

APPRECIATION

WHEREAS, The messengers of the 199th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention have been the recipients of the cordial hospitality of the staff and members of Church at The Mill; and

WHEREAS, South Carolina Baptists assemble to *engage* in worship, networking, accountability, and business; and

WHEREAS, The 2019 annual meeting theme is *Engage* and every South Carolina Baptist is urged to engage our culture and our communities for Christ's Kingdom; and

WHEREAS, Worshipping together in the town of Moore is a model and encouragement to churches of all sizes to engage each other as Christ engaged people from all walks of life; and

WHEREAS, The president, officers, committees, and platform personnel have conducted the preparation and matters of this annual meeting with dignity and in a Christlike manner; and

WHEREAS, We, the messengers meeting at Church at The Mill on November 11–12, 2019, have been received with kindness and met with gracious provision for every need of this meeting; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we express appreciation to all who worked diligently to create a worshipful and relevant experience for all God's people; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we express our profound gratitude to the Lord for His continued guidance and blessings throughout our lives and our service.

ENCOURAGING SCHOOL ENGAGEMENT

WHEREAS, According to the Public School Review, the 2019–2020 research data shows that 770,650 children attend in 1,272 South Carolina public schools; and

WHEREAS, There are 2,125 churches within the South Carolina Baptist Convention and about 225 of these churches currently have adopted local schools; and

WHEREAS, The Great Commission and Acts 1:8 commands all Christians to engage the world with the Gospel; and

WHEREAS, According to the South Carolina Education and Oversight Committee, 34 percent of all third-graders do not read on grade level causing our state to rank 47th in literacy nationally; and

WHEREAS, Studies show that children mentored by an adult for six months or longer are 87 percent more likely to graduate high school; and

WHEREAS, Almost one-half of our South Carolina schools receive Title I funding, indicating a significant socio-economic need among students; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we the messengers to the 199th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Moore on November 11–12, 2019, encourage South Carolina Baptist Convention churches to intentionally engage local schools through faith-based ministries such as *Heart 4 Schools*; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we endeavor to meet the needs of students, engage communities, support local educational leadership and build relationships among the lost—thereby impacting communities.

PEOPLE WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES

WHEREAS, All men and women are created in the image of God, with equal value and dignity (Genesis 1:26–27); and

WHEREAS, Adam and Eve committed the first sin and consequently disorder, disease, and death were unleashed upon the whole human race (Genesis 3; Romans 5:12–21; 8:22); and

WHEREAS, As a result of the fall of man, humanity is more specifically subjected to intellectual, physical, and emotional disabilities and a high percentage of babies who are given a pre-term diagnosis of developmental disabilities are aborted; and

WHEREAS, Scripture teaches that human life begins at conception (Psalm 139:13–14); and

WHEREAS, *The Baptist Faith and Message* admonishes us to speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death and it reminds us that every person possesses full dignity (Article XV) and is worthy of respect and Christian love (Article III); and

WHEREAS, Believers should not disregard or show favoritism to anyone in the body of Christ (James 2:1–4, Romans 2:11); and

WHEREAS, People with developmental disabilities and their families are functionally an unreached, unengaged people group and scripturally we are to seek to win and disciple the lost for Christ; and

WHEREAS, All believers have a place and a ministry within the local church (I Corinthians 12:1–26) and the Generations Group at the Convention is available to help churches develop a ministry for people affected by developmental disabilities; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we the messengers to the 199th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Moore on November 11–12, 2019, seek to eliminate any behavior that harms or marginalizes those with developmental disabilities; taking away from them the most basic of rights, the right to life, making them feel unimportant, unwanted, or unloved as sinful; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we reaffirm the sanctity of every human life, from conception to natural death, including the developmentally disabled; be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge every church in the South Carolina Baptist Convention to engage, include, and minister to people with developmental disabilities and their families; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we acknowledge the value and worth of believers with developmental disabilities as fellow laborers for Christ and urge our churches to prepare and utilize them for service and ministry, as it would be appropriate to do so; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we uphold the dignity and worth of all believers as necessary and valuable participants in the life of the local church, regardless of their level of developmental ability.

SOUTH CAROLINA FETAL HEARTBEAT BILL

WHEREAS, The Bible teaches that God holds human life to be sacred because He created human beings in His own image (Genesis 1:27, Genesis 9:6) and affirms that an unborn baby is a person bearing His image from the moment of conception (Psalm 139:13–16; Luke 1:44); and

WHEREAS, Southern Baptists have historically affirmed biblical teaching regarding the sanctity of human life by adopting numerous pro-life resolutions at national, state, and associational meetings; and

WHEREAS, More than 60 million unborn human babies have lost their lives in America due to elective abortion as a result of the 1973 decision of the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade* and more than 6,000 innocent children were aborted in South Carolina in 2018; and

WHEREAS, *The Baptist Faith and Message*, states that we are to speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death (Exodus 23:7) and that children, from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord (Sections XV and XVIII); and

WHEREAS, The legacy of *Roe v. Wade* has grown to include ongoing assaults on human life such as euthanasia, the harvesting of human embryos for the purposes of medical experimentation, and an acceleration toward human cloning; and

WHEREAS, A beating heart is the *measure of life* for every human being; and

WHEREAS, Developments in human stem cell research have brought into fresh focus the dignity and status of each human embryo as a unique distinct individual, separate and different from its mother, and deserving of full protection under the laws of this state and nation by virtue of having a beating heart; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we the messengers to the 199th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Moore on November 11–12, 2019, affirm the biblical teaching that God is the author of life and that human life begins at conception (Psalm 51:5; 139:14–16, Jeremiah 1:5); and be it further

RESOLVED, That Christians have a responsibility to address moral and spiritual issues which affect society; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That all South Carolina Baptists call upon members of the South Carolina General Assembly to protect the most innocent of us all by protecting the unique beating heart of an infant

in its mother's womb by passing House Bill 3020, the South Carolina Fetal Heartbeat Protection from Abortion Act as soon as possible.

