

1 **APPRECIATION**

2  
3 WHEREAS the messengers of the 2023 annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention have once  
4 again enjoyed the generosity of the staff and members of Shandon Baptist Church; and

5  
6 WHEREAS Hebrews 12:28 says, “Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken,  
7 and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe;” and

8  
9 WHEREAS South Carolina Baptists assemble to worship, fellowship, and conduct business as a unified  
10 convention of messengers; and

11  
12 WHEREAS the 2023 Annual Meeting theme is Let’s Go! and every South Carolina Baptist is encouraged  
13 to advance Christ’s Kingdom by building relationships beyond the church walls and the confines of our  
14 communities; therefore, be it

15  
16 RESOLVED that we, the messengers to the South Carolina Baptist Convention annual meeting held at  
17 Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia on November 13–14, 2023, express appreciation to all who worked  
18 diligently to create a worshipful and relevant experience for all God’s people; and be it finally

19  
20 RESOLVED that we express our profound gratitude to the Lord for his continued guidance and blessings  
21 throughout our lives and our service.

1 **ENCOURAGING LAWS TO PREVENT MINORS FROM ACCESSING PORNOGRAPHY**

2  
3 WHEREAS God desires believers to be dead to sin and alive in Christ Jesus by living under grace, pursuing  
4 holiness, and becoming instruments for righteousness in the Kingdom of God (Romans 6:11–14); and

5  
6 WHEREAS we are called by God to train our minds and hearts to focus on what is true, honorable, just, pure,  
7 lovely, commendable, excellent, and worthy of praise (Philippians 4:8); and

8  
9 WHEREAS sexual perversion is perpetuated due to the confusion surrounding the academic and cultural  
10 definition of the elements of pornography (McKee, A., Byron, P., Litsou, K. et al. An Interdisciplinary  
11 Definition of Pornography: Results from a Global Delphi Panel. Arch Sex Behav 49, 1085–1091 (2020). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-019-01554-4>); and

12  
13  
14 WHEREAS numerous peer-reviewed scholarly studies (such as Myung, R. (2022, June 3). To Call Pornography  
15 a Public Health Issue Is Not Enough When it is a Public Health Crisis: A Multi-Survivor Analysis. The Public  
16 Health Advocate. <https://pha.berkeley.edu/2022/06/03/to-call-pornography-a-public-health-issue-is-not-enough-when-it-is-a-public-health-crisis-a-multi-survivor-analysis>) demonstrate that the consumption of,  
17 use, and exposure to pornography has created a public health crisis (Psalm 119:37; 1 Corinthians 6:18; 1 Peter  
18 2:11), corrupting the perception of God’s design for sex and sexuality within marriage (1 Thessalonians 4:3–4);  
19 leading many to low self-esteem, body image disorders; increasing problematic sexual activity for adolescents  
20 and adults (2 Timothy 2:22); serving as sex education for children and youth (Luke 17:2); normalizing people  
21 as objects and commodities; contributing to violence and abuse; depicting rape as harmless; increasing  
22 prostitution, child sexual abuse, and child pornography; and contributing to the increase of human  
23 trafficking (Human Trafficking Hotline, 2022, 1-888-373-7888); and

24  
25  
26 WHEREAS recent research indicates that pornography is addictive, causing the user to require more perverse  
27 content; and

28 WHEREAS pornography has a detrimental effect on the family unit by lessening the desire in young people to  
29 marry, increasing dissatisfaction in marriage, normalizing infidelity, and exposing young children to aberrant  
30 sexual behavior through the universal availability of pornography; and  
31  
32 WHEREAS overcoming pornography’s harms is difficult to achieve alone, and afflicted individuals often need  
33 continued support and accountability; therefore, be it  
34  
35 RESOLVED that we, the messengers to the South Carolina Baptist Convention annual meeting held at  
36 Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia on November 13–14, 2023, recognize that pornography is a public health  
37 hazard that leads to a broad spectrum of individual and public health impacts and societal harms; and be it  
38 further  
39  
40 RESOLVED that efforts to protect minors from the distribution of harmful material on the internet, such as  
41 Arkansas Senate Bill 66 (Act 612) or similar protective legislation that requires reasonable age verification to  
42 identify and prohibit those under 18 from entering pornographic websites be supported and encouraged; and  
43 be it further  
44  
45 RESOLVED we encourage churches and families to be proactive in seeking ways to protect and educate their  
46 children about God’s design for sex within biblical marriage, living holy and righteous lives, and filling their  
47 minds with what God says is good; and be it finally  
48  
49 RESOLVED that the South Carolina Baptist Convention calls for education, prevention, research, strict  
50 enforcement of obscenity laws, and policy considerations where needed in the church, our communities, and  
51 societal and legislative levels to address the pornography epidemic that is harming the people of our state and  
52 nation.

