

**Green Valley  
Baptist Church**



**Constitution**

## **Green Valley Baptist Church Constitution**

### **Introduction**

A church is a fellowship of people who have accepted Christ as Savior and are united by their common relation to the Holy Spirit. A church, like a community or individual, is always changing. Fundamental doctrines remain the same, but methods of teaching these doctrines and of moving toward objectives must change if the mission of the church is to be accomplished.

Basic theology, organization structures, and church policies are contained in a constitution. By-laws, on the other hand, state the methods for carrying out these principles and policies. By-laws will usually be changed more often than the constitution and by-laws should be reviewed annually by the Constitution and By-Laws Committee.

### **Preamble**

We declare and establish this constitution for the preservation and security of our faith and for the government of this body in an orderly manner. Because this constitution will preserve the liberties of each individual member of this church and the freedom of action of this body in its relation to other churches of same faith and order, Green Valley Baptist Church declares and establishes the following constitution.

### **Name and Purpose**

**Section A:** This body shall be known as the Green Valley Baptist Church in cooperation with other churches of like faith and order through the New Lebanon Baptist Association, the General Association of Virginia, and the Southern Baptist Convention.

**Section B:** The purpose of this church shall be to glorify God, to maintain a place for worship, to win others to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to spread the Gospel in Russell County, in Virginia, in our nation, and to the uttermost part of the earth.

## **Statement of Faith**

The Holy Bible is the inspired Word of God and is the basis for any statement of faith. We band ourselves together as a body of baptized believers in Jesus Christ, personally committed to sharing the good news of salvation to lost mankind. The ordinances of the church are Baptism and the Lord's Supper.

## **Church Covenant**

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

“We engage, therefore, by the aid of the Holy Spirit, to walk together in Christian love: to strive for the advancement of this Church in all knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the gospel to all nations.”

“We also engage to maintain family and secret devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and others; to walk circumspectly in the world; to be just in our dealings, faithful in our engagements, and exemplary in our deportment; to avoid all tattling, backbiting, and excessive anger; to abstain from the sale and use of intoxicating drinks as a beverage; and, to be zealous in all our efforts to advance the kingdom of our Saviour.”

“We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember one another in prayer; to aid one another in sickness and distress; to reach across racial, social, and economic barriers; to cultivate Christians sympathy and Christian

courtesy in speech; and, to be slow to take offense, but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rules of our Saviour, to secure it without delay.”

“We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will, at the earliest time, unite with some other Church of the same faith and order where we can carry the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God’s Word.”

## **Character of this Church**

**Section A: Policy:** The Church government is vested in the body of believers who compose it. It is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation which are common among Baptist churches.

**Section B: Doctrine:** The Church receives the Bible as the inherent word of God for authority in matters of faith and practice. Its understanding of Christian truth as contained therein is in essential accord with the belief of Baptist churches as indicated in the declarations of faith as follows:

## **Articles of Faith**

Our Articles of Faith shall be the same as those set forth in the Baptist Faith and Message, as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention in annual session June 14, 2000.

## **I. The Scriptures**

The Holy Bible was written by men divinely inspired and is God's revelation of Himself to man. It is a perfect treasure of divine instruction. It has God for its author, salvation for its end, and truth, without any mixture of error, for its matter. Therefore, all Scripture is totally true and trustworthy. It reveals the principles by which God judges us, and therefore is, and will remain to the end of the world, the true center of Christian union, and the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and religious opinions should be tried. All Scripture is a testimony to Christ, who is Himself the focus of divine revelation.

*Exodus 24:4; Deuteronomy 4:1-2; 17:19; Joshua 8:34; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:11,89,105,140; Isaiah 34:16; 40:8; Jeremiah 15:16; 36:1-32; Matthew 5:17-18; 22:29; Luke 21:33; 24:44-46; John 5:39; 16:13-15; 17:17; Acts 2:16ff.; 17:11; Romans 15:4; 16:25-26; 2 Timothy 3:15-17; Hebrews 1:1-2; 4:12; 1 Peter 1:25; 2 Peter 1:19-21.*

## **II. God**

There is one and only one living and true God. He is an intelligent, spiritual, and personal Being, the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe. God is infinite in holiness and all other perfections. God is all powerful and all knowing; and His perfect knowledge extends to all things, past, present, and future, including the future decisions of His free creatures. To Him we owe the highest love, reverence, and obedience. The eternal triune God reveals Himself to us as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, with distinct personal attributes, but without division of nature, essence, or being.

### **A. God the Father**

God as Father reigns with providential care over His universe, His creatures, and the flow of the stream of human history according to the purposes of His grace. He is all powerful, all knowing, all loving, and all

wise. God is Father in truth to those who become children of God through faith in Jesus Christ. He is fatherly in His attitude toward all men.

*Genesis 1:1; 2:7; Exodus 3:14; 6:2-3; 15:11ff.; 20:1ff.; Leviticus 22:2; Deuteronomy 6:4; 32:6; 1 Chronicles 29:10; Psalm 19:1-3; Isaiah 43:3,15; 64:8; Jeremiah 10:10; 17:13; Matthew 6:9ff.; 7:11; 23:9; 28:19; Mark 1:9-11; John 4:24; 5:26; 14:6-13; 17:1-8; Acts 1:7; Romans 8:14-15; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 4:6; Colossians 1:15; 1 Timothy 1:17; Hebrews 11:6; 12:9; 1 Peter 1:17; 1 John 5:7.*

## **B. God the Son**

Christ is the eternal Son of God. In His incarnation as Jesus Christ, He was conceived of the Holy Spirit and born of the virgin Mary. Jesus perfectly revealed and did the will of God, taking upon Himself human nature with its demands and necessities and identifying Himself completely with mankind yet without sin. He honored the divine law by His personal obedience, and in His substitutionary death on the cross, He made provision for the redemption of men from sin. He was raised from the dead with a glorified body and appeared to His disciples as the person who was with them before His crucifixion. He ascended into heaven and is now exalted at the right hand of God where He is the One Mediator, fully God, fully man, in whose Person is effected the reconciliation between God and man. He will return in power and glory to judge the world and to consummate His redemptive mission. He now dwells in all believers as the living and ever present Lord.