HUMAN TRAFFICKING

WHEREAS, The Bible teaches that each person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), affirms the sanctity and dignity of all human life (Psalm 8), and calls on believers to speak up for those who cannot defend themselves (Proverbs 31: 8–9); and

WHEREAS, Human trafficking is criminal activity in which human beings are treated as possessions to be controlled and exploited through the use of force, threats, fraud, or coercion for the purpose of involuntary subjection to labor or commercial sex acts; and

WHEREAS, Human trafficking is modern-day slavery and is the fastest growing crime in the world, according to the Department of Defense; and

WHEREAS, South Carolina has a significant number of interstate corridors (Interstates 85, 95, 20, and 26) which allow for quick transfer along the entire Eastern Coast making South Carolina a natural location for trafficking activity; and

WHEREAS, According to the National Human Trafficking Hotline, in 2018 South Carolina ranked twelfth in the nation in trafficking cases per capita; and

WHEREAS, National studies indicate a direct correlation between pornography, vulnerable children, and a shortage of healthy foster homes to human trafficking; and

WHEREAS, The irresponsible use of salacious, explicit sexual material which is increasingly easy to access, perpetuates the demand for personal sexual gratification, reduces the stigma of commercial sex, and creates a demand for sexual slavery; and

WHEREAS, Sixty percent of all child sex trafficking victims have histories in the child welfare system making them primary targets according to the National Foster Youth Institute; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we the messengers to the 199th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Moore on November 11–12, 2019, encourage all South Carolina Baptists to become more aware of the various contributing factors that lead to human trafficking and seek to eradicate human trafficking through education and awareness, especially in our state; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we urge everyone to refuse to consume any pornographic material because pornography feeds the trafficking pipeline; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we need Christians to open their homes and hearts to provide sanctuary for at-risk people in an effort to protect them from predators; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we fully support anti-trafficking legislation and policies that give sanctuary to forthcoming victims; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we commend South Carolina Baptist churches and individuals who are bringing healing and restoration to trafficked victims in the name of Jesus Christ; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage South Carolina Baptists to support agencies and ministries which help rescue and rehabilitate victims of human trafficking; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we affirm the vital work of all those in law enforcement, education, medicine, counseling, and other professions who witness and address human trafficking through their assigned responsibilities while pledging our prayerful support.

THE EQUALITY ACT

WHEREAS, We are called to minister in the spirit of grace and love to all people in the culture in which God has placed us (Acts 17:23–27); and

WHEREAS, The United States House of Representatives introduced a bill called The Equality Act (HR 5), and the United States Senate could soon consider this far-reaching bill; and

WHEREAS, The Equality Act falsely equates sexual conduct with immutable and unchanging attributes like skin color, race, and national origin and openly contradicts biblical mandates we were given for our good (1 Thessalonians 4:3–8); and

WHEREAS, The Equality Act would effectively destroy religious freedom protections, including but not limited to those enjoyed by houses of worship, by removing employment nondiscrimination provisions in Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, thereby barring religious organizations from ensuring that their leaders and other employees abide by biblical beliefs on marriage, sexual behavior, and the distinction between the sexes; and

WHEREAS, The Equality Act would harm faith-based adoption providers and other charities that play a vital role in the adoption and foster care systems by forcing faith-based organizations to choose between continuing their life-affirming work or violating the tenets of their faith; and

WHEREAS, South Carolina Baptists have consistently taken strong pro-life positions, the Equality Act is anti-life and creates a “right” to demand abortion from health care providers for whom the commission of such an act is a violation of conscience and is biblically unacceptable (Psalm 139:13–18); and

WHEREAS, The standard for moral and righteous living is the divinely inspired Word of God which must be upheld by all Christians to the glory of God regardless of legislation to the contrary; and

WHEREAS, This bill is not only incompatible with the clear teaching of scripture and the historic doctrinal convictions of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, the Equality Act is filled with threats to religious liberty and the sanctity of human life; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That we the messengers to the 199th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting in Moore on November 11–12, 2019, call on all South Carolina Baptists and other like-minded believers to adamantly oppose this legislation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That we encourage pastors to continue to speak biblically and consistently from their pulpits affirming the clarity and coherency of Scripture on cultural issues regardless of the consequences; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all Christians affirm their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, that He alone is sufficient to meet their every need (Daniel 3:16–18); and be it finally

RESOLVED, That we express our vigorous opposition to the Equality Act (HR 5) and encourage pastors, church leaders and congregations to live out the convictions of their faith in the presence of all men with humility and grace so as to bring glory and honor to our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ that all might come to find complete satisfaction and salvation in Him alone.