### **PRAYERFUL SUPPORT OF ISRAEL**

1  
2  
3 WHEREAS God committed his Word to Abram saying, “I will make you into a great nation . . . I will bless those  
4 who bless you . . . I will curse anyone who treats you with contempt, and all the peoples of the earth will be  
5 blessed through you” (Genesis 12:2–3); and  
6  
7 WHEREAS the state of Israel represents the descendants of Jacob as an ethnic, cultural, and national entity  
8 (Genesis 32:28); and  
9  
10 WHEREAS we are commanded to “Pray for the peace of Jerusalem. May those who love you be secure; may  
11 there be peace within your walls, security within your fortresses” (Psalm 122:6–7); and  
12  
13 WHEREAS we thankfully remember that we are indebted to the Jewish people, through whom we have our  
14 Lord Jesus Christ, the Messiah, and the holy Scriptures; and  
15  
16 WHEREAS since the inception of the modern state of Israel in 1948, Israel has faced numerous attacks,  
17 incursions, and violations of its national sovereignty; and  
18  
19 WHEREAS we are horrified by the recent murders and violence perpetuated by the Hamas terror organization  
20 upon the people of Israel and victims of other nationalities; therefore, be it  
21  
22 RESOLVED that we, the messengers to the South Carolina Baptist Convention annual meeting held at  
23 Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia on November 13–14, 2023, commit to bless Israel; and be it further

24 RESOLVED that we support the right of Israel to exist as a sovereign state and we reject any activities attacking  
25 that right by promoting economic, cultural, and academic boycotts against Israel; and be it further  
26  
27 RESOLVED that we support the right of Israel to protect itself from hatred and violence, and the right to bring  
28 those to justice who have killed or threatened to kill her people; and be it further  
29  
30 RESOLVED that amid this conflict, we prayerfully ask for the preservation of innocent lives among both  
31 Israelis and Palestinians, with a hope of more peaceful days ahead; and be it finally  
32  
33 RESOLVED that at this important time when dangerous forces are mounting up against the nation of Israel, we  
34 recommit ourselves to pray for God’s peace to rule in Jerusalem and for the salvation of Israel, for the “gospel .  
35 . . is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes” (Romans 1:16).

## 1 HUMAN DIGNITY\*

2  
3 WHEREAS all human beings are created, from conception, in the image of God and for the purpose of bringing  
4 glory to the triune God through fulfilling the creation mandate as his vice-regents (Genesis 1:27; Genesis 5:2;  
5 Genesis 9:6–7; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 11:7; Colossians 1:16; James 5:9); and  
6

7 WHEREAS the fall of Adam and Eve into sin marred the image of God in people, brought death for them, and  
8 destroyed their perfect communion with God; the fall did not destroy the image of God completely, did not  
9 bring immediate physical death, and did not destroy the possibility of having relationship with God (Genesis  
10 3:1–19; Romans 5:12–21); and  
11

12 WHEREAS all human beings as God’s image-bearers possess equal, substantive, objective dignity and worth  
13 before God that does not vary based on ethnicity, age, gender, means of conception, mental capacity, or  
14 physical development (Genesis 1:27; Matthew 18:6; Luke 5:12–26; Romans 1:19–20, 9:6); and  
15

16 WHEREAS the noetic effects of the fall have hindered the ability of every human to think rationally in varying  
17 ways, and the physical effects of the fall wreak havoc on our bodies and play a role in making the work  
18 humans are mandated to perform difficult (Genesis 3:17–19; Proverbs 6:6–11); and  
19

