



BAPTIST GENERAL  
CONVENTION OF VIRGINIA  
HYBRID MINISTRY CHURCH CONSTITUTION (Sample)  
2022

Written by Dr. William “Bill” Whitaker, II

© Copyright, WHWhitaker, II, Library of Congress, Washington, D. C., 2021

\*The Holy Bible, Baptist Church Covenant, & the Baptist Articles of Faith not included in this this copyright.

# \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church Constitution

Index

Section 1 - Preamble .....	2
Section 2 - About _____ Baptist Church	
Our Doctrine .....	2
Our Leadership.....	3
Section 3 - About the _____ Constitution	
Constitution Purpose .....	3
Constitution Contents .....	3
Constitution Spirit .....	4
Membership/Leadership as “One Church, One Doctrine, One Polity” .....	5
Section 4 – Church Mission Statement .....	5
Section 5 – Church Purpose Statement .....	6
Section 6 – The Word of God .....	6
Section 7 – The Baptist Church Covenant .....	6
Section 8 – The Baptist Articles of Faith .....	7
Article I.    The Scriptures .....	7
Article II.   The True God .....	8
Article III.  The Fall of Man .....	8
Article IV.   The Way of Salvation .....	8
Article V.    Justification .....	8
Article VI.   The Freeness of Salvation .....	9
Article VII.  Regeneration .....	9
Article VIII. Repentance and Faith .....	9
Article IX.   God’s Purpose of Grace .....	9
Article X.    Sanctification .....	10
Article XI    Perseverance of the Saints .....	10
Article XII.  The Law and Gospel .....	10
Article XIII. A Gospel Church .....	10
Article XIV.  Baptism and the Lord’s Supper .....	11
Article XV.   The Christian Sabbath .....	11
Article XVI.  Civil Government .....	11
Article XVII. Righteous and Wicked .....	11
Article XVIII. The World to Come .....	11

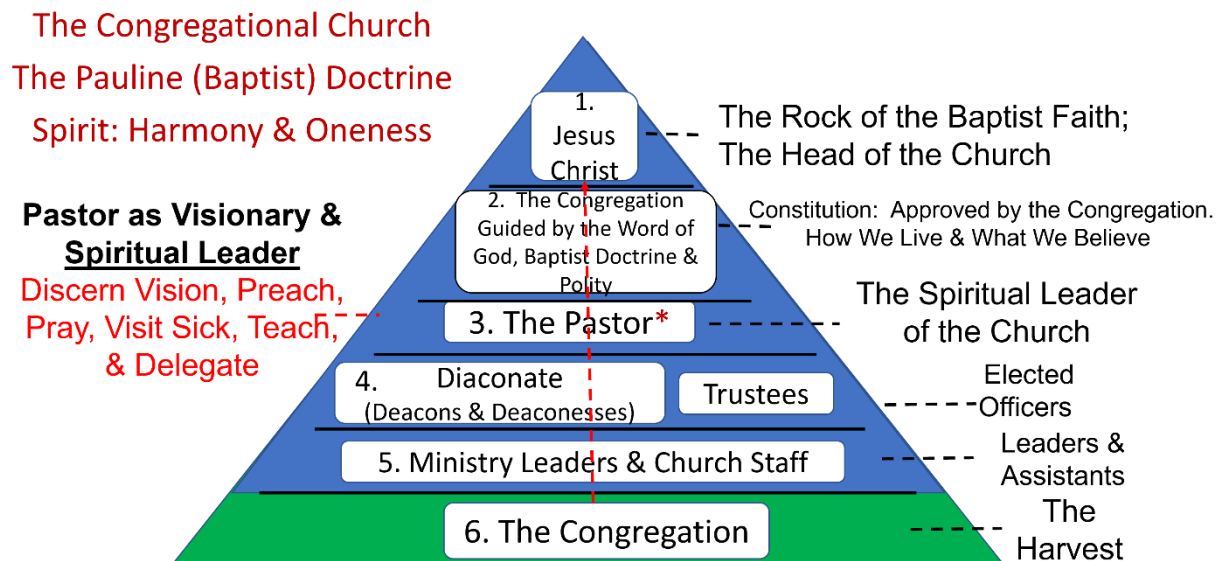
## Section 1 - Preamble

As disciples [Matthew 4:18-22] and servants of the Lord, Jesus Christ [2 Timothy 2:24-25], we have been called by God to unite as one body [Ephesians 4:4-6] in Christian love [John 15:9-10] with harmony towards each other [Romans 12:16-18], good will towards all [Jeremiah 29:7 & 11], and the command to win lost souls for Christ [Matthew 28:19-20]. In fulfillment of God’s divine call, we establish this constitution as members of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church to affirm and “...carry out the spirit of *the Baptist Church* covenant and the principles of God’s word [The Baptist Church Covenant].”

