

Constitution and Bylaws of the Leon Valley Baptist Church

ARTICLE I – LEON VALLEY BAPTIST CHURCH OF SAN ANTONIO, BEXAR COUNTY TEXAS, INCORPORATED

ARTICLE II - PURPOSE

This church, believing in the Bible as the inspired Word of God and as the SOLE authority for faith and practice, declares its purpose:

- a) To maintain regular services for public worship;
- b) To proclaim earnestly the Gospel message and to urge its personal acceptance, both privately and publicly;
- c) To cooperate heartily, by prayer, giving and service, in the effort of seeing the Gospel of Jesus Christ preached throughout the world;
- d) To pray for one another that we may ever live according to the will of God, as revealed in His Word;
- e) To promote Christian fellowship and friendship.

This church will teach and preach the truths generally as the Baptists through the years have taught, i.e.:

- a) The sufficiency and supremacy of the Bible in all things pertaining to faith and practice;
- b) The autonomy of the local church;
- c) A regenerate and baptized membership;
- d) The priesthood of every believer;
- e) The separation of church and state.

ARTICLE III - CHURCH COVENANT

Having been led, as we believe by the Spirit of God, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as our Savior and on the profession of our faith of the Holy Ghost, we do now, in the presence of God, angels, and this assembly, most joyfully enter into 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 knowledge, holiness and comfort; to promote its prosperity and spirituality; to sustain its worship, ordinances, discipline and doctrines; to give it a sacred preeminence over all institutions of human origin; to contribute cheerfully and regularly to the support of the ministry, the expenses of the church, the relief of the poor, and the spread of the Gospel through all nations.

We also engage to maintain family and private devotions; to religiously educate our children; to seek the salvation of our kindred and acquaintances; 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, drugs, pornography, and to be zealous in our efforts to advance the Kingdom of our Savior.

We further engage to watch over one another in brotherly love; to remember each other in prayer; to aid each other in sickness and distress; to cultivate Christian sympathy in feeling and courtesy in speech; to be slow to take offense but always ready for reconciliation, and mindful of the rule of our Savior to secure it without delay.

We moreover engage that when we remove from this place, we will as soon as possible, unite with a

church of like faith where we can carry out the spirit of this covenant and the principles of God's Word.

ARTICLE IV - ARTICLES OF FAITH

A fundamental Baptist is one who believes in a supernatural Bible which tells of a supernatural Christ, Who had a supernatural birth, Who spoke supernatural words, Who performed supernatural miracles, Who lived a supernatural life, Who died a supernatural death, Who rose in supernatural splendor, Who intercedes as a supernatural priest, and Who will one day return in supernatural glory to establish a supernatural kingdom on the earth.

Of The Scriptures

We believe that the Holy Bible was written by men supernaturally inspired; that it has truth without any error or contradiction and therefore is, and shall remain to the end of the age, the only complete and final revelation of the will of God to man; the supreme standard by which all human conduct, creeds, and opinions should be tried.

1. By "The Holy Bible," we mean that collection of sixty-six books from Genesis to Revelation which, as originally written, does not only contain and convey the word of God, but IS the very Word of God.
2. By "inspiration," we mean that the books of the Bible were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Spirit in such a definite way that their writings were supernaturally and verbally inspired and free from error, as no other writings have ever been or will ever be inspired.

II Timothy 3:16-17; II Peter 1: 19-21; Psalm 119:105, 160; Revelation 22:19.

Of The True God

We believe that there is one, and only one, living and true God, an infinite, intelligent spirit, 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 Spirit, equal in every divine perfection, and executing distinct but harmonious offices in the great work of redemption.

**Genesis 1:1, 25, 17:1; Exodus 20:2-3; ; Jeremiah 10:10; John 1:1;
I Timothy 3:16**

Of The Lord Jesus Christ

We believe in the deity and virgin birth of our Lord Jesus Christ; that He was begotten by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, not having human father, sinless in His life and is true God and true man; that He is man's only hope of salvation from sin, being the only mediator between God and man; that He died, was buried, and rose again the third day for our sins according to the Scriptures, that His return for His Church (the Body of Christ), which he will take with Himself into Heaven, is imminent and pretribulational; that He will return to this earth after the tribulation period to set up His millennial reign.

