



## WHO WE ARE

For 200 years, BGAV has been a place where like-hearted Baptists can come together to do Kingdom work. Churches can do more together than separately, and BGAV enables that kind of cooperation through a rich network of ministers and lay leaders united in their desire to serve Jesus Christ through the local church.

As such, BGAV is a cooperative missions and ministry organization that consists of more than 1,200 autonomous churches—in the Commonwealth of Virginia and beyond, including:

- Arizona
- California
- Colorado
- District of Columbia
- Florida
- Georgia
- Hawaii
- Indiana
- Kentucky
- Maryland
- Massachusetts
- Minnesota
- New Jersey
- New York
- North Carolina
- Pennsylvania
- South Carolina
- Tennessee
- Texas
- Washington
- West Virginia
- Seoul, South Korea
- Toronto, Ontario, Canada



**THE BAPTIST GENERAL  
ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA  
HAS NO CREEDS BUT THE BIBLE,  
WHICH IT HOLDS AS INSPIRED  
AND AUTHORITATIVE.**

## OUR VISION

Our vision is to become greater agents of mission together with our networks of churches, partners, and leaders impacting the Kingdom locally, nationally, and globally with the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

## OUR MISSION

Our mission is to be a missionary movement unleashing the power of the resurrected Christ through the local church for the renewal of all things.

## OUR VALUES

- Gospel Centric
- Mission Driven
- Relationally Rich
- Civil, Respectful
- Heart for the Not Yet



**Celebrating 200 Years**  
BAPTIST GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA

**VIRGINIA**  
is a land of rich history and  
honorable traditions, and  
Baptists have been a  
**STRONG  
PRESENCE**  
in the Commonwealth  
for centuries.

Since its formation in 1823,  
the purpose of the  
Baptist General Association  
of Virginia has been  
“to furnish the Baptist churches  
of Virginia with a medium of

**COOPERATION**  
for the propagation of the  
Gospel of Jesus Christ, and  
for the advancement of the  
Redeemer’s Kingdom  
by all methods in accord  
with the Word of God.”



BAPTIST GENERAL ASSOCIATION OF VIRGINIA

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WHAT  
**VIRGINIA  
BAPTISTS  
BELIEVE**

## WANT TO KNOW MORE?

If you or your church would like to know more about the Baptist General Association of Virginia (BGAV), call the BGAV Office at 800.255.2428, ext. 1201, to schedule a speaker or to request more information.







## What position does the BGAV take on marriage?

In 1998, the BGAV adopted the following resolution on the sanctity of marriage of one man to one woman:

### Resolution Affirming the Sanctity of Marriage

*The sanctity of marriage continues to face attacks from a variety of cultural attitudes and moral lapses, including those of public and religious leaders. Recent occurrences greatly heighten our awareness of the need to reclaim the moral authority of biblical principles in marriage and family relationships. The world hungers for models that demonstrate the joy of family love and the rewards of marital fidelity. Today, as never before, believers need strongly to affirm and exemplify biblical ideals in marriage and family.*

*God created man and woman in His own image. He established a covenant in marriage between them: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh" (Genesis 2:24). Families grow as husbands and wives follow God's command to "...be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it..." (Genesis 1:28).*

*Mutual fidelity, respect, and unselfish love characterize the marriage relationship God intends (Ephesians 5:21-23).*

*God created the marriage covenant as a lifelong commitment between one man and one woman (Matthew 5:27-32).*

*He judges and holds accountable those who break the covenant. He provides grace and the opportunity for reconciliation (Romans 3:21-26).*

*The Scriptures repeatedly bear witness to God's love toward persons who sin. They also bear witness to God's offer of pardon to all who seek His forgiveness through repentance and contrition (Luke 18:9-30).*

*The Virginia Baptist Mission Board emphatically reaffirms the biblical principles that undergird the sanctity of marriage, recognizes the biblical call to accountability, and challenges all persons of faith to live out this ideal.*

This Affirmation on the Sanctity of Marriage was approved by the Virginia Baptist Mission Board on October 14, 1998, and recommended for adoption by the Baptist General Association of Virginia, which approved it at its annual meeting that year.