## Section 2 – About \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church

### Our Doctrine

We are and forever shall be Baptist (Congregationalism) in doctrine, denomination, and faith as one body of Christ called the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church. We follow the example Jesus Christ in fellowshiping and witnessing to all God’s children including believers, non-believers, and people of other faiths [Luke 15:1-2]. However, congregational associations of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church shall be intentionally with churches and organizations of and within the Baptist faith.



**\*All parts of the Baptist Church are responsible for seeking and growing in Christ. The absence or change in any one area neither lessens nor negates our responsibility to seek Christ in all we do.**

## **Our Leadership**

All leadership of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church (to include, but not be limited to the Pastor, ministers, Diaconate, Trustees, Ministry Leaders, and Staff) shall commit to ministry service that preserves, affirms, teaches, and abides by Christian principles and Baptist doctrine through the teaching, preaching, and exemplifying of the Word of God, the Baptist Church Covenant, and the Baptist Articles of Faith.

## **Section 3 – About \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church Constitution**

### **Our Church Constitution Purpose - We Are One**

*One Church, One Doctrine, One Polity, One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.*

Because believers join and unite with churches for a myriad of reasons from various denominational and doctrinal backgrounds, we do not assume that members of \_\_\_\_\_ have an understanding of what it means to be Baptist nor the willingness or desire to abide by the principles of Baptist doctrine and polity. Therefore, the purpose of the *Baptist Church Constitution* is to unite the leadership and membership of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church under Christian principles according to the common beliefs of the Baptist faith.

### **Our Church Constitution Contents & Amendments**

This Church Constitution contains the doctrinal statements of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church and affirm who we are and what we believe as Baptists.

Statements within the \_\_\_BC constitution shall be limited to and only consist of...

1. The Word of God
2. The Baptist Church Covenant
3. The Baptist Articles of Faith

...the three spiritual documents as inspired by God and written by the founders of the Baptist faith. As Baptist believers who affirm our faith as Baptists, the Word of God shall always be prioritized over any other document of human origin. Under the Word of God, we are careful to give the Baptist Church Covenant and the Baptist Articles of Faith priority and precedence in our church and ministry.

The leadership of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church are called to ensure that \_\_\_\_\_ remains a loving church according to the principles set forth in this document. Church By-Laws of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church shall only be discussed and implemented by \_\_\_BC as a body of Christ that lives by and applies the Word of God and the Baptist doctrinal statements as listed in this Church Constitution. The By-Laws of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church shall never be used as a separate document from the \_\_\_BC Constitution that controls and oppresses the members of \_\_\_BC. Amendment of the Church Constitution shall require 90% approval of the active \_\_\_BC membership during a duly called Church Meeting.

### **Our Church Constitution Spirit**

The spirit of the constitution of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church is rooted in the belief that “free will” is the only way a believer can truly be led to accept the teachings and the Spirit of Christ. Doctrine and faith can neither be accepted nor received by force. It is the responsibility of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church to teach the Word of God to sinners and then, depend on God to lead them to repentance.

*God's servant must not be argumentative, but a gentle listener and a teacher who keeps cool, working firmly but patiently with those who refuse to obey. You never know how or when God might sober them up with a change of heart and a turning to the truth, enabling them to escape the Devil's trap, where they are caught and held captive, forced to run his errands.*

2 Timothy 2:24-26 (The Message Translation)

Additionally, the leaders and members of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church are called to strive to ensure that serving and worshipping as a part of the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church family is a solemn and joyful experience according to the covenant of our faith.

*We “...do now in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.”*

(The Baptist Church Covenant)

### **Membership as *One Church, One Doctrine, One Polity* of \_\_\_BC**

The content of this constitution is taught as a part of the New Members' class and Leadership Development Training of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church. All believers desiring membership within the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church must first complete the \_\_\_BC New Member's class. By entering into membership within the \_\_\_BC family, the believer affirms their desire and willingness to understand, accept, and abide by Christian principles and Baptist Doctrine.

### **Leadership as *One Church, One Doctrine, One Polity* of \_\_\_BC**

Church leaders are required to sign and commit to *Servant Leadership Covenants* (see **Article II – Church Leadership, pg. 3 of the Church By-Laws**) at the beginning of each year. Ministry leadership is considered and approved by the Pastors and Elders of \_\_\_BC on an annual basis. Consideration for new and continued leadership within \_\_\_BC shall be dependent primarily upon the individual member's willingness to abide by the principles set forth in this Constitution. Members who do not affirm, abide by, and support the Constitution of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church shall not be eligible for \_\_\_BC leadership.

