



## CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS

Revised October 15, 2023 At the UOVBA Annual Messengers Meeting

### Article I- Name and Composition

This body shall be called the Upper Ohio Valley Baptist Association and shall be composed of cooperating Southern Baptist churches in this geographical area.

### Article II- Purpose

The purpose of this body shall be to assist the churches to fulfill the divine commission and the functions which God has entrusted to them; and to promote cooperation and fellowship.

### Article III – Declaration of Faith

“The Baptist Faith and Message,” as adopted by the Southern Baptist Convention of June 14, 2000, and printed in tact form, shall constitute the articles of faith for the Upper Ohio Valley Baptist Association.

### Article IV – Membership

Section 1. This body at its annual meeting shall be composed of messengers elected from churches of the association on the basis of five (5) from each with a membership of 100 or less. There shall be one additional messenger for each 100 additional members, not to exceed a total of ten (10). These messengers shall be identified by associational messenger’s cards which shall be required at the time of registration.

#### Section 2.

- a. Churches desiring to affiliate with the association may be received under the watch-care of the association at any executive board meeting. In order to be considered, the petitioning church must have at least three (3) members present in addition to the pastor and must submit the following documents to the association:
  - 1) A written request indicating their desire to be received into the fellowship of this association.
  - 2) A copy of the minutes of the business in which the church voted to make this request.
  - 3) A signed statement demonstrating that the pastor and church are in full agreement with the latest revision of the Baptist Faith and Message
  - 4) A copy of their constitution and by-laws.
  - 5) A letter of recommendation from a sponsoring church. In the event that there was no sponsoring church, a statement shall be made in writing as to the reasons for lack of sponsorship.
  
- b. Upon approval of the executive board, the petitioning church will be received under watch-care status for period of the one (1) year enjoying all privileges and responsibilities of any other member church, except voting rights. During this period, the Credentials Committee will evaluate the petitioning church as to their:
  - 1) Doctrinal fidelity
  - 2) Polity
  - 3) Cooperation and participation in the association

#### 4) Conduct

After one year of watch-care, the Credentials Committee can recommend the incoming church at the next associational executive board meeting. Upon recommendation and approval at the executive board meeting, they will at that time gain full membership.

Section 3. This body shall not in any way limit the autonomy of any church, but reserves the right to dissolve connections with any church that departs from the teachings of the New Testament as set forth in the declaration of "The Baptist Faith and Message," or becomes disorderly in practice, or fails to represent itself, either by messengers or letter, more than two successive sessions, for a period of 1 year, without sufficient reason, or upon request of a church for its withdrawal.

- a. When a church falls out of fellowship:
  - i. The executive board will have the authority to place the church under an inactive probation status with the association.
    1. Inactive Probation Status will:
      - a. remove voting privileges for a period of 1 year.
    2. Once a church is placed on an inactive probation status a certified letter will be sent to the church stating its options.
      - a. If the church would like to stay in cooperation with the Upper Ohio Valley Baptist Association, the pastor and messenger from the church will need to present a letter to the executive board stating this fact and attend the next executive board meeting.
      - b. At that meeting a vote from the executive board will be taken to approve or deny the request from the church, requiring a majority vote.
      - c. This church will also be given the option to remove itself from the association upon request from the church via letter to the Upper Ohio Valley Baptist Association accompanied by a copy of the church minutes signed by the church clerk.
    3. If a church receives a certified letter of probation status, and does not respond within 1 year of receiving the letter, the church will then be removed from the Upper Ohio Valley Baptist Association.

#### **Article V – Associational Annual Meetings**

The association shall convene annually in October at such times and places as recommended by the Time, Place, and Preacher Committee and adopted by the association.

#### **Article VI – Associational Year**

The associational year shall begin on October first (1) and end on September thirtieth (30). The fiscal year, however, shall begin on January first (1) and end on December thirty-first (31).

#### **Article VII – Officers**

Section 1. Elections: This body in the October session after nominations from the floor shall elect the following general officers.

- a. Moderator
- b. Vice-Moderator

Section 2. Qualifications: The moderator and the vice-moderator shall be members of an Upper Ohio Valley Baptist Association member church.