20 WHEREAS God’s Word declares that all human life is a sacred gift and mandates that all human life should be  
21 protected from conception until natural death, therefore, making abortion and euthanasia attacks on human  
22 dignity (Psalm 127:3–5, 139:13–16; Romans 2:15–16); and  
23

24 WHEREAS the dignity of people who bear the image of God is also attacked through violence, oppression, and  
25 language that degrades the worth of individuals or groups, as well as any other act that undermines the value  
26 that an image-bearer possesses; and  
27

28 WHEREAS our confessional statement, the “Baptist Faith and Message 2000,” as stated in Article XV affirms  
29 that children “from the moment of conception, are a blessing and heritage from the Lord” and further affirms  
30 that Southern Baptists are mandated by Scripture to “speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the  
31 sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death” and  
32

33 WHEREAS we commend the 2023 South Carolina Legislature for passing a six-week abortion ban and we  
34 desire to see a day when society at large honors the undeniable personhood of every unborn child, by  
35 preserving the life of every person who, in God’s providence, is conceived; and  
36

37 WHEREAS the Scriptures present a vision of human flourishing grounded in the saving work of Jesus Christ,

38 pursued through Kingdom-focused living, and completed with the redemption of the entire created order  
39 (Colossians 1:15–20); and

40

41 WHEREAS all Christians have been called by God to participate in his mission through obeying the original  
42 creation mandate and fulfilling the Great Commandment and the Great Commission (Genesis 1:26–28;  
43 Matthew 22:35–40, 28:18–20); therefore, be it

44

45 RESOLVED that we, the messengers to the South Carolina Baptist Convention annual meeting held at  
46 Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia on November 13–14, 2023, exhort our fellow South Carolina Baptists to  
47 pursue the Great Commission of making disciples so that those image-bearers who are in Adam and are being  
48 crushed by the oppressive power of sin and death can be raised to new life in Christ Jesus and be reconciled to  
49 a right relationship with the triune God; and be it further

50

51 RESOLVED that we will pursue the Great Commandment of loving God and loving our neighbors by honoring  
52 the undeniable personhood of every life, including unborn children, by seeking to preserve the life of every  
53 person who, in God’s providence, is conceived, and by promoting the God-given right to life, liberty, and the  
54 pursuit of happiness, which is expressed in the Declaration of Independence but comes from Scripture; and  
55 be it further

56

57 RESOLVED that we will in word and deed demonstrate that those who are designated to be neurodivergent,  
58 have Down’s Syndrome, or have any other condition that affects their mental capacity possess the image of  
59 God fully and all those from among these groups who have professed faith in Jesus Christ should be viewed as  
60 full participants in South Carolina Baptist Churches; and be it further

61

62 RESOLVED that we will encourage and exhort one another to carry out the creation mandate, recognizing the  
63 inherent value of work; and be it further

64

65 RESOLVED that we will call on the South Carolina Legislature to continue to protect unborn life and the  
66 system of free markets while providing social services promoting the dignity and flourishing of those in need  
67 and promoting economic policies that promote human flourishing; and be it finally

68

69 RESOLVED that we exhort our fellow South Carolina Baptists to continue to strive together until every life is  
70 saturated and transformed by the hope of the Gospel.

71

72 *\*The Resolutions Committee would like to thank North Greenville University for generously allowing the use of*  
73 *language from A Statement on Human Flourishing.*

## 1 **SOUTH CAROLINA JUDICIAL APPOINTMENT REFORM**

2  
3 WHEREAS the Bible declares that God is the God of justice (Job 37:23; Psalm 33:5, 89:14; Isaiah 30:18;  
4 Zephaniah 3:5); and

5

6 WHEREAS the Bible commands God’s people to uphold biblical justice and to treat everyone equally by law  
7 and as an act of conscience (Exodus 23:6–9; Deuteronomy 6:18–20; Proverbs 20:10; Micah 6:8; James 2:1–9);  
8 and

9

10 WHEREAS biblical justice requires that every person be treated according to the same standards and with the  
11 same respect, regardless of class, race, ethnicity, age, nationality, gender, or developmental challenges; and