*Genesis 18:1ff.; Psalms 2:7ff.; 110:1ff.; Isaiah 7:14; 53; Matthew 1:18-23; 3:17; 8:29; 11:27; 14:33; 16:16,27; 17:5; 27; 28:1-6,19; Mark 1:1; 3:11; Luke 1:35; 4:41; 22:70; 24:46; John 1:1-18,29; 10:30,38; 11:25-27; 12:44-50; 14:7-11; 16:15-16,28; 17:1-5, 21-22; 20:1-20,28; Acts 1:9; 2:22-24; 7:55-56; 9:4-5,20; Romans 1:3-4; 3:23-26; 5:6-21; 8:1-3,34; 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 2:2; 8:6; 15:1-8,24-28; 2 Corinthians 5:19-21; 8:9;*

*Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:20; 3:11; 4:7-10; Philippians 2:5-11; Colossians 1:13-22; 2:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 3:16; Titus 2:13-14; Hebrews 1:1-3; 4:14-15; 7:14-28; 9:12-15,24-28; 12:2; 13:8; 1 Peter 2:21-25; 3:22; 1 John 1:7-9; 3:2; 4:14-15; 5:9; 2 John 7-9; Revelation 1:13-16; 5:9-14; 12:10-11; 13:8; 19:16.*

### **C. God the Holy Spirit**

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of God, fully divine. He inspired holy men of old to write the Scriptures. Through illumination He enables men to understand truth. He exalts Christ. He convicts men of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. He calls men to the Saviour and effects regeneration. At the moment of regeneration, He baptizes every believer into the Body of Christ. He cultivates Christian character, comforts believers, and bestows the spiritual gifts by which believers serve God through His church. He seals the believer unto the day of final redemption. His presence in the Christian is the guarantee that God will bring the believer into the fullness of the stature of Christ. He enlightens and empowers the believer and the church in worship, evangelism, and service.

*Genesis 1:2; Judges 14:6; Job 26:13; Psalms 51:11; 139:7ff.; Isaiah 61:1-3; Joel 2:28-32; Matthew 1:18; 3:16; 4:1; 12:28-32; 28:19; Mark 1:10,12; Luke 1:35; 4:1,18-19; 11:13; 12:12; 24:49; John 4:24; 14:16-17,26; 15:26; 16:7-14; Acts 1:8; 2:1-4,38; 4:31; 5:3; 6:3; 7:55; 8:17,39; 10:44; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 19:1-6; Romans 8:9-11,14-16,26-27; 1 Corinthians 2:10-14; 3:16; 12:3-11,13; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30; 5:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:19; 1 Timothy 3:16; 4:1; 2 Timothy 1:14; 3:16; Hebrews 9:8,14; 2 Peter 1:21; 1 John 4:13; 5:6-7; Revelation 1:10; 22:17.*

### **III. Man**

Man is the special creation of God, made in His own image. He created them male and female as the crowning work of His creation. The gift of

gender is thus part of the goodness of God's creation. In the beginning man was innocent of sin and was endowed by his Creator with freedom of choice. By his free choice man sinned against God and brought sin into the human race. Through the temptation of Satan, man transgressed the command of God, and fell from his original innocence whereby his posterity inherit a nature and an environment inclined toward sin. Therefore, as soon as they are capable of moral action, they become transgressors and are under condemnation. Only the grace of God can bring man into His holy fellowship and enable man to fulfill the creative purpose of God. The sacredness of human personality is evident in that God created man in His own image and in that Christ died for man; therefore, every person of every race possesses full dignity and is worthy of respect and Christian love.

*Genesis 1:26-30; 2:5,7,18-22; 3; 9:6; Psalms 1; 8:3-6; 32:1-5; 51:5; Isaiah 6:5; Jeremiah 17:5; Matthew 16:26; Acts 17:26-31; Romans 1:19-32; 3:10-18,23; 5:6,12,19; 6:6; 7:14-25; 8:14-18,29; 1 Corinthians 1:21-31; 15:19,21-22; Ephesians 2:1-22; Colossians 1:21-22; 3:9-11.*

#### **IV. Salvation**

Salvation involves the redemption of the whole man and is offered freely to all who accept Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, who by His own blood obtained eternal redemption for the believer. In its broadest sense salvation includes regeneration, justification, sanctification, and glorification. There is no salvation apart from personal faith in Jesus Christ as Lord.

A. Regeneration, or the new birth, is a work of God's grace whereby believers become new creatures in Christ Jesus. It is a change of heart wrought by the Holy Spirit through conviction of sin, to which the sinner responds in repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance and faith are inseparable experiences of grace.

Repentance is a genuine turning from sin toward God. Faith is the acceptance of Jesus Christ and commitment of the entire personality to Him as Lord and Saviour.

B. Justification is God's gracious and full acquittal upon principles of His righteousness of all sinners who repent and believe in Christ. Justification brings the believer into a relationship of peace and favor with God.

C. Sanctification is the experience, beginning in regeneration, by which the believer is set apart to God's purposes and is enabled to progress toward moral and spiritual maturity through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit dwelling in him. Growth in grace should continue throughout the regenerate person's life.