## **Section 4 – Mission Statement**

The name of this organization shall be the \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church. It is the mission of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church to...

[Use this space for your \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church Mission Statement which should contain statements that connect the church's mission to the Word of God, the Baptist Church Covenant, and the Baptist Articles of Faith.]

## Section 5 – Purpose

The purpose of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church is...

[Use this space for your \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church Purpose Statement which should contain statements that connect the church’s purpose to the Word of God, the Baptist Church Covenant, and the Baptist Articles of Faith.]

## Section 6 – The Word of God

As members of \_\_\_\_\_ Baptist Church, we believe that the Word of God is “...the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried.” (Articles of Faith, Article #1, “The Scriptures”) The Word of God takes precedence over every document of human origin and is used as the literal guide to our ultimate goal of salvation.

## Section 7 – The Baptist Church Covenant

Having been led, as I believe, by the Spirit of God to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as my Savior; and on the profession of my faith, having been baptized in the name of the Father, and the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, I do now in the presence of God, angels and this assembly, most solemnly and joyfully enter into covenant with one another, as one body in Christ.

I engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love; to strive for the advancement of this church in knowledge and holiness; to give it a place in my affections, prayers and services above every organization of human origin; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrine; to contribute cheerfully and regularly, as God has prospered me, towards its expenses, for the support of a faithful and evangelical ministry among us, the relief of the poor and the spread of the Gospel throughout the world. In case of difference of opinion in the church, I will strive to avoid a contentious spirit, and if I cannot unanimously agree, I will cheerfully recognize the right of the majority to govern.

## **The Baptist Church Covenant (cont'd.)**

I also engage to maintain congregational and personal devotion; to study diligently the word of God; to religiously educate my children; to seek the salvation of my kindred and acquaintances; to walk circumspectly in my world; to be kind and just to those in my employ, and faithful in the service I promise others; endeavoring in the purity of heart and good will towards all men to exemplify and commend my holy faith.

I further engage to watch over, to pray for, to exhort and stir up each other unto every good word and work; to guard each other's reputation, not needlessly exposing the infirmities of others; to participate in each other's joys, and with tender sympathy bear one another's burdens and sorrows; to cultivate Christian courtesy; ...

...to be slow to give or take offense, but always ready to reconciliation, being mindful of the rules of the Savior in the eighteenth chapter of Matthew, to secure it without delay; and through life, amid good and evil report, to seek to live to the glory of God, who hath called us out of darkness into his marvelous light.

When I remove from this place, I will endeavor, as soon as possible to unite with some other church where I can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's word.

## **Section 8 - What We Believe; The Baptist Articles of Faith**

### **Article I     The Scriptures**

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired, and is a perfect treasure of heavenly instruction; that it has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth without any mixture of error for its matter; that it reveals the principles by which God will judge us, and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions shall be tried.



## **The Baptist Articles of Faith (cont'd. )**

### **Article II The True God**

We believe the Scriptures teach that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent Spirit, whose name is Jehovah, the Maker and Supreme Ruler of heaven and earth; inexpressibly glorious in holiness, and worthy of all possible honor confidence and love; that in the unity of the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

### **Article III The Fall of Man**

We believe the Scriptures teach that Man was created in holiness, under the law of his Maker; but by voluntary transgressions fell from that holy and happy state; in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint but choice; being by nature utterly void of that holiness required by the law of God, positively inclined to evil; and therefore under just condemnation to eternal ruin, without defense or excuse.

### **Article IV The Way of Salvation**

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God; who by the appointment of the Father, freely took upon him our nature, yet without sin; honored the divine law by his personal obedience, and by his death made a full atonement for our sins; that having risen from the dead, he is now enthroned in heaven; and uniting in his wonderful person the tenderest sympathies with divine perfections, he is in every way qualified to be a suitable, a compassionate, and an all-sufficient Savior.

### **Article V Justification**

We believe the Scriptures teach that the great Gospel blessing which Christ secures to such as believe in him is justification; that justification includes the pardon of sin, and the promise of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed, not in consideration of any works of righteousness which we have done, but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood; by virtue of which faith his perfect righteousness is freely imputed to us of God; that it brings us into a state of most blessed peace and favor with God, and secures every other blessing needful for time and eternity.