12

13 WHEREAS the current method of selecting judges opens the possibility that they may be appointed based on

14 the political circumstances present in the Legislature, rather than the philosophy and qualifications of the  
15 judge; and  
16  
17 WHEREAS the people of South Carolina have expressed frustration with the process by which judges are  
18 appointed and are, therefore, calling for the South Carolina Legislature to reform the current process; and  
19  
20 WHEREAS the South Carolina Attorney General, the Governor, numerous grassroots organizations, and many  
21 members of the Legislature have issued public statements calling for reform of the current system of selecting  
22 judges in the state of South Carolina; and  
23  
24 WHEREAS the “Baptist Faith and Message 2000” (Section XV, The Christian and the Social Order) states:  
25 “Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the  
26 principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love;” therefore, be it  
27  
28 RESOLVED that we, the messengers to the South Carolina Baptist Convention annual meeting held at  
29 Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia, South Carolina, on November 13–14, 2023, encourage the members  
30 of the South Carolina Legislature to work toward reforming the current system of selecting judges so that it  
31 reflects a biblical understanding of justice; and be it further  
32  
33 RESOLVED that reform will improve and streamline the process of selecting judges while providing maximum  
34 transparency and greater opportunities for input by the people through their elected officials; and be it finally  
35  
36 RESOLVED that South Carolina Baptists support only efforts of reform that conform to the principles of  
37 biblical justice and support the goal of more accountability, accessibility, and transparency in the selection of  
38 judges.

### 1 ENCOURAGING CHRISTIAN CIVIL DISCOURSE

2  
3 WHEREAS Jesus said, “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God,” reminding us  
4 that we are “the salt of the earth” and “the light of the world” (Matthew 5:1–16), and, therefore, we have a  
5 responsibility to speak biblical truth to the culture; and  
6  
7 WHEREAS Jesus called us to, “Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you,  
8 pray for those who abuse you. To one who strikes you on the cheek, offer the other also, and from one who  
9 takes away your cloak do not withhold your tunic either” (Luke 6:27–29); and  
10  
11 WHEREAS Paul exhorts us to “let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for  
12 building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear” (Ephesians 4:29–30); and  
13  
14 WHEREAS Paul reminds us that “. . . our battle is not against flesh and blood, but against powers of this  
15 darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavens” (Ephesians 6:12); and  
16  
17 WHEREAS Scripture instructs believers to speak graciously seasoned with salt, to speak evil of no one, to  
18 avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all people, demonstrating to believers how  
19 we are to speak to everyone made in the image of God (Colossians 4:5–6, Titus 3:1–2); and  
20  
21 WHEREAS cultural and political debates over contentious issues such as sexuality, gender, abortion, doctor-  
22 assisted suicide, the treatment of immigrants both legal and illegal, the role of government in our daily lives,  
23 and many other issues that are discussed in various public forums have escalated from meaningful debates  
24 to angry exchanges, leading to many areas of division in our country and a growing sense of anger and

25 resentment as we treat one another like enemies deserving of our disdain instead of as unique image bearers  
26 of God; and  
27  
28 WHEREAS we are currently engaged in a contentious election cycle where the rancor of political discourse is  
29 escalating exponentially and could lead to physical violence as we approach the next nationwide election;  
30 and  
31  
32 WHEREAS many media outlets promote heated rhetoric to drive up the temperature of our cultural  
33 engagement and threaten our ability to dialogue free from derisive language and personal accusations; and  
34  
35 WHEREAS angry rhetoric and personal accusations left unchecked can lead to acts of violence breaking the  
36 bonds of peace and civility that bind us together as a culture, a people, and a nation; and  
37  
38 WHEREAS many of our political, cultural, entertainment, religious leaders, and social media influencers seem  
39 reluctant to call for restraint and respect in our personal engagement with people with whom we disagree;  
40 and  
41  
42 WHEREAS Christians have a clear biblical call to be ambassadors of peace in a tumultuous and fractured  
43 world where so many people are caught up in heated cultural and political discourse undermining our ability  
44 to live in peace with each other; therefore, be it  
45  
46 RESOLVED that we, the messengers of the South Carolina Baptist Convention annual meeting held at  
47 Shandon Baptist Church in Columbia, South Carolina, on November 13–14, 2023, exhort all South Carolina  
48 Baptists to be peacemakers in every area of life, including civil discourse; and be it finally  
49  
50 RESOLVED that we call on our political, cultural, entertainment, religious leaders, and social media  
51 influencers, to exercise restraint in discourse, remembering to treat each other with respect and courtesy, and  
52 thereby turning down the temperature of our current cultural climate