D. Glorification is the culmination of salvation and is the final blessed and abiding state of the redeemed.

*Genesis 3:15; Exodus 3:14-17; 6:2-8; Matthew 1:21; 4:17; 16:21-26; 27:22-28:6; Luke 1:68-69; 2:28-32; John 1:11-14,29; 3:3-21,36; 5:24; 10:9,28-29; 15:1-16; 17:17; Acts 2:21; 4:12; 15:11; 16:30-31; 17:30-31; 20:32; Romans 1:16-18; 2:4; 3:23-25; 4:3ff.; 5:8-10; 6:1-23; 8:1-18,29-39; 10:9-10,13; 13:11-14; 1 Corinthians 1:18,30; 6:19-20; 15:10; 2 Corinthians 5:17-20; Galatians 2:20; 3:13; 5:22-25; 6:15; Ephesians 1:7; 2:8-22; 4:11-16; Philippians 2:12-13; Colossians 1:9-22; 3:1ff.; 1 Thessalonians 5:23-24; 2 Timothy 1:12; Titus 2:11-14; Hebrews 2:1-3; 5:8-9; 9:24-28; 11:1-12:8,14; James 2:14-26; 1 Peter 1:2-23; 1 John 1:6-2:11; Revelation 3:20; 21:1-22:5.*

## V. God's Purpose of Grace

Election is the gracious purpose of God, according to which He regenerates, justifies, sanctifies, and glorifies sinners. It is consistent with the free agency of man and comprehends all the means in connection with the end. It is the glorious display of God's sovereign goodness and is infinitely wise, holy, and unchangeable. It excludes boasting and

promotes humility.

All true believers endure to the end. Those whom God has accepted in Christ and sanctified by His Spirit will never fall away from the state of grace but shall persevere to the end. Believers may fall into sin through neglect and temptation, whereby they grieve the Spirit, impair their graces and comforts, and bring reproach on the cause of Christ and temporal judgments on themselves; yet, they shall be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-8; 1 Samuel 8:4-7,19-22; Isaiah 5:1-7; Jeremiah 31:31ff.; Matthew 16:18-19; 21:28-45; 24:22,31; 25:34; Luke 1:68-79; 2:29-32; 19:41-44; 24:44-48; John 1:12-14; 3:16; 5:24; 6:44-45,65; 10:27-29; 15:16; 17:6,12,17-18; Acts 20:32; Romans 5:9-10; 8:28-39; 10:12-15; 11:5-7,26-36; 1 Corinthians 1:1-2; 15:24-28; Ephesians 1:4-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-11; Colossians 1:12-14; 2 Thessalonians 2:13-14; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2:10,19; Hebrews 11:39-12:2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:2-5,13; 2:4-10; 1 John 1:7-9; 2:19; 3:2.*

## **VI. The Church**

A New Testament church of the Lord Jesus Christ is an autonomous local congregation of baptized believers, associated by covenant in the faith and fellowship of the gospel; observing the two ordinances of Christ; governed by His laws; exercising the gifts, rights, and privileges invested in them by His Word; and, seeking to extend the gospel to the ends of the earth. Each congregation operates under the Lordship of Christ through democratic processes. In such a congregation each member is responsible and accountable to Christ as Lord. Its scriptural officers are pastors and deacons. While both men and women are gifted for service in the church, the offices of pastors and deacon are limited to men as qualified by Scripture.

The New Testament speaks also of the church as the Body of Christ which includes all of the redeemed of all the ages, believers from every

tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation. *Matthew 16:15-19; 18:15-20; Acts 2:41-42,47; 5:11-14; 6:3-6; 13:1-3; 14:23,27; 15:1-30; 16:5; 20:28; Romans 1:7; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 3:16; 5:4-5; 7:17; 9:13-14; 12; Ephesians 1:22-23; 2:19-22; 3:8-11,21; 5:22-32; Philippians 1:1; Colossians 1:18; 1 Timothy 2:9-14; 3:1-15; 4:14; Hebrews 11:39-40; 1 Peter 5:1-4; Revelation 2-3; 21:2-3.*

## **VII. Baptism and the Lord's Supper**

Christian baptism is the immersion of a believer in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is an act of obedience symbolizing the believer's faith in a crucified, buried, and risen Saviour, the believer's death to sin, the burial of the old life, and the resurrection to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus. It is a testimony to his faith in the final resurrection of the dead. Being a church ordinance, it is prerequisite to the privileges of church membership and to the Lord's Supper.

The Lord's Supper is a symbolic act of obedience whereby members of the church, through partaking of the bread and the fruit of the vine, memorialize the death of the Redeemer and anticipate His second coming.

*Matthew 3:13-17; 26:26-30; 28:19-20; Mark 1:9-11; 14:22-26; Luke 3:21-22; 22:19-20; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42; 8:35-39; 16:30-33; 20:7; Romans 6:3-5; 1 Corinthians 10:16,21; 11:23-29; Colossians 2:12.*

## **VIII. The Lord's Day**

The first day of the week is the Lord's Day. It is a Christian institution for regular observance. It commemorates the resurrection of Christ from the dead and should include exercises of worship and spiritual devotion, both public and private. Activities on the Lord's Day should be commensurate with the Christian's conscience under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

*Exodus 20:8-11; Matthew 12:1-12; 28:1ff.; Mark 2:27-28; 16:1-7; Luke 24:1-3,33-36; John 4:21-24; 20:1,19-28; Acts 20:7; Romans 14:5-10; I Corinthians 16:1-2; Colossians 2:16; 3:16; Revelation 1:10.*

## **IX. The Kingdom**

The Kingdom of God includes both His general sovereignty over the universe and His particular kingship over men who willfully acknowledge Him as King. Particularly, the Kingdom is the realm of salvation into which men enter by trustful, childlike commitment to Jesus Christ. Christians ought to pray and to labor that the Kingdom may come and that God's will be done on earth. The full consummation of the Kingdom awaits the return of Jesus Christ and the end of this age.

*Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Matthew 3:2; 4:8-10,23; 12:25-28; 13:1-52; 25:31-46; 26:29; Mark 1:14-15; 9:1; Luke 4:43; 8:1; 9:2; 12:31-32; 17:20-21; 23:42; John 3:3; 18:36; Acts 1:6-7; 17:22-31; Romans 5:17; 8:19; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Colossians 1:13; Hebrews 11:10,16; 12:28; 1 Peter 2:4-10; 4:13; Revelation 1:6,9; 5:10; 11:15; 21-22.*

## **X. Last Things**

God, in His own time and in His own way, will bring the world to its appropriate end. According to His promise, Jesus Christ will return personally and visibly in glory to the earth; the dead will be raised; and Christ will judge all men in righteousness. The unrighteous will be consigned to Hell, the place of everlasting punishment. The righteous in their resurrected and glorified bodies will receive their reward and will dwell forever in Heaven with the Lord.

*Isaiah 2:4; 11:9; Matthew 16:27; 18:8-9; 19:28; 24:27,30,36,44; 25:31-46; 26:64; Mark 8:38; 9:43-48; Luke 12:40,48; 16:19-26; 17:22-37; 21:27-28; John 14:1-3; Acts 1:11; 17:31; Romans 14:10; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 15:24-28,35-58; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Philippians 3:20-21; Colossians 1:5; 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-18; 5:1ff.; 2 Thessalonians 1:7ff.; 2; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1,8; Titus 2:13;*

*Hebrews 9:27-28; James 5:8; 2 Peter 3:7ff.; 1 John 2:28; 3:2; Jude 14; Revelation 1:18; 3:11; 20:1-22:13.*

## **XI. Evangelism and Missions**

It is the duty and privilege of every follower of Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations. The new birth of man's spirit by God's Holy Spirit means the birth of love for others. Missionary effort on the part of all rests thus upon a spiritual necessity of the regenerate life and is expressly and repeatedly commanded in the teachings of Christ. The Lord Jesus Christ has commanded the preaching of the gospel to all nations. It is the duty of every child of God to seek constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness undergirded by a Christian lifestyle and by other methods in harmony with the gospel of Christ.

*Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Isaiah 6:1-8; Matthew 9:37-38; 10:5-15; 13:18-30, 37-43; 16:19; 22:9-10; 24:14; 28:18-20; Luke 10:1-18; 24:46-53; John 14:11-12; 15:7-8,16; 17:15; 20:21; Acts 1:8; 2; 8:26-40; 10:42-48; 13:2-3; Romans 10:13-15; Ephesians 3:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 1:8; 2 Timothy 4:5; Hebrews 2:1-3; 11:39-12:2; 1 Peter 2:4-10; Revelation 22:17.*

## **XII. Education**

Christianity is the faith of enlightenment and intelligence. In Jesus Christ abide all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. All sound learning is, therefore, a part of our Christian heritage. The new birth opens all human faculties and creates a thirst for knowledge. Moreover, the cause of education in the Kingdom of Christ is coordinate with the causes of missions and general benevolence and should receive along with these the liberal support of the churches. An adequate system of Christian education is necessary to a complete spiritual program for Christ's people.

In Christian education there should be a proper balance between academic freedom and academic responsibility. Freedom in any orderly relationship of human life is always limited and never absolute. The freedom of a teacher in a Christian school, college, or seminary is limited by the pre-eminence of Jesus Christ, by the authoritative nature of the Scriptures, and by the distinct purpose for which the school exists.

*Deuteronomy 4:1,5,9,14; 6:1-10; 31:12-13; Nehemiah 8:1-8; Job 28:28; Psalms 19:7ff.; 119:11; Proverbs 3:13ff.; 4:1-10; 8:1-7,11; 15:14; Ecclesiastes 7:19; Matthew 5:2; 7:24ff.; 28:19-20; Luke 2:40; 1 Corinthians 1:18-31; Ephesians 4:11-16; Philippians 4:8; Colossians 2:3,8-9; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 2 Timothy 2:15; 3:14-17; Hebrews 5:12-6:3; James 1:5; 3:17.*

### **XIII. Stewardship**

God is the source of all blessings, temporal and spiritual; all that we have and are we owe to Him. Christians have a spiritual debtorship to the whole world, a holy trusteeship in the gospel, and a binding stewardship in their possessions. They are, therefore, under obligation to serve Him with their time, talents, and material possessions and should recognize all these as entrusted to them to use for the glory of God and for helping others. According to the Scriptures, Christians should contribute of their means cheerfully, regularly, systematically, proportionately, and liberally for the advancement of the Redeemer's cause on earth.

*Genesis 14:20; Leviticus 27:30-32; Deuteronomy 8:18; Malachi 3:8-12; Matthew 6:1-4,19-21; 19:21; 23:23; 25:14-29; Luke 12:16-21,42; 16:1-13; Acts 2:44-47; 5:1-11; 17:24-25; 20:35; Romans 6:6-22; 12:1-2; 1 Corinthians 4:1-2; 6:19-20; 12; 16:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8-9; 12:15; Philippians 4:10-19; 1 Peter 1:18-19.*

### **XIV. Cooperation**

Christ's people should, as occasion requires, organize such associations and conventions as may best secure cooperation for the great objects of the Kingdom of God. Such organizations have no authority over one another or over the churches.

They are voluntary and advisory bodies designed to elicit, combine, and direct the energies of our people in the most effective manner. Members of New Testament churches should cooperate with one another in carrying forward the missionary, educational, and benevolent ministries for the extension of Christ's Kingdom. Christian unity in the New Testament sense is spiritual harmony and voluntary cooperation for common ends by various groups of Christ's people. Cooperation is desirable between the various Christian denominations, when the end to be attained is itself justified and when such cooperation involves no violation of conscience or compromise of loyalty to Christ and His Word as revealed in the New Testament.