Section 3. Installations and terms: These officers shall be installed at the close of the October session at which they are elected and shall serve until their successors are duly elected and qualified. The moderator and vice-moderator shall not serve more than two terms in succession, nor shall they serve in any other elected office of the association.

### Section 3. Duties.

- a. **Moderator:** It shall be the duty of the Moderator to preside over all meetings, and to serve as chairman of the executive board. The moderator shall prepare or approve the agendas for the regular meetings of the Executive Board, and Annual Meeting. He shall appoint, at the Annual meeting, the members of the Time, Place and Preacher Committee, and the Nominating Committee not to exceed three (3) members for each committee. He shall appoint all special committees as necessary. The moderator shall ensure that the associational missionary receives an annual evaluation during the August meeting of the Executive Board, at which time they shall also review the personnel evaluations prepared by the associational missionary for each regular employee of the association. Should it be necessary the moderator shall also serve as interim associational missionary until the association is able to call another missionary.
- b. **Vice-Moderator:** It shall be the duty of the vice-moderator to preside over any meeting in the absence of the moderator or at his request and to assist the moderator in any way possible.
- c. **Clerk:** It shall be the duty of the clerk of the association to take the minutes of all the proceedings of the annual meeting, to have the minutes printed and distributed to each church, and to keep a regular file of the printed minutes of each session of this body. The clerk shall serve as secretary of the executive board, recording the minutes of the proceedings of the board.
- d. **Historian:** The historian shall collect, keep and pass on to succeeding historians such record books, minutes, etc., that pertain to the association and state minutes, state Baptist papers, and associational bulletins.
- e. **Treasurer:** Shall be bonded and perform the following responsibilities:
  - 1) Set-up automatic payment accounts to (as much as practical) pay all monthly bills.
  - 2) Follow the following steps in making all other payments so that payment will be received prior to the due date.
    - a) All bills will be received at the associational office.
    - b) Associational secretary will notify the treasurer when bills are received.
    - c) Treasurer will review the bill, write a check to cover the bill and provide his/her signature as the first signature.
    - d) Treasurer will copy the check, attach the copy of the check to the original bill, and file them.
    - e) Treasurer will arrange for the second signature.
    - f) The bill will be paid after the second signature is secured.
    - g) Treasurer will record in a ledger all transactions.
    - h) Treasurer will balance the checkbook monthly.
    - i) Treasurer will make monthly reports and forward a copy to the associational office.

#### **Note:**

- 1) There will be a total of four people with authorization to sign checks. Half of these are to be located near the treasurer and the other half near the assistant treasurer.
  - 2) There will be an audit performed annually.
- f. **Assistant Treasurer:** will assume the responsibilities of the treasurer in the event the treasurer is unavailable.
  - g. **Associational Administrator:** will be responsible to:
    - 1) Receive all checks and cash.
      - a) Immediately stamp the checks with strict endorsement.
      - b) Record the checks and cash in the ledger.
      - c) Photocopy the checks and cash and place the copy in the file.
      - d) Write receipts for the checks and cash using receipt forms that provide a duplicate and send the original to the donator.

- e) File the copy of the receipts.
  - f) Fill out a triplicating deposit slip.
  - g) File the office copy.
  - h) Send the treasurer's copy to the treasurer.
  - i) Deposit the checks and cash with the banks deposit slip attached.
- 2) Report all monies received.
    - a) Monthly in the *Valley Voice*
    - b) Yearly in the associational annual
  - 3) Serve as the association clerk/historian.

**Note:**

- 1) The associational administrator will not write or sign any checks.
- 2) In the event the associational administrator is unable to perform the above responsibilities, the director of missions will appoint a person to handle these responsibilities.

- h. **Trustees:** Trustees shall be recommended by the nomination committee. There shall be three trustees, with each serving for a term of three years on a rotating basis: one person rotating off each year upon completion of that individual's three-year term. They shall serve from the close of the association's October session to the close of the next October session. They may also be permitted to serve multiple terms consecutively at the discretion of the nomination committee.

