

The Virginia Baptist Bible Fellowship

Constitution and By-Laws

Revised December 2006

THE VIRGINIA BAPTIST BIBLE FELLOWSHIP CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS

PREAMBLE

The State Fellowship shall be patterned in basic principles after the Baptist Bible Fellowship International. The paragraph incorporating convictions relative to the autonomy of local churches is herewith included:

“No article in this constitution or by-laws shall ever be interpreted in such a way as to infringe upon or jeopardize the absolute sovereignty of any and all local churches in fellowship with this organization, nor shall the property rights, the local missionary and practical policies, or the autonomy of any self-governing Fellowship church ever be endangered in any way by this constitution and by-laws or by the Fellowship as a whole.”

ARTICLE I

Name

The name of this body shall be known as “The Virginia Baptist Bible Fellowship.”

ARTICLE II

Purpose

The purpose of this fellowship shall be (1) to promote the formation of new Baptist churches in Virginia, (2) to provide fellowship for ministers and churches in Virginia, (3) and to promote evangelism and world missions.

ARTICLE III

Fellowship

SECTION 1

The basis of fellowship shall be that participating ministers must believe in and subscribe to the “Articles of Faith” as adopted by the Baptist Bible Fellowship International and to this constitution and by-laws herein set forth and to work together in a common cause of world-wide missionary endeavor.

SECTION 2

Recognized participation in this State Fellowship is an acceptance of Section 1, Article III, as well as regular attendance at the stated meetings and being actively engaged in its purpose, principles, and responsibilities.

ARTICLE IV

Meetings

SECTION 1 DATE AND FORMAT:

The Virginia Baptist Bible Fellowship, VBBF, shall meet on the third Tuesday of each month. The meetings will be held in churches that have offered invitations. All invitations are to be submitted to the officers. A business meeting will be held at each Fellowship meeting.

SECTION 2 SELECTION OF SPEAKERS:

- A. All speakers will be selected by the officers in coordination with host pastor.
- B. Selection of speakers must be made at least two months in advance.

SECTION 3 MODERATOR:

The state chairman will be the moderator of the fellowship and business meeting.

SECTION 4 HOST CHURCH:

The philosophy involving a meeting of the VBBF is that the host church is to provide the buildings, music, etc.; and that it is a meeting of the VBBF rather than the church. The church is only allowing the Fellowship to use its facilities to have a meeting of pastors to carry on the business of establishing NT churches, building and promoting a spirit of steadfastness and victory as co-workers in Christ.

ARTICLE V

Voting Rights

The pastor of each fellowship church shall have one vote. The vote shall be cast by the church's pastor or, in his absence, by his authorized alternate. The church must support the fellowship financially and with attendance for their representative to vote.

ARTICLE VI

Fellowship Officers

SECTION 1 QUALIFICATIONS:

- A. All officers shall be pastors of regular-supporting churches of the Virginia Baptist Bible Fellowship; this is financial and attendance support.
- B. All officers shall accept, believe, and practice the "Articles of Faith" of the Baptist Bible Fellowship International and agree to this constitution and by-laws.
- C. All officers shall be expected to attend all monthly meetings.

SECTION 2 RESTRICTIONS:

No officer shall hold more than one elected office concurrently.

SECTION 3 OFFICERS:

A. Duties and Functions: The general duties will be to attend each monthly Fellowship meeting, attend each Officers' Business Meeting, and be involved in Fellowship procedures.

B. Officers

1. Chairman

- a) Term in Office: The term of state chairman shall be two years.
- b) The chairman shall preside at all business meetings.
- c) He shall attend all National Fellowship meetings and all special meetings of state representatives/chairmen.
- d) He shall represent the Virginia Fellowship, our views and interests, and be our voice in expressing our opinions on national and state matters concerning our Fellowship.
- e) He shall report to our State Fellowship all information pertaining to matters discussed and action taken in meetings he has attended.
- f) He shall be considered ex-officio member of all committee and agencies of this fellowship.
- g) In case of an emergency where immediate action is necessary, the chairman may, with concurrence of the officers proceed with the necessary action. A report on said action will be given at the next business meeting.

2. Vice-Chairman

- a) Term in Office: The term of state vice-chairman shall be two years.
- b) The vice-chairman shall act for the chairman in his absence and on all necessary occasions, assisting him wherever and whenever possible in matters pertaining to the Fellowship.
- c) He will be responsible to contact the host pastor to discuss the speakers recommended by the officers. He will then notify the speakers the officers have selected.
- d) Application for support will be sent to the vice-chairman.

3. Secretary

- a) The secretary shall keep all records and minutes in behalf of the Fellowship.
- b) The secretary shall send out notices of each meeting to those who are interested.

- c) He shall pass records along to any newly-elected secretary.
- d) Records shall include the minutes, constitution, mail list, correspondence, and list of speakers at the meeting.

4. Treasurer

- a) The treasurer shall receive, deposit, and disburse all funds, as directed by the Fellowship pastors, submitting monthly and annual reports.
- b) He shall pass all financial records along to any newly elected treasurer.