*Exodus 17:12; 18:17ff.; Judges 7:21; Ezra 1:3-4; 2:68-69; 5:14-15; Nehemiah 4; 8:1-5; Matthew 10:5-15; 20:1-16; 22:1-10; 28:19-20; Mark 2:3; Luke 10:1ff.; Acts 1:13-14; 2:1ff.; 4:31-37; 13:2-3; 15:1-35; 1 Corinthians 1:10-17; 3:5-15; 12; 2 Corinthians 8-9; Galatians 1:6-10; Ephesians 4:1-16; Philipians 1:15-18.*

## **XV. The Christian and the Social Order**

All Christians are under obligation to seek to make the will of Christ supreme in their own lives and in human society. Means and methods used for the improvement of society and the establishment of righteousness among men can be truly and permanently helpful only when they are rooted in the regeneration of the individual by the saving grace of God in Jesus Christ. In the spirit of Christ, Christians should oppose racism, every form of greed, selfishness, vice, and all forms of sexual immorality, including adultery, homosexuality, and pornography. We should work to provide for the orphaned, the needy, the abused, the aged, the helpless, and the sick. We should speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death. Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love. In order to promote these ends Christians should be ready to work with all men of good will in any good cause, always being careful to act in the spirit of love without compromising their loyalty to Christ and His truth.

*Exodus 20:3-17; Leviticus 6:2-5; Deuteronomy 10:12; 27:17; Psalm 101:5; Micah 6:8; Zechariah 8:16; Matthew 5:13-16, 43-48; 22:36-40; 25:35; Mark 1:29-34; 2:3ff.; 10:21; Luke 4:18-21; 10:27-37; 20:25; John 15:12; 17:15; Romans 12-14; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 6:1-7; 7:20-24; 10:23-11:1; Galatians 3:26-28; Ephesians 6:5-9; Colossians 3:12-17; 1 Thessalonians 3:12; Philemon; James 1:27; 2:8.*

## **XVI. Peace and War**

It is the duty of Christians to seek peace with all men on principles of righteousness. In accordance with the spirit and teachings of Christ, they should do all in their power to put an end to war.

The true remedy for the war spirit is the gospel of our Lord. The supreme need of the world is the acceptance of His teachings in all the affairs of men and nations and the practical application of His law of love. Christian people throughout the world should pray for the reign of the Prince of Peace.

*Isaiah 2:4; Matthew 5:9, 38-48; 6:33; 26:52; Luke 22:36, 38; Romans 12:18-19; 13:1-7; 14:19; Hebrews 12:14; James 4:1-2.*

## **XVII. Religious Liberty**

God alone is Lord of the conscience, and He has left it free from the doctrines and commandments of men which are contrary to His Word or not contained in it. Church and state should be separate. The state owes to every church protection and full freedom in the pursuit of its spiritual ends. In providing for such freedom, no ecclesiastical group or denomination should be favored by the state more than others. Civil government being ordained of God, it is the duty of Christians to render loyal obedience thereto in all things not contrary to the revealed will of God. The church should not resort to the civil power to carry on its work. The gospel of Christ contemplates spiritual means alone for the pursuit of its ends. The state has no right to impose penalties for religious opinions of any kind. The state has no right to impose taxes for the support of any form of religion. A free church in a free state is the Christian ideal, and this implies the right of free and

unhindered access to God on the part of all men and the right to form and to propagate opinions in the sphere of religion without interference by the civil power.

*Genesis 1:27; 2:7; Matthew 6:6-7,24; 16:26; 22:21; John 8:36; Acts 4:19-20; Romans 6:1-2; 13:1-7; Galatians 5:1,13; Philippians 3:20; 1 Timothy 2:1-2; James 4:12; 1 Peter 2:12-17; 3:11-17; 4:12-19.*

## **XVIII. The Family**

God has ordained the family as the foundational institution of human society. It is composed of persons related to one another by marriage, blood, or adoption.

Marriage is the uniting of one man and one woman in covenant commitment for a lifetime. It is God's unique gift to reveal the union between Christ and His church and to provide for the man and the woman in marriage the framework for intimate companionship, the channel of sexual expression according to biblical standards, and the means for procreation of the human race.

The husband and wife are of equal worth before God, since both are created in God's image. The marriage relationship models the way God relates to His people. A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. He has the God-given responsibility to provide for, to protect, and to lead his family. A wife is to submit herself graciously to the servant leadership of her husband even as the church willingly submits to the headship of Christ. She, being in the image of God as is her husband and thus equal to him, has the God-given responsibility to respect her husband and to serve as his helper in managing the household and nurturing the next generation.

Children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord. Parents are to demonstrate to their children God's pattern for marriage. Parents are to teach their children spiritual and moral values and to lead them, through consistent lifestyle example and loving discipline, to make choices based on biblical truth. Children are to honor and obey their parents.

*Genesis 1:26-28; 2:15-25; 3:1-20; Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 6:4-9; Joshua 24:15; 1 Samuel 1:26-28; Psalms 51:5; 78:1-8; 127; 128; 139:13-16; Proverbs 1:8; 5:15-20; 6:20-22; 12:4; 13:24; 14:1; 17:6; 18:22; 22:6,15; 23:13-14; 24:3; 29:15,17; 31:10-31; Ecclesiastes 4:9-12; 9:9; Malachi 2:14-16; Matthew 5:31-32; 18:2-5; 19:3-9; Mark 10:6-12; Romans 1:18-32; 1 Corinthians 7:1-16; Ephesians 5:21-33; 6:1-4; Colossians 3:18-21; 1 Timothy 5:8,14; 2 Timothy 1:3-5; Titus 2:3-5; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 3:1-7.*

## **By-Laws**

### **Article I. Membership**

Section A. Receiving members-Any person professing faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and giving evidence of a change of heart and a Christian life may present himself or herself at any worship service of the church and be voted in by the members present. A person may be received into the church in the following ways:

1. Candidate for Baptism - He or She professes Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and is received into the full fellowship of the church following baptism by immersion.
2. Letter - A candidate is received upon promise of a letter from another church of like faith and order and received into full fellowship when the letter is received.
3. Statement - A candidate is received upon statement that he or she has been baptized by immersion, trusts Christ as his or her personal Saviour, holds to beliefs and doctrines according to Green Valley Baptist Church, and is satisfied with his or her baptism.

