Constitution Of The

Ava General Baptist Church Inc.

P.O. Box 116

Located At The Corner Of S.E. 3rd Street And S.E. 3rd Avenue

Ava, Missouri 65608

**PREAMBLE**

For the more certain preservation and security of the principles of our faith and to the end that this body may be governed in an orderly manner and for the purpose of preserving the liberties inherent in each individual member of this church and the freedom of action this body with respect to its relation to other churches of the same faith, we do declare and establish this constitution.

**Name**

The name of this body shall be known as “Ava General Baptist Church Inc.”

**Purpose**

The purpose of this church shall be to follow the teachings of the OLD and NEW TESTAMENTS by:

1. Proclaiming the good news (GOSPEL) of the Kingdom of God.
2. Making Disciples.
3. Teaching the disciples to obey all commandments of our Lord.
4. Seeking the spiritual growth of the membership through prayer, worship, preaching of the Gospel, Christian Education and the continuous outreach of the ministry.

**Statements of Faith**

* 1. ***GOD***

We believe that there is only one true, living and eternal God and that the Godhead is revealed as Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

1. **One True and Eternal God:** Deuteronomy 6:4; 33:27; Jeremiah 10:10;

Matthew 3:15-16; 28:19; Mark 12:29; John 14:9-11; I Thessalonians 1:9; Timothy 1:17; 2:5; 6:7; Hebrews 1:1-13; 3:12

 B **The Godhead:**

1. **God as Father:** Genesis 1:1; Matthew 6:9; Ephesians 4:6
2. **God as Son:** Isaiah 9:6; Matthew 16:16; John 1:1; 3:14, 16; 14:28;

I Corinthians 15:28; Hebrews 1:18

* 1. **Virgin Birth of Jesus:** Matthew 1:18-25; Luke 1:26-38
1. **God as Holy Spirit:** John 14:16, 26; Acts 1:5, 8; 2:1-4; Romans 8:16
	1. ***The Bible***

We believe that the Holy Scriptures are the Old and New Testaments; the inspired and infallible Word of God and therein is found the only reliable guide of Christian faith and its conduct.

1. **The Inspired Revelation:** Luke 24:44-46; Romans 16:25-26; II Timothy 3:15-17;

Hebrews 1:1-2; II Peter 1:20-21

1. **The Infallible Word:** Isaiah 40:8; Luke 21:33; John 17:17; Titus 1:2; I Peter 1:25
2. **The Reliable Guide:** Deuteronomy 6:6-9; Psalms 19:7-10; 119:105; 140; John 5:39;

Acts 17:11-12; Romans 10:14-15; 15:14; II Timothy 3:16-17

* 1. ***Man***

We believe that God created man in his own image to bring Him honor through obedience and that when man disobeyed; he became a fallen and sinful creature, unable to save himself.

We believe that infants are in the covenant of God’s grace and that all persons become accountable to God when they reach a state of moral responsibility.

1. **Man’s Origin:** Genesis 1:26-27; 2:7; Psalms 8:5
2. **Man’s Purpose:** Genesis 1:28-31; 2:15-25; Isaiah 43:7
3. **Man’s Sin:** Genesis 3: 1-24; Psalms 51:5; Jeremiah 13:23;

Romans 1:18-3:23; 5:12-21; 7:1-25

1. **Man’s Accountability:** Matthew19:13-15; Romans 4:15; 5:13; 6:16;

Hebrews 11:24-26

* 1. ***Salvation***

We believe that salvation (regeneration, sanctification, justification and redemption) has been provided for all mankind through the redemptive work (life, death, resurrection, ascension and intercession) of Jesus Christ, and that this Salvation can be received only through repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

1. **Salvation:** Hebrews 5:9; 7:25; I Thessalonians 5:9; I Peter 1:9
2. **Regeneration:** John 3:3-8; 1:11-13; I Peter 1:23; Ephesians 2:1-10;

II Corinthians 5:17; II Peter 1:4; Titus 3:5

1. **Sanctification:** I Corinthians 1:30; Ephesians 5:26; Hebrews 10:9-10,29; 13:12; II Timothy 2:21; Romans 12:1-2; I Peter 1:2
2. **Justification:** Romans 3:20-24; 5:1-2; 18; 8:30-33; Acts 13:38-39;

I Corinthians 6:11; II Corinthians 5:21

1. **Redemption:** Matthew 20:28; Isaiah 53:6; Colossians 1:14; Titus 2:14;