ARTICLE VII

Fellowship Business

SECTION 1 MONTHLY OFFICERS' MEETING:

The officers shall meet separately sometime during each monthly Fellowship meeting. The officers will discuss old and new business and act on any necessary motions. All requests for financial support are to be made to the officers at this time. If a vacancy has occurred in any office, the officers will recommend a replacement until the next election of that position. All motions passed by the officers shall be recommended to the body for vote. The chairman shall present all recommendations from the officers' meeting to the body at the business meeting.

SECTION 2 MONTHLY BUSINESS MEETING:

At each monthly Fellowship meeting, a business meeting shall be held. Requests for financial support will be acted upon at this time.

SECTION 3 ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING:

The Annual Business Meeting of the Fellowship will be held the third Tuesday of November, at which time the yearly election of officers will be held.

SECTION 4 FELLOWSHIP BUSINESS REIMBURSEMENT:

In the performance of Fellowship business, expenses may be involved. Any church or pastor in the carrying out of authorized Fellowship business is entitled to reimbursement. Expenses for travel, meals, and lodging for regularly-scheduled state and national meetings which pastors would normally attend will not be reimbursed. Receipts for said expenses should be given to the state treasurer for payment. The State Chairman, or his authorized substitute, shall be reimbursed for meals, lodging, and travel to the National Fellowship Meeting when the State Chairman and national officers have scheduled meetings. No officer shall be reimbursed for state

officers meetings.

SECTION 5 FINANCIAL SUPPORT:

In accordance with Article II of this constitution, the Fellowship will endeavor to provide money for the support of churches and pastors. The primary objective will be to assist in the establishment of new churches in Virginia. Pastors and churches receiving financial support will be expected to give reports at the monthly meeting as to the progress of the work. This report should be given by the pastor who is receiving support. However, if he cannot attend, he should send it by mail or give it to someone to read.

ARTICLE VIII

Church Planting Policies

SECTION 1 Our Objective

It is the intention of the men of the *Virginia Baptist Bible Fellowship* to effectively partner with sending churches in the planting and establishment of independent Baptist churches throughout the state of Virginia. We believe that God's great commission mandates the necessity of planting and establishing local New Testament churches. We believe it is our privilege and our duty, as the Virginia fellowship, to accept responsibility for Virginia. There is perhaps no greater use of our combined efforts and resources as a fellowship, than in assisting churches in the planting and establishing of new independent Baptist churches throughout our state of Virginia.

SECTION 2 OUR PROCESS

The VBBF Church Planter Policies provides assistance and support for Virginia church planters. The process includes a pre-application interview by which the church planter will gain greater understanding our the VBBF partners with the church planter and sending church. During this time the church planter submits his application to the VBBF Officers and they will determine whether or not to recommend this partnership to the fellowship. Upon approval there are Pre-Start Helps and Post-Start Helps. Please refer to The Church Planters Support Strategy for details of this process.

SECTION 3 OUR MULTI-PASTOR COMRADERY

The VBBF believes within the VBBF are great opportunities for pastors to share their unique gifts and resources in the church planting effort. Our fellowship is an invaluable resource for planting new churches in Virginia. We believe it is the local church that plants churches. Therefore, the VBBF will assume a support role. We will come alongside and partner with the sending/mentoring church and the church planter to provide assistance.

The VBBF church planter support strategy has been initiated based on the following key principles:

A. We have a clear focus, a clear objective; we desire to partner with, and support, local New Testament Baptist churches and church planters in the planting and establishing of local New Testament Baptist churches.

Matthew 16:18; Ephesians 5:25

B. We have the proper foundation on which to build; we, as independent Baptists, trace our heritage back to the foundation of the apostles, and of Jesus Christ Himself. Any assistance or church planter support from this fellowship will be provided to continue building on this, the proper foundation. I Corinthians 3:9-11; Ephesians 2:19-21

C. We have a commitment to accomplishing the task of church planting; we must be willing to invest of our time, talent, and treasure to be of any real support in this effort. Just as faith without works is dead, so is an agenda to plant churches without a commitment to do the work needed to accomplish the task. Galatians 6:9-10; James 1:22

D. We must support one another and participate in this great work, this great calling, this great opportunity; we recognize that our independent status restricts us from having authority over one another. It does not, however, restrict us from working together. Each of us is very unique and divinely gifted. It is when we work together that we are at our strongest. Ecclesiastes 4:9-12

E. We understandability accept the responsibility to reach Virginia with the gospel; we are committed to assisting sending/mentoring churches in planting and supporting new churches throughout Virginia. If the Virginia fellowship doesn't support church planting in Virginia, then who will? Acts 1:8

(This is an overview of the Church Planting Policies of the Virginia Baptist Bible Fellowship. The intent here is to only introduce our church planting strategy. All actions to partner with church planters and sending/mentoring churches will be in accordance to the entire church planting policy.)

ARTICLE IX

Abrogation

The adopting of this constitution shall abrogate all rules and regulations previously adopted by this fellowship.

ARTICLE X

Amendments

This constitution and by-laws may be amended at the annual meeting or a special meeting of the Virginia Baptist Bible Fellowship by a two-thirds vote of those present and voting. Special business meetings to amend the constitution must be called two months in advance.