## What is the BGAV's position on abortion?

In November 1997 the BGAV reaffirmed its opposition to abortion.

### Resolution on Abortion

*As we approach the 20th anniversary of Virginia Baptists' definitive statements on abortion, the Christian Life Committee recommends that the messengers to the 1997 Baptist General Association of Virginia reaffirm the following position:*

*Whereas, Southern Baptists have historically held a biblical view of the sanctity of human life, and*

*Whereas, abortion is a very serious moral and spiritual problem of continuing concern to the American people, and Whereas, Christians have a responsibility to deal with all moral and spiritual issues which affect society, including the problems of abortion, and*

*Whereas, the practice of abortion for selfish nontherapeutic reasons wantonly*

*destroys fetal life, dulls our society's moral sensitivity, and leads to a cheapening of all human life,*

*Therefore, be it Resolved, that the messengers to the 174th Baptist General Association of Virginia meeting in Roanoke in November 1997 reaffirm the biblical sacredness and dignity of all human life, including fetal life, and Be it further Resolved, that in the best interest of our society, we reject any indiscriminate attitude toward abortion as contrary to the biblical view, and Be it further Resolved, that we also affirm our conviction about the limited role of government in dealing with matters relating to abortion, and support the right of expectant mothers to the full range of medical services and personal counseling for the preservation of life and health.*

## Why doesn't the BGAV take a stand opposing homosexual behavior and homosexual church leadership?

It definitely has taken a stand opposing both, and has severed relations with two institutions over disagreements about their policy on related issues, most recently with Averett University in 2005. Averett's association was restored in 2011 when the school clarified its stance and both entities regarded their positions as compatible.

In 1993 messengers at the BGAV annual meeting adopted the following resolution on homosexual behavior:

**Resolution on Homosexual Behavior**  
*Recognizing that the autonomy of the local congregation historically has been*

*affirmed in Baptist life, the Virginia Baptist General Board makes the following statement:*

*We believe that homosexual behavior is one of many sins listed by the Scriptures, and that "the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God." For the Bible says: "Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, not extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10).*

*"And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompense of their error which was meet" (Romans 1:27).*

*We affirm the biblical teaching that homosexual behavior is sinful and unacceptable for Christians. Therefore, we do not endorse elevating those who practice it to positions of leadership.*

*We make this statement in the spirit of the grace of the Lord Jesus, confessing our own sinfulness: "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23). We seek to bring all people to a loving and redeeming Savior who alone will judge between the redeemed and the lost.*

This issue was revisited at the 2012 BGAV annual meeting. Again, the messengers of the BGAV affirmed the biblical teaching that homosexual behavior is unacceptable for Christian ordination.

## How does the BGAV view the ordination of women as deacons or senior pastors?

The ordination of women and how they shall serve is a local church matter, not a BGAV matter. The autonomy of the local congregation and the priesthood of the believer are the criteria by which the BGAV represents churches.

## My church wants to give to Cooperative Missions, but there is more than one option. Why?

Because the churches asked for options. BGAV churches value the autonomy of the local church and freedom. In a series of budget hearings across Virginia, Baptists asked to have more say in how their mission gifts were distributed. So the BGAV voted to give churches several options for Cooperative Missions (CM\*) giving.

For information regarding BGAV's giving plans, please call 800-255-2428.

\* CM is Virginia Baptists' long-standing commitment to the Cooperative Program.



# WHAT WE BELIEVE

## Where does the BGAV stand regarding the Baptist Faith and Message statement?

The BGAV has no creeds but the Holy Bible. The BGAV passed a resolution at its 1999 annual meeting that affirmed its support of the 1963 version of the Baptist Faith and Message. The SBC voted in 2000 to replace the 1963 version with the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message. The BGAV has taken no subsequent action but, as an autonomous body of Baptists, still stands behind the 1963 statement as a matter for our autonomous churches to decide for themselves. There are churches in the BGAV that have endorsed the 2000 Baptist Faith and Message, as is their freedom. We will, of course, cooperate with both in our mutual effort to focus on the Gospel of Jesus Christ.