

# **Constitution of the Bay Area Baptist Association**

Adopted 10/22/66; Last Revised 10/11/2020

## **ARTICLE I – NAME**

The name of this autonomous non-profit corporation is the Bay Area Baptist Association, hereafter referred to as the “Association.”

## **ARTICLE II – LOCATION**

The Association is a family of Southern Baptist congregations that serve the Mid-Michigan Bay Region with the gospel of Jesus Christ. The Association primarily serves the counties of Arenac, Bay, Clare, Gladwin, Gratiot, Huron, Isabella, Midland, Saginaw, Sanilac, and Tuscola.

## **ARTICLE III – COOPERATION WITH NATIONAL AND STATE ENTITIES**

The Association voluntarily cooperates with the Baptist State Convention of Michigan (BSCM), the Southern Baptist Convention (SBC) and other entities that help it to elicit, combine and direct the energies of its people and churches in the most effective manner. All cooperating churches are encouraged to support the Cooperative Program in addition to the Associational Program and to participate in BSCM and SBC events. The Association enables cooperating churches to have an active part in the programs of the BSCM and the SBC.

## **ARTICLE IV – PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Association is to assist cooperating churches to equip, encourage and engage their members in making, maturing and mobilizing Christian disciples (Matthew 28:19-20), which we understand to include the promotion of missions, evangelism, discipleship training, stewardship and harmonious fellowship.

## **ARTICLE V – DOCTRINE**

The Association adopts as its confession of faith the Baptist Faith and Message adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention, June 14, 2000. Those churches who were in cooperation with the Association prior to October 13, 2007 may alternatively choose the Baptist Faith and Message statement as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention on May 9, 1963 if they desire.

Our statement of faith does not exhaust the extent of our beliefs. The Bible itself, as the inspired and infallible Word of God that speaks with final authority concerning truth, morality, and the proper conduct of mankind, is the sole and final source of all that we believe. For purposes of the Association’s faith, doctrine, practice, policy and discipline, our Executive Board is the Association’s final interpretive authority on the Bible’s meaning and application.

## **ARTICLE VI – MARRIAGE, GENDER, AND SEXUALITY**

The Association affirms that God wonderfully and immutably creates each person as male or female. These two distinct, complementary genders together reflect the image and nature of God (Genesis 1:26-27). Rejection of one’s biological sex is a rejection of the image of God within that person.

We believe that the term “marriage” has only one meaning: the uniting of one man and one woman in a single, exclusive union, as delineated in Scripture (Genesis 2:18-25). We believe that God intends sexual intimacy to occur only between a man and a woman who are married to each other (1 Corinthians 6:18; 7:2-5; Hebrews 13:4). We

believe that God has commanded that no intimate sexual activity be engaged in outside of a marriage between a man and a woman.

We believe that any form of sexual immorality (including adultery, fornication, homosexual behavior, bisexual conduct, bestiality, incest and use of pornography) is sinful and offensive to God (Matthew 15:18-20; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10).

We believe that to preserve the function and integrity of the Association's cooperating churches as local expressions of the Body of Christ and to provide a biblical role model to the cooperating churches and the community, it is imperative that all persons employed by Association in any capacity, or who serve as volunteers, agree to and abide by this Statement on Marriage, Gender, and Sexuality (Matthew 5:16; Philippians 2:14-16; 1 Thessalonians 5:22).

We believe that God offers redemption and restoration to all who confess and forsake their sin, seeking His mercy and forgiveness through Jesus Christ (Acts 3:19-21; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11).

We believe that every person must be afforded compassion, love, kindness, respect and dignity (Mark 12:28-31; Luke 6:31). Hateful and harassing behavior or attitudes directed toward any individual are to be repudiated and are not in accord with Scripture nor the doctrines we hold.

#### **ARTICLE VII – AMENDMENTS**

Changes or amendments to this Constitution may be made by: (a) Writing the cooperating churches and chapels at least sixty (60) days prior to the Annual Meeting, (b) Presenting the proposed amendment in writing to the Messengers at least one (1) session before the vote is taken and (c) Approval by a three-fourths (3/4) vote of the Messengers present and voting.