## 

**Great Commission Association of Southern Baptist Churches**

**Church Membership Application**

**Blessings and Responsibilities**

Thank you for your interest in membership in Great Commission Association of Southern Baptist Churches! Membership is a both a blessing and a responsibility. Our purpose as an association is to invest in churches, staff and families so they might receive the full blessing of God as they live and serve in their community. Our member churches sacrifice together for the good of every church in every culture in our association. If you would like to join a team of churches who hold to the Bible as the final authority on all matters in every age and desire fellowship & equipping to enhance the ministry of your church, then we look forward to receiving your application.

**Blessings Include**:

* A community of ministry relationships that care about you and your church. Everyone does better with a family!
* Personal visits, prayer support and counsel as requested from experienced ministry leaders
* Allows the missions investment of the church to fulfill Acts 1:8 by supporting work through the association that assists new and existing churches in multiple locations and languages that no one church can resource alone.
* Opportunities to work with other churches on joint mission efforts to advance the work of the Gospel

**Responsibilities Include**:

* To uphold biblical doctrinal integrity as defined in our statement of faith
* Executive Board Service on a rotation basis
* Membership Contributions
* Meaningful participation in the ministry life of the association

###### Step One : Provide Church Information

(you can complete the online version of the form at <https://form.jotform.com/210966070197156>)

1. **NAME OF CHURCH** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Meeting address if different from above: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH PHONE \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ WEBSITE\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ FACEBOOK\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please check all that apply:

* Church owns its own facility
* Church rents/leases facility
* Church is seeking facility to lease

Please check one:

* We are an existing independent church
* We are a new church plant

1. **PASTOR'S FULL NAME** \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

HOME MAILING ADDRESS\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

PHONE\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ E-MAIL\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Please check one:

* Ordained as Southern Baptist
* Ordained as other: please specify\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **MAIN CONTACT PERSON FOR MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION**

Check One:

* + Pastor is the main contact person for the membership application
  + Church Office is the main contact for membership application. Please discuss this with: Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_
  + Other:
  + Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Phone\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ E-mail:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **CHURCH BYLAWS AND STATEMENT OF FAITH**

Check all that apply:

* We have bylaws and are submitting them with this application
* We do not have bylaws or we need assistance with our bylaws prior to submission
* We are in agreement with the Southern Baptist Convention statement of faith, The Baptist Faith and Message 2000. See [www.sbc.net](http://www.sbc.net) to review statement.
* We are also in agreement with the Great Commission Association of Southern Baptist Churches (GCA) statement of faith which is attached.

1. **GCA MEMBERSHIP CONTRIBUTIONS**

Member churches give sacrificially together to provide quality associational services to all churches large or small.

* We will contribute a full 3% or more of our annual general offerings to the work of the GCASBC on at least a quarterly basis upon our acceptance into membership
* We will gradually grow our giving with 1% in our first year of membership, 2% in our second year and 3% in all following years to GCASBC upon acceptance into membership.

1. **COOPERATIVE PROGRAM GIVING INFORMATION**

The Southern Baptist National Convention and California Southern Baptist Convention are funded by churches that desire to give directly to their work through the Cooperative Program. Please go to [www.csbc.com](http://www.csbc.com) and for detailed information on how these funds are used to support international missions, church planting and seminary education. **Cooperative Program funds gifts do not fund the GCA.**

**NEXT STEPS**

**STEP TWO: SCHEDULE CHURCH WORSHIP SERVICE VISIT**

1. GCA staff will visit your church on a mutually agreeable date to introduce the work of the association to the congregation and be available for questions afterwards. This will take 3-5 minutes during the service. If the church desires for the GCA representative to preach during the service that can be requested when scheduling of the meeting.
2. Discussion after service or at another agreed upon time with the church staff, elders, deacons and lay leaders to discuss specific GCA ministry resources and relationships that may be of value to the church as well as to discuss the responsibilities of associational membership to the group. This can be held during a lunch fellowship if planned by the church, but it is not required.

**STEP THREE: OFFICIAL INTERVIEW WITH THE GOVERNING BODIES OF GCA**

1. Upon recommendation of the GCA staff assigned to the church visit, the Administrative Council of the GCA will schedule an official membership interview.
2. The interview will review the membership application, bylaws and doctrinal position of the church and its leadership.
3. The Administrative Council will recommend to the Annual Meeting of GCA churches those churches that meet the criteria for membership in the GCA.
4. Official membership shall be granted to the applying church upon the vote of the GCA churches in attendance at the Annual Meeting.