## **The Baptist Articles of Faith (cont'd. )**

### **Article VI The Freeness of Salvation**

We believe that the Scriptures teach that the blessings of salvation are made free to all by the Gospel; that it is the immediate duty of all to accept them by cordial, penitent and obedient faith; and that nothing prevents the salvation of the greatest sinner on earth, but his own determined depravity and voluntary rejection of the Gospel; which rejection involves him in an aggravated condemnation.

### **Article VII Regeneration**

We believe that the Scriptures teach that in order to be saved, sinners must be regenerated, or born again; that regeneration consists in giving a holy disposition to the mind that it is effected in a manner above our comprehension by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; and that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith, and newness of life.

### **Article VIII Repentance and Faith**

We believe the Scriptures teach that repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces, wrought in our souls by the regenerating Spirit of God; whereby being deeply convinced of our guilt, danger and helplessness and of the way of salvation by Christ, we turn to God with unfeigned contrition, confession, and supplication for mercy; at the same time heartily receiving the Lord Jesus Christ as our prophet, priest and king, and relying on him alone as the only and all-sufficient Savior.

### **Article IX God's Purpose of Grace**

We believe the Scriptures teach that election is the eternal purpose of God, according to which he graciously regenerates, sanctifies and saves sinners; that being perfectly consistent with the free agency of man, it comprehends all the means in connection with the end; that it is a most glorious display of God's sovereign goodness, being infinitely free, wise, holy and unchangeable; that it utterly excludes boasting and promotes humility, love, prayer, praise, trust in God, and active imitation of his free mercy; that it encourages the use of means in the highest degree; that it may be ascertained by its effects in all who truly believe the Gospel; that it is the foundation of Christian assurance; and that to ascertain it with regard to ourselves demands and deserves the utmost diligence.

## **The Baptist Articles of Faith (cont'd. )**

### **Article X Sanctification**

We believe the Scriptures teach that Sanctification is the process by which, according to the will of God, we are made partakers of his holiness; that it is a progressive work; that it is begun in regeneration; and that it is carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, the Sealer and Comforter, in the continual use of the appointed means especially the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer.

### **Article XI Perseverance of the Saints**

We believe the Scriptures teach that such only are real believers as endure to the end; that their persevering attachment to Christ is the grand mark which distinguishes them from superficial professors; that a special Providence watches over their welfare; and they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

### **Article XII The Law and Gospel**

We believe the Scriptures teach that the Law of God is the eternal and unchangeable rule of his moral government; that it is holy, just and good; and that the inability which the Scriptures ascribe to fallen men to fulfill its precepts, arise entirely from their love of sin; to deliver them from which, and to restore them through a Mediator to unfeigned obedience to the holy Law, is one great end of the Gospel, and of the Means of Grace connected with the establishment of the visible church.

### **Article XIII A Gospel Church**

We believe the Scriptures teach that a visible church of Christ is a congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the Gospel; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by his laws; and exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its only scriptural officers are Bishops or Pastors, and Deacons whose Qualifications, claims and duties are defined in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus.

## **The Baptist Articles of Faith (cont'd. )**

### **Article XIV Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

We believe the Scriptures teach that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, into the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Ghost; to show forth in a solemn and beautiful emblem, our faith in the crucified, buried, and risen Savior, with its effect, in our death to sin and resurrection to a new life; that it is prerequisite to the privileges of a church relation; and to the Lord's Supper, in which the members of the church, by the sacred use of bread and wine, are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination.

### **Article XV The Christian Sabbath**

We believe the Scriptures teach that the first day of the week is the Lord's Day, or Christian Sabbath, and is to be kept sacred to religious purposes, by abstaining from all secular labor and sinful recreations, by the devout observance of all the means of grace, both private and public, and by preparation for that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

### **Article XVI Civil Government**

We believe the Scriptures teach that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good order of human society; and that magistrates are to be prayed for, conscientiously honored and obeyed; except only in things opposed to the will of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the only Lord of the conscience, and the Prince of the Kings of the earth.

### **Article XVII Righteous and Wicked**

We believe the Scriptures teach that there is a radical and essential difference between the righteous and the wicked; that such only as through faith are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and sanctified by the Spirit of our God, are truly righteous in his esteem; while all such as continue in impenitence and unbelief are in his sight wicked, and under the curse; and this distinction holds among men both in and after death.

### **Article XVIII The World to Come**

We believe the Scriptures teach that the end of the world is approaching; that at the last day, Christ will descend from heaven, and raise the dead from the grave for final retribution; that a solemn separation will then take place; that the wicked will be adjudged to endless punishment, and the righteous to endless joy; and that this judgment will fix forever the final state of men in heaven or hell, on principles of righteousness.