**Isaiah 7:14; Luke 1:35; John 10:30, 14:6; I Cor. 15:1-8;
I Thessalonians 4:13-18; I Timothy 2:5-6; Revelation 20:4-6.**

Of The Holy Spirit

We believe that the Holy Spirit is a divine Person, equal with the Father and the Son and of the same substance. We believe that the Holy Spirit is the true God; and that He convicts of sin, righteousness and judgment; bears witness to the Truth; is the agent of the new birth; and that He seals, endues, guides, teaches, witnesses to, sanctifies, and helps the believer; that He takes up His abode within the individual at the time of regeneration, and thus indwells every born-again believer; that He fills the believer for service upon each experience of surrender and dedication. We believe that the Holy Spirit testifies concerning Jesus Christ and never leads any person at any time contrary to the teaching of the Bible.

John 3:5-6; 14:26; 16:7-11; Acts 5:1-4;

We declare ourselves opposed to the "gifts of the Spirit" as exercised in the charismatic movement (also known as the Pentecostal movement), particularly the "Baptism of the Holy Spirit" and the speaking in tongues. In addition, we resist the notion of "divine healing" as practiced by the modern day healers.

We insist that the speaking in tongues was a special gift for the early apostolic church, and this special gift is not needed in our time. I Cor. 13:8; Acts 2:6.

We also maintain that God does not promise to heal everyone who is physically or mentally ill. We recognize His power to heal the ill and infirm but realize that healing is based on His divine will. II Cor. 12:7.

Of the Devil, or Satan

We believe that Satan was once holy and enjoyed Heavenly honors but through pride and ambition to be as the Almighty, fell and drew after him a great host of angels; that he is now the malignant prince of the power of the air and the unholy god of this world. We hold him to be man's great tempter, the enemy of God and His Christ, the accuser of the saints, the author of all false religions; the chief power back to the present apostasy; the lord of the antichrist, and the author of all the powers of darkness - destined, however, to final defeat at the hands of God's own Son, and to the judgment of an eternal justice in hell, a place prepared for him and his angels.

Isaiah 14:12; Ezekiel 28:14-17; Matt. 4:1-3, 25:41; John 14:30; Ephesians 2:2; Rev. 20:1-3, 10

Of Creation

We believe in the Genesis account of creation, and that it is to be accepted literally and not allegorically or figuratively; that man was created directly in God's own image and after His own likeness; that man's creation was not a matter of evolution or evolutionary change of species, or development through interminable periods of time from lower to higher forms; that all animal and vegetable life was made directly and God's established law was that they should bring forth only "after their kind." **Genesis 1:1-2, 25; Exodus 20:11; Nehemiah 9:6; Colossians 1:16-17; Hebrews 11:3.**

Of The Fall of Man

We believe that man was created in innocence under the law of his Maker but by voluntary transgression fell from his sinless and happy state, in consequence of which all mankind are now sinners, not by constraint, but of choice; and therefore, under just condemnation without defense or excuse.

Genesis 3:1-6; John 3:18, 36; Romans 3:10, 5:12.

Of The Atonement For Sin

We believe that the salvation of sinners is wholly of grace; through the mediatorial offices of the Son of God, who by 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 and vicarious atonement for our sins; that His atonement consisted not in setting us an example by His death as a martyr, but was the voluntary substitution of Himself in the sinner's place, the just dying for the unjust; Christ, the Lord, bearing our sins in His own body on the tree; that, having risen from the dead, He is now enthroned in Heaven.

Isaiah 53; John 3:16; Acts 15:11; Romans 3:24; II Corinthians 5:21; Ephesians 2:8-9; Philippians 2:7-8; Hebrews 2:14, 7:25; I Peter 2:24, 3:10;

I John 2:2, 4:10.

Of Grace in The New Creation

We believe that in order to be saved, sinners must be born again; that the new birth is a new creation in Christ Jesus; that it is instantaneous and not a process; that in the new birth the one dead in trespasses and in sin is made a partaker of the divine nature and receives eternal life, the free gift of God; that the new creation is brought about in a manner above our comprehension, not by culture, not by character, not by the will of man, but wholly and solely by the power of the Holy Spirit in connection with divine truth, so as to secure our voluntary obedience to the Gospel; that its proper evidence appears in the holy fruits of repentance and faith and newness of life. **John 1:12-13, 3:3-7; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:1;**

Colossians 2:13; II Cor. 5:17; II Peter 1:4; I John 5:1

Of Justification

We believe 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 gift of eternal life on principles of righteousness; that it is bestowed not in consideration of any works of righteousness we have done; but solely through faith in the Redeemer's blood, His righteousness is imputed unto us.

Acts 13:39; Romans 4:1-8, 5:1, 8:1; Titus 3:5-7.

We reject the "Hyper-Calvinist" view which says "God predestines individuals to Heaven or Hell." We believe this is a mere concession to the issue of "double predestination." The very act of choosing eternal life automatically excludes those who were not chosen. God does not "choose" or "will" that individuals should go to Hell.

