

**VAN POLICY**

Van Use Policy and Procedures

**BETHESDA BAPTIST CHURCH**

Carrollton, Georgia

## **VAN POLICY**

### **General Policy**

The church van was purchased with money donated by church members. Since it does not do God's work when parked in the church parking lot, its frequent use to further the work of the church is encouraged. When it is used to carry passengers, safety is the paramount concern, taking priority over matters of cost, convenience, or timing.

These are hard-and-fast rules, not suggestions, recommendations, or guidelines. Read "thou shalt" or "thou shalt not" into every one.

### **How the Van may be Used**

The van may be used to bring people to worship who have no other means of getting to and from the church. It may be used to carry people to and from church meetings and social events. It may be used to bring children and youth to worship, Sunday School, and church activities. It may be used to transport church staff and officers to and from meetings and events in and away from the Carroll County area. It may be used to transport people in support of church-sponsored activities. It may be used to transport materials for projects at the church. It may be used in parades for outreach purposes.

### **How the Van may not be Used**

The van may not be used for any private or personal use of any pastor, employee, officer, member, or non-member.

### **Who may Drive the Van**

Any person whose name appears on the list of authorized drivers maintained in the church office may drive the van. A person's name is placed on the list of authorized drivers after it has been provided to the church insurance carrier. An authorized driver must be 25 years of age or older, and no more than 70 years of age. He/she must have a valid Georgia/Alabama driver's license, and supply his/her driver's license number and date of birth to the church office. He/she must not have any physical or emotional impairment, which could affect his/her ability to operate the vehicle safely. He/she must become familiar with the van and review the owner's manual before driving the van with passengers aboard. A person who receives a moving traffic violation while driving the van or any other vehicle will be removed from the list of authorized drivers unless otherwise specified by the Pastor and Board of Deacons. Authorized drivers must acknowledge in writing that they have read, they understand, and they will comply with this policy.

### **Who may Not Drive the Van**

No person whose name does not appear on the list of authorized drivers may operate the van. Authorized drivers may not operate the van after consuming alcohol, after using recreational drugs, after using any prescription or non-prescription medication with a "do not operate machinery after using" warning, when fatigued, or when emotionally distraught.

### **No Smoking**

Smoking in the church van is not allowed.

## **Driver Responsibility**

Drivers are responsible, to the best of their ability, to operate the van only when all safety-related equipment (lights, horn, windshield wipers, brakes, seat belts) are operating properly, when mirrors are properly adjusted, when tires are properly inflated, and when windows are clean. Drivers are responsible for ensuring that luggage brought aboard is properly stowed and that no dangerous items are brought aboard. Drivers are responsible for requiring passengers to fasten seat belts. Drivers are responsible for driving in a safe, considerate and lawful manner, obeying all posted speed limits.

## **Driver Authority**

The authorized driver is in charge of the van, its cargo, and its passengers. If he or she determines that a stop is necessary to avoid danger to the passengers or damage to the vehicle, no passenger may override that decision.

## **Transportation of Children and Youth**

Children and youth may only be transported when a written permission slip, signed by a parent or guardian, has been submitted to the church office.

## **Before Leaving the Church Parking Lot**

The driver makes a walk-around inspection, checking that tires appear to be properly inflated and windows are clean, and noting any damage. Driver adjusts seat and mirrors and makes sure that vehicle registration and current insurance card are in the vehicle. After starting engine, driver checks dashboard gauges, brake lights, headlights, fastens his or her seat belt, and requires passengers to fasten their seat belts.

## **Encountering Unsafe Conditions**

When road conditions ahead are known or believed to be unsafe due to ice on the roadway or poor visibility due to fog, smoke, or blowing dust, the driver must stop the vehicle at the first available safe location. If there is danger of the stopped van being struck by another vehicle, the driver and all passengers must leave the van and move to a safe location away from the road. If the van becomes unsafe to drive because of a mechanical failure or failure of a safety-related system, it must be stopped and necessary repairs performed before the trip is resumed. The church will bear the cost of lodging and meals for the driver and passengers if an overnight stop is required to avoid driving in unsafe conditions.

## **Ability to Defray Expenses**

Before leaving the Carroll County area, the driver, or an adult passenger, must have a credit card that he or she is willing to use to pay unexpected expenses for repairs, meals and lodging.

## **Trailer**

Any towed trailer must not exceed the rated towing capacity of the church van. Use of the church

trailer must comply with the Church Trailer Policy.

## Off-Road Use

The church van may not be operated off-road.

## Infants and Toddlers

Infants and toddlers carried in the van must be in approved car seats properly restrained by the van seat belts.

## Passenger Needs

Drivers must be aware of, and responsive to, the needs of the passengers. Trips must be planned to allow time for stops to accommodate carsickness, for bathroom use, to obtain food, or just to get out and stretch the legs. No trip should become an ordeal for any passenger.

## Upon Return From a Trip

Upon return, or on the following day, the van must be refueled and receipt turned into the church office. If the interior needs cleaning, it must be cleaned. If the exterior needs washing, it must be washed. The maintenance/mileage log must be brought up to current mileage.

## The Maintenance/Mileage Logbook

The maintenance/mileage logbook is used to record trip information, fuel purchases, maintenance performed, and items needing attention. It is kept in the church office.

## Minor Accidents

**There are no injuries and the van is drivable:** Notify police. Do not move the van until police arrive and give the OK unless otherwise dictated by roadway signs, i.e. some city ordinances instruct drivers to move accident vehicles off the roadway. If another vehicle is involved, exchange insurance information with the other driver. Complete an accident report (note the name of the police officer). Damage to headlights, taillights, or mirrors must be repaired before continuing trip. Call the church office and report what happened.

## Major Accidents

**There are injuries, deaths, and/or major damage to the van:** Notify police and ambulance. Administer first aid. If another vehicle is involved, assist its occupants. Note where each injured person is taken. If possible, exchange information with driver or occupant or the other vehicle, if another vehicle is involved. Complete an accident report. Call the church office and report what happened, giving the status of each person in the van, as it is known at the time. If the van is to be towed away, note where it is being taken. Arrange for temporary lodging for uninjured passengers.

## **Travel Outside of the United States:**

The van must not be driven outside of the borders of the United States unless insurance covering its operation (in Canada or Mexico) has been purchased and is in force.

## **Relief Driver**

A second driver must be aboard on any trip of more than eight hours' duration.

## **Failure to Plan**

Failure to adequately plan a trip does not constitute an emergency justifying violation of these rules.

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