4. **Restoration** - He or She is restored to the fellowship of the church upon confession of his or her sins and profession of godly sorrow for his or her transgressions.
5. **New Member Orientation** - As part of the requirements for membership of Green Valley Baptist, every new member will be encouraged to attend new member orientation classes and will be given a copy of the church constitution and by-laws with a copy of the Baptist Faith and Message of June 14, 2000.

**Section B.** Membership will be discontinued with the church in the following ways:

1. **Request for letter** - When a member applies for membership in another church of like faith and order and that church requests a letter of membership, this church may in a business meeting grant the letter.
2. **Joins a church of different faith and order** - When a member joins a church of different faith and order, his or her membership in this church will terminate. If requested in writing by the person or by the church, this church will furnish information as to membership and standing.
3. **Unchristian-like conduct** - A member may be dismissed for conduct by a vote of the church at a business meeting provided the scripture teachings of Matthew 18 have been followed.
4. **Death**-Following the death of a member, the church clerk shall remove his or her name from the church roll.

### **Section C. Voting Rights**

1. Members who are sixteen years of age or older may act and vote in the deliberations of this church.
2. Members who have not been persistent in maintaining their covenant with this church by failing to “sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines” as evidenced by consistent absence for six months, without providential hindrance, shall not be allowed to vote or hold an office in the church.
3. Inactive non-resident members: Members moving residence from this church field and not carrying out the covenant to unite with some other church within one year shall be carried on an inactive non-resident roll. When such member’s letter is requested, it shall be granted as a letter of dismissal with an explanation of his or her inactive non-resident status.
4. An affirmative vote of two-thirds of the members present shall be required for all actions conducted in a business meeting, except when selecting or dismissing a pastor as stated in article 3 section A items 2 and 3.

### **Article II. Organizations and Meetings**

1. Worship – The church shall meet regularly each Sunday morning and evening for preaching, instruction, evangelism, and worship of the Almighty God, and shall meet on Wednesday evening for prayer and Bible study. These meetings shall be conducted under the direction of the pastor.

2. **Sunday School/Bible Study** - There shall be a Sunday School, divided into departments and classes for all ages and conducted under the supervision of a Sunday School Director, for the study of God's Word.
3. **Discipleship Training** - This program shall serve as the training unit of the church. Its tasks shall be to train church members to perform the functions of the church; to train church leaders; to orient new church members; to teach Christian theology, Christian ethics, Christian history, and church polity and organization; and to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church and denomination. Discipleship training shall be conducted under the direction of a general director.
4. **Church Music Program** - There shall be a church music program consisting of the music director, choir, song leader, and musicians. This group shall work in co-operation with the pastor.
5. **Brotherhood** - There shall be a Brotherhood organization. The tasks are to lead all men, young men, and boys to participate in missions, and to provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the church which includes the Royal Ambassadors (R. A.'s).
6. **Women's Missionary Union** - There shall be a Woman's Missionary Union organization. The tasks are to lead all women, young women, and girls to participate in missions; to provide organization and leadership for special mission projects of the church and for Girls in Action (G. A.'s) and Mission Friends; and to provide and interpret information regarding the work of the church. The organization shall elect its own officers to correspond with the Sunday School year.

7. **The Lord's Supper** - The church shall observe the Lord's Supper quarterly, unless otherwise scheduled by the church. The observance may alternate between the morning and evening worship services. The pastor and deacons shall administer the Lord's Supper, deacons being responsible for the physical preparations. Upon request from a church member, deacons and the pastor are available to administer the Lord's Supper to individuals away from the church premises.
8. **Baptism** - This church shall receive for baptism any person who has received Jesus Christ as Savior by personal faith, who professes him publicly at any worship service, and who indicates a commitment to follow Christ as Lord.
  - (1) Baptism shall be by immersion in water.
  - (2) The pastor or whomever the church shall authorize shall administer baptism. The deacons shall assist in the preparation for and the observance of baptism.
  - (3) Baptism shall be administered as an act of worship during any worship service of the church.
  - (4) A person who professes Christ and is not baptized after a reasonable length of time shall be counseled by the pastor and/or staff or deacons. If negative interest is ascertained on the part of the candidate, he shall be deleted from those awaiting baptism.
9. **Regular Business Meetings** - Regular church business meeting shall be held quarterly or as needed under the direction of the chairman of the deacons or his designee.
10. **Notice of Called Business Meeting** - The church may conduct called business meetings to consider matters of special nature and significance. A one-week notice must be given for the specially called business meeting

unless extreme urgency renders such notice impractical. The notice shall include the subject, the date, the time, and the place; it must be given in such a manner that all resident members have opportunity to know of the meeting.

11. Quorum - The quorum consists of 20 members who attend the business meeting and who are eligible to vote.

12. Parliamentary Rule - Any issue not specified in the constitution and by-laws will be settled by Robert's Rules of Order, Revised.

### **Article III. Church Officers Program Leaders**

The officers of the church shall be as follows: Pastor, Associate Pastor, Clerk, Treasurer, Sunday School Director, Discipleship Training Director, Music Director, Deacons, and Trustees.