The trustees shall hold in trust the property of the association but shall have no personal interest or personal obligation relating to any association-approved transaction concerning such property. The function and responsibility of the trustees of this association shall be limited to the affixing of their signatures to legal documents involving the purchase, sale, mortgage, lease or rental of real property or other legal documents where the signature of trustees is required. They shall have no power to buy, sell, mortgage, lease, rent, or transfer any property without specific vote of this association or its executive board, authorizing and requesting each action. The trustees shall be in charge of repairs and upkeep of the property of the association unless otherwise provided for in these bylaws.

**Article VIII – Committees and Duties**

Section 1. Associational Council: The associational council consists of all associational officers, ministry directors, and committee chairpersons.

- a. Duties: to plan, coordinate, evaluate, and calendar the work of the association. They shall also make annual budget requests to the finance committee.
- b. The Associational Council shall meet semiannually.

Section 2. Committees:

- a. The moderator shall appoint the Time, Place, and Preacher Committee, the Nomination Committee and other committees as deemed necessary.
  - i. Both the Time, Place, and Preacher Committee and the Nomination Committee will serve as standing committees.
- b. The finance committee will serve as a standing committee consisting of no fewer than three members: the treasurer, assistant treasurer, and director of missions (ex officio). Additional appointments to this committee may be made with executive board approval. The committee shall serve from the close of the association's October session to the close of the next October session.
- c. A personnel committee may be appointed by the executive board when employment vacancies arise in the association. The responsibilities of the personnel committee shall be limited to associational employment vacancies, and shall not extend to existing employees.

Section 3. Duties. Order has been arraigned to match the order listed in Section 2 above.

- a. The Time, Place and Preacher Committee shall recommend to the association the time and place of the next annual meeting, and the preacher and alternate for the next annual sermon in October.
- b. The Nomination Committee shall nominate for the following positions to be presented at the annual meeting for election: assistant clerk/historian, assistant treasurer, disaster relief team leader/coordinator, missions development/evangelism team leader, trailer & vehicle team leader, treasurer, trustees, Vacation Bible School team leader, worship team leader, youth ministry team leader and discipleship team leader. Team leaders may appoint teams consisting of members from cooperating churches within the association. Those named herein shall not serve more than one program area nor serve any other elected post of the association. Job descriptions not specified in these bylaws shall be kept by the associational office
- c. The Finance Committee shall gather budget requests from the associational council, no later than the August meeting of the Executive Board and formulate an annual associational budget to present to the October session for consideration.

#### **Article IX – Executive Board**

The work of the association shall be under the direction of an executive board, consisting of pastors of the churches and missions which compose the association, one member and an alternate member elected by each church and mission, and the Associational Council. The church and mission representative shall be reported on the uniform church letter to the association each year. Those present at a regular executive board meeting shall constitute a quorum. The executive board shall have the authority to request replacement of members who have moved or who absent themselves from three consecutive meeting without sufficient reason. Except during annual meeting, the executive board shall meet on even months on the dates calendared by the association.

#### **Article X – Amendments**

This constitution may be amended by two-thirds majority vote of the members present at any annual session, providing the proposed amendment shall have been distributed to the messengers in writing at the first session. It will then be voted upon at the second session of the annual session.

#### **Article XI – Rules of Decorum**

1. The association shall be opened and closed with prayer.
2. One person shall speak at a time, who shall rise and address the moderator.
3. The speaker shall confine himself to the subject under consideration.
4. No member shall be interrupted except by the moderator, when he shall violate the rules of order.
5. There shall be no improper laughing or whispering during the associational meetings.
6. Names of messengers shall be enrolled by the clerk and called as often as the association may require.
7. The moderator may speak on any subject when the assistant or some other member is in the chair, but shall have no vote except in case of a tie.
8. Every motion properly made and seconded by authorized messengers shall be considered. The motion shall be written and placed in the hands of the clerk following action by the body.
9. Visiting members invited to seat with us may speak on any subject but shall not vote, make or second motions.
10. The association will have the right to make an order limiting the time of discussion.

#### **Article XII – Printing of the Constitution**

This constitution, in its entirety, must be printed in the associational annual at least once every three years. In the event that the association, in annual session, shall adopt any amendments, this constitution with the adopted amendments shall be printed in that year's annual.