I Peter 1:18-19; Revelation 5:9

1. **Christ Redemptive Work:** John 3:16; Romans 5:8; Hebrews 2:9; Revelation 22:17; II Peter 3:9; John 14:6; Acts 4:12; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-9
2. **Life and Death:** Romans 5:10; Hebrews 9:12-15; John 10:11; I John 3:16
3. **Resurrection:** Romans 4:25; I Peter 1:3; I Corinthians 15:14, 17
4. **Ascension:** Hebrews 4:14-16; 6:19-20; 9:24; 10:11-12
5. **Intercession:** Romans 8:34; Hebrews 9:15; Isaiah 53:12; I Timothy 2:5
6. **Repentance:** Isaiah 55:6-7; Luke 24:47; 13: 3-5; Acts 2:38; I Thessalonians 1:9-10
7. **Faith:** John 3:16-18; Hebrews 11:1; 6; I Peter 1:5
	1. ***Assurance and Endurance***

We believe that those that abide in Christ have the assurance of salvation. However, we believe that the Christian retains his freedom of choice; therefore, it is possible for him to turn away from God and be finally lost.

1. **Assurance:** Matthew 28:20; I Corinthians 10:13; Hebrews 5:9
2. **Endurance:** Matthew 10:33; Luke 9:62; Colossians 1:23; Revelations 2:10-11; 3:3-5
3. **Warnings:** John 15:6; Romans 11:20-23; Galatians 5:4; Hebrews 3:12; 10:26-29; II Peter 2:20-21
4. **Finally Lost:** John 15:6; I Corinthians 9:27; Hebrews 6:4-6
	1. ***Christian Duties***

We believe that Christians should live faithfully by serving in and through the local church, praying diligently, witnessing earnestly, practicing tolerance, showing loving kindness, giving as God prospers and conducting themselves in such a way as to bring glory to God.

1. **Faithful Service:** I Chronicles 16:11; Psalms 101:6; Matthew 28:18-20; John 15:7-14; Romans 12:14; I Corinthians 13; II Corinthians 8,9; Ephesians 4,6; Hebrews 12:1
2. **Prayer:** II Chronicles 7:14; Daniel 6:10; Matthew 6:1-13; 26:41; Luke 18:1; I Thessalonians 5:17
3. **Witnessing:** Matthew 28:19-20; Acts 1:8
4. **Tolerance:** Matthew 18:15-17; Luke 10:27; Galatians 5:22-23; II Peter 1:5-9
5. **Loving Kindness:** John 13:35; I John 3:11; 4:7, 11-12
6. **Financial Stewardship:** Matthew 23:23; I Corinthians 16:2; II Corinthians 9:6-7
	1. ***The Church***

We believe that the Church Universal is the Body of Christ, the fellowship of all believers, and that its members have been called out of the world to come under the dominion and authority of Christ, its head.

We believe that a local church is a fellowship of Christians, a part of the Body of Christ, voluntarily banded together for worship, nurture and service.

1. **The Church Universal:** Matthew 16:18; John 10:10; I Corinthians 3:16; 12:12-14, 27; Ephesians 1:22-23; Colossians 1:18, 24; Hebrews 12:23
2. **The Local Church:** Matthew 18:17; Acts 2:38-47; 11:19-30; Revelation 1:4; 3:22
3. **Worship and Service:** Romans 12:1; I Corinthians 14:12; 23-25; Hebrews 10:25; James 1:26-27
4. **Nurture:** Ephesians 4; II Peter 1:2-8; 3:18
	1. ***Ordinances***

We believe that baptism and the Lord’s Supper are ordinances instituted by Christ to be observed by Christians only. We also believe that the Biblical mode of baptism is immersion and participation in the Lord’s Supper should be open to all Christians. (Note: Several associations and local churches recognize feet washing as an ordinance. We believe that this should be left to the individual and that neither the practice nor the non practice of it should be any bar to fellowship, either in the church, local association, the Presbytery or the General Association. John 13:1; I Timothy 5:10.)

1. **Baptism**
2. **Instituted:** Matthew 3:13-15; 28:19
3. **Subjects:** Acts 2:41; 8:12; 37-38; 10:47-48; 16:30-33; 19:5
4. **Biblical Mode:** Romans 6:3-5; Colossians 2:12
5. **Purpose:** Matthew 3:14; I Peter 3:21
6. **Communion**
	1. **Instituted:** Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:19-20;

I Corinthians 11:23-25

* 1. **Subjects:** I Corinthians 11:27-29
	2. **Purpose:** I Corinthians 11:26
	3. ***The Lord’s Day***

We believe in the Sanctity of the Lord’s Day, the first day of the week, and that this day ought to be observed by worshipping God, witnessing for Christ, and ministering to the needs of humanity. We believe that secular work on Sunday should be limited to cases of necessity or mercy.