#### **Section A. Senior Pastor**

1. Duties - It is the duty of the pastor to "equip the saints for the work of the ministry" (Ephesians 4:11) by preaching and teaching the Word of God, by overseeing the church's functioning, and by providing pastoral care to the church's membership. The pastor will have charge of the stated services of public worship and will administer the ordinances (the Lord's Supper and Baptism). The pastor will work with the deacons in leading the church in the fulfillment of its mission; he will be an ex-officious member of all church committees, boards, and organizations. If the pastor's position becomes vacant, the chairman of deacons will fulfill those committee duties. The pastor will visit the sick and infirm members of the congregation and will perform such other duties as usually pertain to that office.

2. Call - Whenever a vacancy occurs, a Pastor Search Committee shall be elected by the church to secure a pastor, and its recommendation will constitute a nomination. The committee shall consist of the chairman of deacons and four others elected by the church. No more than one of those elected may be a deacon. The Pastor Search Committee shall bring only one name at a time to the church for consideration. The election of a pastor shall take place at a special business meeting called for that purpose. Election shall be by an affirmative vote of  $\frac{3}{4}$  of those members present and voting.
  
3. Resignation - The pastor shall give at least 30 days (not to exceed 90 days) notice at the time of resignation before terminating his responsibilities as pastor. The pastor will be given the privilege of living rent-free in church owned parsonage for a period of time based on the recommendation of the deacons.
  
4. Dismissal - The pastor can be terminated by the church by a simple majority of those members present and voting at a special business meeting called for that purpose. The pastor will be given the privilege of living rent-free in church owned parsonage for a period of times based on the recommendation of the deacons. If the pastor is terminated by a vote of the church members, his services and compensation will be immediately terminated.

The pastor can be terminated by the church by a simple majority of those members present and voting at a special business meeting called for that purpose. The pastor will be given the privilege of living rent-free in church-owned parsonage for a period of time based on the recommendation of the deacons. If the pastor is terminated by a vote of the church members, his services and compensation will be immediately terminated.

## **Section B. Associate Pastor**

1. It is the duty of the Associate Pastor to assist the Senior Pastor. In addition, the Associate Pastor will have the responsibility of the children and youth ministry. He will be an ex-officious member of all children and youth committees.
2. If a vacancy occurs and the church body deems it necessary to fill the position, the personnel committee will begin the process in accordance with the personnel manual.
3. The Senior Pastor shall annually evaluate the Associate Pastor. Any serious issues that arise will be brought to the Personnel Committee for review according to the personnel manual.

## **Section C. Deacons**

1. Election - The church shall elect and ordain deacons as it deems wise and expedient. The number shall be maintained in at least the ratio of one deacon to each multiple of fifty members, except that there shall always be a minimum of three deacons. To choose, the church shall elect two persons, not deacons, who shall serve with the pastor, the chairman of deacons and one other deacon as a committee to consider, interview, and examine potential candidates in accordance with the instruction of I Timothy 3:8-13. Subsequent to their investigation, the deacon selection committee shall recommend to the church the number of qualified persons necessary to fill existing vacancies.

2. **Plan of Service - Deacons** shall serve for a four-year term. At the end of the term, the deacon must be reaffirmed by the church members. The purpose of this procedure is to provide a process whereby the deacons are reaffirmed by the church members for continued service or replaced as the church members direct.

Initially, a random drawing will be used to provide the succession of the deacons' terms. The term for the first four names drawn will end the first Sunday in March 2010; at that time the names of those deacons will come before the church members for a reaffirmation vote. An affirmative vote of two thirds of the members present shall be required to place the deacon back in active service. If the deacon is not reaffirmed by a two-thirds vote, then the guidelines in Section C, Article 1, shall be followed. The term for the next four names will end the first Sunday in March 2010.

3. **Duties -** In accordance with the meaning of the Word and the practice of the New Testament, deacons are to be the servants of the church. They shall have only powers and authority as the church shall grant them. Their particular duties are as follows:

- a) They are to be zealous to guard the unity of spirit within the church in the bonds of peace.
- b) Representing the church body, they shall serve as a council to advise and to confer with the pastor on all matters pertaining to the welfare and work of the church. With the pastor, they are to consider and formulate plans for the constant effort and progress of the church in all things pertaining to the saving of souls, the development of Christians, and the extension and growth of the Kingdom of God. If serious issues arise which cannot be resolved, the deacons may take action up to and including the request of the immediate resignation of the pastor. If the conflicts are not resolved, the issues will be taken to the church body.

- c) By proper organization and method among themselves, they are to establish and maintain personal fraternal relations with, and inspiring oversight of, the members of the church.
- d) They are to seek to know the physical needs, as well as the moral and spiritual struggles of the brethren and sisters, and to serve the whole church in relieving, encouraging, and developing of all who are in need.
- e) To counsel with the pastor by such methods as the Holy Spirit may direct in accordance with the teachings of the New Testament, they are to have oversight of the discipline of the church. In this they are to be always guided by the principles set forth in Matthew 18:15-17, I Corinthians 5:9-13, and I Thessalonians 5:12-14, and shall be free to call upon any member of the church to aid in disciplinary action.
- f) They shall, besides the foregoing, perform any other duties that the church may assign them.
- g) At the first meeting of the new year, a chairman, vice-chairman, and secretary of the board of deacons shall be elected. All deacon meetings will be under the supervision of the deacon chairman. The deacon secretary shall keep proper minutes of all deacon meetings.
- h) In case of illness or inability of the pastor, subject to advice from and conference with him when possible, the deacons will serve as a pulpit supply committee.

## **Section C. Clerk**

The clerk of the church shall keep, in a suitable book, a record of all the actions of the church, except as otherwise herein provided. He or She is responsible for keeping a register of the names of members, with dates of admission, dismissal, or death, together with record of baptisms. He or She shall issue letters of dismissal voted by the church, preserve on file all communication and written official reports, and give legal notice of all meeting where such notice is necessary, as indicated in these by-laws. All church records are church property and should be filed in the church office when one is maintained.