# **GCASBC Statement of Faith**

6.05 The statement of faith of Great Commission Association:

*Below is a summary of some of our basic beliefs:*

1. **GOD** is the Creator, Redeemer, Preserver, and Ruler of the Universe. There is one God who reveals himself to us as the Father, Son (Jesus Christ), and Holy Spirit. This mystery is commonly called the Trinity: each “person” of the Trinity exists simultaneously and has distinct personal attributes, but there is no division of nature, essence, or being in God.
2. **THE SCRIPTURES** were written by those who were divinely inspired. The Bible is the written Word of God, revealing God’s will for humanity. It is the basis for our faith and practice as individual Christians, as churches, and as an association of churches. The life and teachings of Jesus Christ are the criteria by which we interpret the Scriptures.
3. **MANKIND** was created in the image of God. All people sin; therefore, mankind is “fallen” from the position that God designed for it. God’s grace (gift of salvation) in Jesus Christ allows mankind to come back into fellowship with God. Because mankind is created in God’s image, and because Christ died for all, then all people are to be given dignity and respect.
4. **SALVATION** is the gift of God, which we receive by faith in Jesus Christ who died for our sins. It involves fellowship with God and eternal life, beginning at the moment one entrusts himself to Jesus as Lord of his life and continuing on past this life, without end. God patiently seeks the salvation of all people, not desiring for any to perish. The “security of the believer” teaches that salvation, once received, cannot be lost; the believer is safe in the Father’s hand. However, a disobedient believer will be disciplined by the Heavenly Father.
5. **HEAVEN AND HELL** are eternal dwelling places. Heaven—the place where God’s people live with him forever—is a gift to the believer. Heaven is also a place where rewards are received. Salvation itself is a gift from God, and not a reward. Heaven’s rewards vary and are based on individual faithfulness in this life. Those who do not receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Savior in this life will spend eternity apart from the loving presence of God in hell. Hell is a place of suffering where the devil and his followers dwell.
6. **THE CHURCH** is a term that is used in two ways in the Scriptures. In the broadest spiritual sense, the Church is the body of Christ which includes all Christian believers of all ages. In a more tangible sense, the New Testament most often speaks of the church as a local body of baptized believers. All believers are members of the Church, and should express this through participation in the local church family of faith. Baptist churches are accountable to the membership under the Lordship of Christ and as each member has a voice and vote in the life of the church. All members of the local church family of faith are to be treated with dignity and respect according to the principles of the Scriptures. All members, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, or national origin are gifted by God to participate in building up the church. The local church should encourage the giftedness of the members.
7. **BAPTISM** is an ordinance of the church: Jesus set it aside (“ordained” it) as a reminder and as an act of obedience. Baptism is by immersion in water and is a statement of one’s faith in Jesus who died, was buried, and rose again. It is also a statement that one has died to sin and is raised to a new life in Christ, looking forward some day to the resurrection from the dead. Baptism portrays a faith already held within the person, and has no saving power in itself.
8. **THE LORD’S SUPPER** is the other “ordinance” of the church. In taking the Lord’s Supper (sometimes called “communion”), we remember especially the sacrifice of Jesus Christ on the cross: the fruit of the vine reminds us of his blood that was shed, and the bread reminds us of his body that was given for us. Taking the Lord’s Supper together regularly as a church body also reminds us that we are united together by our common faith in Jesus and his sacrifice on the cross.
9. **THE KINGDOM OF GOD** is the Lord’s spiritual reign over the lives of all who give allegiance to him, whether they be living on earth or in heaven. It includes all who are in the Church, but also includes believers in God prior to the coming of Jesus Christ and the establishment of his Church.
10. **LAST THINGS** refers to those things that will happen near the end of time. The Bible tells us that Jesus will come again visibly to receive his followers to himself. The evil forces of Satan and this world will be ultimately defeated and cast into hell, and God’s kingdom shall prevail forever.
11. **EVANGELISM** is every Christian’s privilege. We are all called to share personally with others how they may be saved by faith in Jesus Christ. By faithful giving, we also support the evangelistic efforts of our local churches, as well as the missions efforts of our denomination in the United States and around the world.
12. **THE PRIESTHOOD OF THE BELIEVER**, or “soul competency,” means that every believer prays directly to God and may read the Bible to better understand the will of God. Other believers may help our understanding, but each one of us is able to stand before God without any intermediary other than Jesus Christ.
13. **SERVANT LEADERSHIP** is exemplified by the true nature of Jesus Christ. Jesus commanded that the Christian leader should not seek to rule over others, but rather to be the servant of all. The cross mandates laying down our rights for the good of others.