II Pet. 3:9; I Tim. 2:4; Rev. 22:17.

Of Repentance and Faith

We believe that repentance and faith are solemn obligations, and also inseparable graces wrought in our souls by the quickening Spirit of God; thereby, being deeply convicted 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 confessing Him as our only and all-sufficient Saviour.

Mark 1:15; Luke 18:13; Acts 2:37-38, 20:21; Romans 10:9-13.

Of The Church

We believe that a Baptist Church is a congregation of baptized believers associated by a covenant of faith and fellowship of the Gospel, said church being understood to be the citadel and propagator of the Divine and Eternal Grace; observing the ordinances of Christ; governed by the laws; exercising the gifts, rights and privileges invested in them by His Word; that its officers of ordination are pastors or elders whose qualifications, claims and duties are clearly defined in the Scriptures, we believe the true mission of the church is found in the Great Commission: **first**, to make individual disciples; **second**, to build up the church; **third**, to teach and instruct as He has commanded. We do not believe in the reversal of this order; we hold that the local church has the absolute right of self-government, free from the interference of any hierarchy of individuals or organizations; and that the one and only superintendent is Christ through the Holy Spirit; that it is Scriptural for the true churches to cooperate with each other in contending for the faith and for the furtherance of the Gospel; that every church is the sole and only judge of the measure and method of its cooperation; on all matters of membership, of policy, of government of discipline, of benevolence, the will of the local church is final.

Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 2:41-42, 14:23;

I Cor. 5:11-13, 6:1-3, 16:1-2; II Cor. 8:23-24; Eph. 4:11-12;

I Timothy 1-13; 1 Peter 5:1-4.

Of Baptism And The Lord's Supper

We believe that Christian baptism is the immersion in water of a believer, in the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, with the authority of the local church, 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 privilege of a church relation and to the Lord's supper; in which believers, by the sacred use of bread and the fruit of the vine are to commemorate together the dying love of Christ; preceded always by solemn self-examination. *In the rare event that one has been saved and is ready for baptism but has not been given an opportunity to be baptized, they may participate in the Lord's Supper.* **Matthew 3:16, 28:19; John 3:23; Acts 2:41-42, 8:36-39; Romans 6:3-5; I Cor. 11:23-28.**

Of The Perseverance of The Saints

We believe that such only are real believers as endure unto 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 that they are kept by the power of God through faith unto eternal salvation. **John 8:31-32, 10: 28-29; Romans 8:28-39; Phil. 1:6; Col. 1:21-23; I Peter 1:15; I John 2:19.**

Of The Righteous And The Wicked

We believe 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 unbelief are in His sight wicked and under the curse, and this distinction holds among men both in and after death, in the everlasting felicity of the saved and the everlasting conscious suffering of the lost.

Malachi 3:18; Romans 6:17-23; Matt. 7:13-14; 25:34, 41; Luke 16:19-31.

Of Civil Government

We believe that civil government is of divine appointment, for the interest and good of human society; 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 coming Prince of the kings of the earth.

We believe that every human being is responsible to God alone in all matters of faith; that each church is independent and autonomous and must be free from interference by any ecclesiastical or political authority; that therefore church and state must be kept separate as having different functions, each fulfilling its duties free from the dictation or patronage of the other.

Romans 13:1-7; Matt. 22:21; Titus 3:1, I Peter 2:17; Acts 4:19-20; Acts 5:29; Daniel 3:17-18.

Of False Doctrines

We believe in the total and complete separation as taught in the Word of God from all forms of heresy and ecclesiastical apostasy. We believe the Scriptures teach that the Church is to: (1) try them, (2) mark them, (3) rebuke them, (4) have no fellowship with them, (5) withdraw ourselves from them, (6) receive them not, (7) have no company with them, (8) reject them, (9) separate itself from them.

I John 4:1; Rom. 16:17; Titus 1:13; Eph. 5:11; II Thes. 3:16; II John 10, 11; II Thes. 3:14; II Cor. 6:17.

Of Missions

The command to give the Gospel to the world is clear and unmistakable, and this Commission was given to the churches.

Matt. 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; John 20:21; Rom. 10:13-15.

Of the Grace of Giving

Scriptural giving is one of the fundamentals of the faith. We are commanded to bring our gifts into the storehouse (common treasury of the church) upon the first day of the week. We are commanded to bring the tithe into the common treasury of the church.

II Cor. 8:7; I Cor. 16:2; Mal. 3:10.