1. **Sanctity:** Exodus 20:8; Isaiah 58:13-14
2. **Observance:** Mark 2:27-28; Luke 4:16; 14:1-6; Acts 20:7; I Corinthians 16:2; Revelation 1:10
	1. ***Last Things***

We believe in the personal return of Jesus Christ and in the bodily resurrection of the dead. We believe that God will judge all mankind by Jesus Christ; that He will reward the righteous with eternal life in heaven; that He will banish the unrighteous to everlasting punishment in hell.

1. **Return:** Matthew 24,25; Luke 12:40; John 14:3; Acts 1:11; I John 3:2; Revelation 1:7
2. **Resurrection:** John 5:25, 28-29, 6:40; 11:24-25; Romans 8:11; I Corinthians 15; Philippians 3:21; I Thessalonians 4:16-17; Revelation 20:4-6
3. **Judgment and Reward:** Matthew 25:21; Mark 9:43-48; John 5:27; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:16; 14:12; II Corinthians 5:1, 10; Colossians 3:24; II Thessalonians 1:7-10; Hebrews 9:27; II Peter 3:8-13; Jude 21; Revelation 2:7; 14:13; 20:10-15; 22:12

**Church Covenant**

Having given ourselves to God, we now give ourselves to His church and covenant with it and with each other, as also with God.

1. That we will forsake all unrighteousness, even the appearance of evil. We will abstain from all questionable pursuits and pleasures; we will forgo all hurtful habits; we will avoid all evil associations.
2. That we will follow earnestly after righteousness and true holiness in the fear and love of God. We will seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, trusting that all needful and helpful things will be added to us; we will seek entire consecration to God; we will seek the constant abiding of Divine Life within us; and we will be satisfied only when we have evidence that we please God and are accepted of Him.
3. That we will faithfully improve all means of grace. We will attend and support the services of the church, the preaching, the social services, the business meetings; we will contribute freely of our means for the advancement of the Gospel; and we will cooperate with our brethren in every enterprise having for its end the glory of God and the salvation of men.
4. That we will be Christ-like in our conduct. We will be tender and affectionate toward each other; we will be careful of each other’s reputation, thinking no evil, and backbiting not with our tongues; we will return good for evil; we will be just and honest, truthful and honorable in all our dealings; we will be meek, loving and forgiving as we desire and hope to be forgiven.
5. That we will be faithful, Christian workers. We will do whatever Christian work comes to hand, shunning no cross, shirking no duty; we will even seek opportunities to do good, glorify God and save souls;

**Corporation Officers**

The officers of the corporation consist of a minimum of five persons. Each officer will serve for a term of one year. Each officer will be an active member of the church.

1. **Officers:**
2. **President:** The Senior Pastor will serve as the President of the Corporation. In the event the office of senior pastor is vacant or the senior pastor is unable or unwilling to fulfill designated responsibilities, the Chairman of the Deacons shall function as president of the corporation until a successor is named or the issue resolved.
3. **Chairperson:** The Chairperson of the Deacons will serve as the Chairperson of the Corporation.
4. **Treasurer:** The Church Treasurer will serve as the Treasurer of the Corporation.
5. **Secretary:** The Church Secretary will serve as the Secretary of the Corporation.
6. **Registered Agent:** The Registered Agent of the Corporation shall be appointed by the Senior Pastor and approved by the Church.

**Polity and Relationships**

The government of this church is vested in the body of believers who compose it. Persons duly received by the members shall constitute the membership. (See Article I of the Bylaws.) All internal groups created and empowered by the church shall report to and be accountable to the church, unless otherwise specified by church action.

The church is subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body, but it recognizes and sustains the obligations of mutual counsel and cooperation common among General Baptist Churches. Insofar as is practical, this church will cooperate with and support the local association, The General Baptist Council of Associations and The General Association of General Baptist.

**Corporate Responsibility**

The property of this corporation is irrevocably dedicated to religious purposes, and all of the income and assets of this organization shall be irrevocably dedicated to religious services. Upon the dissolution of this church, the Board of Trustees shall make provisions for the payment of all unpaid debts of the church. The Board of Trustees shall further dispose of all remaining assets of the church by giving sale assets to the General Baptist Council of Associations of the General Association of General Baptist and in compliance with Section 501(C)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or the corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law).

**Amendments**

This Constitution may be amended by a 2/3 majority vote of the members present and voting in two successive business meetings of the church.

This Constitution and accompanying By-Laws shall be reviewed every three years by a committee designated by the church to recommend whether it shall be amended or re-written.

***Revised 1/16/2008***