately after the last session of the annual meeting at which they were elected. The Nominating Committee will make the nominations and two-year terms will commence with the 1996 -1997 associational year.

- (a) Should an administrative officer be unable, for any reason, to finish a term of office, the moderator may appoint a replacement to serve the remaining portion of the term or until the Nominating Committee can recommend a permanent replacement.
- (b) The moderator may appoint assistant moderators for specific purposes or projects. Should the association sponsor an event that involves two or more associational ministries and a single point of coordination of that event is desired, an assistant moderator may be appointed to fill that need.

**Section 3: Administrative Committees of the Association.** Officers and representatives to other related organizations will be nominated by the Nominating Committee, recommended by the Leadership Team and approved at the annual meeting. Individuals will be selected for two-year terms, with the terms commencing immediately after the last session of the annual meeting at which they were elected.

- (a) The Tri-Rivers Baptist Area Coordinating Committee will have three associational members who serve for the purpose of providing associational representation in the functioning and operation of the Tri-Rivers Baptist area. One of the three members will be elected as Trustee, Tri-Rivers Baptist Area, Incorporated, and will serve a three-year term.
- (b) The nominating committee will be appointed by the moderator and will consist of three members serving two-year terms. The moderator and the Director of Missions serve in ex officio status. The committee functions to enlist qualified persons to serve as associational officers, ministry directors and committee members. The procedure for the nominating process includes a screening function to insure the person being considered are suitable in their Christian life and qualified by education, experience or special skills for the position for which they are being considered. Committee nominations are forwarded to the Leadership Team for further action.

## **Article IX**

### **Associational Staff**

This article pertains to paid and volunteer staff members who serve to handle the administrative needs of the association. Administration of the association is accomplished by the office of the Director of Missions, the moderator and by the ministry directors and committee chairpersons in their individual areas of responsibility. When it becomes necessary to establish administrative staff positions, the appropriate job descriptions and assignment of duties will be developed to meet government and employer management requirements.

## **Article X**

### **Resources**

**Section 1: Financial Resources.** All monies coming into the association will be faithfully applied to the purpose for which they were given. The treasurer of the association will prepare and distribute financial reports of sufficient detail to show the status of all funds entrusted to the association. A general accounting of funds will be made annually and presented to the association at the annual meeting.

**Section 2: Supplies and Equipment.** Supplies and equipment used in the support of association ministries and programs will normally be under the control of the ministry director or committee chairperson involved. The director or chairperson in charge shall practice good stewardship in safeguarding associational property and economy in the use of supplies and materials.

**Section 3: Real Property.** In the event the association finds itself the owner of real property or

should the occasion warrant such a purchase, the property will be received in the name of the association and a three-member board of trustees designated to fulfill the interests of the associations in respect to the property. Care will be exercised to insure that all real property taxing entities are advised and proper applications made to exempt the property from taxes if that is consistent with the use or intended use of the property.

**Section 4: Annual Budget.** Each entity of the association that is represented by a line item in the annual budget will prepare, as instructed, and submit to the Associational Council a budget request for the forthcoming year. The budget shall represent the funds required to support the work of the activity for the year. The Associational Council will assemble the various budget requests and compare the total funds requested to the expected income for the year. Through review and adjustment among the associational activities, a proposed budget will result which will be recommended to the Leadership Team for review, adjustment and adoption at the next annual meeting.

**Amendments to the Budget.** The Leadership Team may make amendments to the budget where circumstances warrant such action. Circumstances such as income exceeding that anticipated where un-funded or under-funded projects may be funded; or, internal transfers of budget funds among budget line items without raising the overall amount of the budget; or unexpected situations arise that cannot be handled through internal budget transfers, then the overall amount of the budget may be exceeded provided that sufficient income can be identified to keep the budget in balance (i.e., transfer from reserves.). These examples of circumstances in which the annual budget may be amended are not intended to be exclusive, but only representative of those that may occur.

## **Article XI**

### **Parliamentary Authority**

To provide for good order and discipline in carrying out the business of the association, all meetings will be conducted according to the procedures contained in the Robert's Rules of Order.

## **Article XII**

### **Amendments**

This constitution may be amended at the annual meeting of the association by a two-thirds majority vote of the elected messengers present provided that: (1) The proposed change has been submitted to the Leadership Team at least 90-days in advance of the annual meeting date; and (2) The Leadership Team has notified the member churches of the proposed changes at least 30-days in advance of the annual meeting date.

\*This constitution was amended at the Annual Meeting of the Lampasas Association on October 8, 2000 at Clear Creek Baptist Church.