## **Section D. Treasurer**

The treasurer of the church shall be elected annually at the annual church business meeting. It shall be the duty of the treasurer to receive, preserve, and pay out, upon receipt of approved purchases signed by authorized personnel, all money, of things of value paid or given to the church, keeping at all times an itemized account of all receipts and disbursements. The treasurer shall make a monthly detailed statement to the church (at the business conference) of all receipts and disbursements and other pertinent facts pertaining to the financial status of the church.

Upon rendering the annual account at the end of each fiscal year, and upon its acceptance and approval by the church, the records shall be kept on file by the treasurer who shall keep and preserve the account as a part of the permanent record of the church.

The treasurer shall be bonded in such amounts as the church shall designate. The treasurer shall understand the confidentiality of his or her work and will keep all records of individuals confidential. The term of office shall be one year.

### **Section E. Sunday School Director**

This person shall have the oversight of the entire school and shall administer it with aid of a council consisting of the pastor, general officers, and age group directors. The term of office shall be one year.

### **Section F. Discipleship Training Director**

This person shall have oversight of the entire training program, on-going programs, short term training, and new-member orientation. A Training Council shall include the director, pastor, age group leaders, and new-member leader. The term of office shall be one year.

### **Section G. Music Director**

This person shall coordinate the music program with various parties of the music program and the pastor. The term of office shall be one year.

### **Section H. Trustees**

At least three trustees elected by the church and confirmed by the Circuit Court of Russell County will hold the church property. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, or transfer any property without specific

vote of the church authorizing each action. It shall be the function of the trustees to affix their signatures to legal documents involving the sale, mortgaging, or purchase of property or other legal documents where the signatures of the trustees are required. Each trustee shall serve at the pleasure of the church until his resignation.

### **Article III. Church Staff**

#### **Section A. Senior Pastor**

See Article 3 Church officers section A

#### **Section B. Associate Pastor**

See article 3 Church officers section B

#### **Section C. Church Secretary**

The church secretary shall perform secretarial duties as required by the pastor. The senior pastor shall annually evaluate the church secretary. Any serious issues that arise will be brought to the Personnel Committee for review according to the personnel manual.

### **IV. Other Positions**

#### **Section A. Financial Secretary**

The financial secretary shall be responsible for recording tithes and offerings for both the Sunday morning and Sunday evening worship services.

## **Section : B. Ushers**

The ushers are to greet people as they enter and leave the church, seat people at the proper time, provide bulletins, receive offerings, and/or other materials at the time of seating. The ushers will attend to the needs of the congregation and the pastor.

## **Sections C: Sunday School Teachers and Assistants**

The Sunday School teachers and assistants, under the direction of the Sunday School Director, shall teach the biblical revelation, lead in reaching all prospects for the church, and lead all church members to worship, witness, learn, and minister daily.

## **Article V: Church Committees**

The necessary committees and their duties for the work of the church shall be approved by the church. The members of the committees shall be printed each year with a description of their duties when new committees are elected and announced. Committees shall be added or deleted by vote of the church upon recommendation by the Church Council or the Deacon Body.

### **Section A: Committee on Committees**

The Committee on Committees shall be recommended by the pastor and the chairman of deacons and this recommendation shall be given to the church at the business meeting in September for approval.

1. This committee shall consist of at least five members.
2. It shall be the duty of this committee to determine the committees needed and outline their responsibilities and duties. They shall also nominate, at the

end of December business meeting, all church committee members. Other nominations or substitutions may be heard from the floor. All church committee members shall be members of Green Valley Baptist Church.

3. Each church committee shall have a designated number of members elected for one-year terms. These members may succeed themselves on the committee.
4. The Committee on Committees recommends the chairman of each committee. The chairman is elected for one year. At the first committee meeting the committee shall elect a vice-chairman and a secretary.
5. Vacancies which occur during the year shall be filled by recommendation to the church by the Committee on Committees. The Committee on Committees shall bring a nomination of an individual at a business meeting of the church. Other nominations may be heard from the floor.

### **Section B: Nominating Committee**

The Committee on Committees shall nominate a Church Nominating committee which consists of at least three members. The list of these nominees shall be given to the church to be voted upon at the September business meeting. Their term of office shall be the church year from October 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>.

1. This Church Nominating Committee shall bring to the June business meeting nominations for the General Director of the Sunday School, Director of Women's Missionary Union and Director of Baptist Brotherhood. After their election these three shall also become members of the Church Nominating Committee.

2. The Church Nominating Committee shall then be charged with the responsibility of nominating all church officers with the exception of those on a called status with the church and church committees. They shall bring their nominations to the church at the September business meeting.

### **Section C: Pastor Search Committee**

In the event the pulpit is vacated, in a called business meeting, the membership present shall nominate members to serve as a Pastor Search Committee. This shall be announced on Sunday, during the regular morning service. It will be voted upon the following Sunday. The four receiving the most votes will form that committee; no more than one of the elected members may be a deacon. The chairman of deacons will be the fifth member of the committee.

It will be the duty of the Pastor Search Committee, upon a vacated pulpit, to seek, qualify, and report back to the church their findings and recommendations.

### **Article VI. Fiscal Year**

The fiscal year of Green Valley Baptist Church shall begin on January 1<sup>st</sup> and end on December 31<sup>st</sup>.

### **Article VII. Amendments**

Changes in this constitution and by-laws may be made at any business meeting of the church, provided such amendments have been presented at a prior business meeting, and copies of the proposed amendment have been made available to each member present. Amendments to the constitution shall be by two-thirds vote of all the members of the church present and entitled to vote; amendments to the by-laws shall be by a two-thirds vote of the members present and voting.