1                   **HONORING THE LEGACY OF SOUTH CAROLINA BAPTIST WOMEN AND CULTIVATING AN**  
2                   **ENVIRONMENT FOR THEIR CONTINUED ENGAGEMENT**

3  
4 WHEREAS the Bible declares that God created both man and woman by his own hand and in his own image  
5 and likeness, crowning them with dignity, value, and worth (Genesis 1:26–27, 2:7, 21–22; 1 Peter 3:7); and  
6  
7 WHEREAS the Bible calls upon all believers to advance the Great Commission and demonstrates that women  
8 are co-laborers in the mission of God as evidenced by their pivotal service throughout history and in the early  
9 church (Matthew 28:18–20; Acts 1:8; 2:17–18, 8, and 17; Romans 16:3; Philippians 4:3); and  
10  
11 WHEREAS the Lord has specifically used South Carolina Baptist women such as the founder of the  
12 Widow’s Mite Society, Hephzibah Jenkins Townsend; the first National Woman’s Missionary Union (WMU)  
13 President Martha McIntosh; the first State WMU President Janie Chapman; the first International Mission  
14 Board appointed missionary to Taiwan, Bertha Smith; the 37 noble, consecrated “State Lady Missionaries”  
15 appointed from 1886 until 1919 to help plant new churches, support, and strengthen existing churches as our  
16 state transitioned from an agricultural economy to an industrial-based economy; and  
17  
18 WHEREAS South Carolina Baptist women continue to serve our Lord today faithfully, sacrificially, and  
19 courageously in our churches, on the mission field, through state and national convention work, holding  
20 elected offices, serving on committees and boards, missions education, and in positions in higher education;  
21 and

22 WHEREAS the “Baptist Faith and Message 2000” states that “It is the duty and privilege of every follower of  
23 Christ and of every church of the Lord Jesus Christ to endeavor to make disciples of all nations [and] to seek  
24 constantly to win the lost to Christ by verbal witness” (Article XI); and

25  
26 WHEREAS the Southern Baptist Convention affirmed the gifts, ministries, and value of women in the Kingdom  
27 of God in our 2018 resolution “On The Dignity And Worth Of Women” and affirmed the legacy of Southern  
28 Baptist women with a resolution thanking God for calling women to fulfill the Great Commission and urging  
29 churches to continue equipping them to make disciples in 2023; and

30  
31 WHEREAS our mission as South Carolina Baptists, to strengthen each church and saturate every life with the  
32 Gospel, requires the gifts, talents, and passion of South Carolina Baptist women engaging the church and  
33 culture in service to Christ through his church in both vocational and voluntary ministry positions; therefore,  
34 be it

35  
36 RESOLVED, that the messengers to the South Carolina Baptist Convention annual meeting at the Shandon  
37 Baptist Church in Columbia on November 13–14, 2023, acknowledge and honor the vital and immeasurable  
38 contributions of South Carolina Baptist women to our cooperative mission; and be it further

39  
40 RESOLVED, that we affirm the gifts of women in their distinctive God-ordained, complementary ministry roles  
41 as they fulfill their callings to serve Christ and advance his Gospel in diverse capacities such as local churches,  
42 the mission field, communities, their own homes, the marketplace, and within our Convention of churches  
43 (Ephesians 2:10, 5:22–33; Colossians 3:18–19; 1 Timothy 2:9–14; Titus 2:3–5; 1 Peter 3:1–7); and be it finally

44  
45 RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to encouraging, cultivating, and celebrating the callings, gifts, and  
46 contributions of South Carolina Baptist women while fostering an environment within our state churches  
47 where women are respected, honored, valued, and mobilized as co-laborers and equal partners in Great  
Commission work.