

1. Appreciation

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, we, the messengers to the 185th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, have experienced the grace of our sovereign God in his provision for our lives, our families and our churches; and

WHEREAS, we have gathered in the City of Columbia on November 15–16, 2005 to celebrate our calling in Christ and to continue our work together for the gospel of Jesus; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we express our appreciation to the City of Columbia for its hospitality to South Carolina Baptists; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we thank the staff of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, the officers of the Convention, the chairmen and members of each Convention committee, and all those participating in conducting the 2005 South Carolina Baptist Convention meeting, for their commitment, efforts, and leadership; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we thank God supremely for the privilege of being part of his family and servants in the cause of Jesus Christ his Son. To God be the glory.

2. Christian Response to Victims of 2005 Hurricanes

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, in 2005 hurricanes wreaked havoc in the United States, destroying many homes, businesses, and churches, and thousands of persons were evacuated, some being transported to other states, including South Carolina; and

WHEREAS, South Carolinians have contributed in abundance to the relief of persons suffering loss from the hurricanes and have welcomed evacuees into our state and helped them in their difficult time of transition; and

WHEREAS, South Carolina Baptists and their churches have exhibited Christian love for hurricane-affected persons and to date have donated more than \$1.6 million to hurricane relief through the South Carolina Baptist Convention; and

WHEREAS, our Convention's Disaster Relief arm has trained many volunteers who have been involved directly in helping the victims of natural disasters including the recent hurricanes; and

WHEREAS, the needs of hurricane victims for help from compassionate people throughout the United States will continue many months while recovery is underway; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 185th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, November 15-16, 2005, pray for the thousands of persons displaced or harmed by hurricanes in 2005; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commend South Carolinians at large for their generous, humanitarian response to hurricane victims; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commend South Carolina Baptists who have already been engaged in giving, going, or helping in any way the many people affected by these storms; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge Christians to continue giving and showing love for those who suffered loss from these hurricanes; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we encourage South Carolina Baptists to be ready for, and responsive to, opportunities afforded by Disaster Relief ministry to share Jesus Christ with those who have seen his love in action in the lives of Christians, in the wake of these natural disasters.

3. Appreciation of Our Troops and President

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, members of the United States military and allied forces continue to be engaged aggressively in the ongoing global war on terror; and

WHEREAS, our troops play a vital role in preserving and protecting freedom in the United States and throughout the world; and

WHEREAS, the sacrificial efforts of our military personnel have made it possible for some nations formerly ruled by dictators to hold democratic elections, ushering in a new era of freedom for the people of those nations; and

WHEREAS, President George W. Bush has been obligated to make difficult decisions that place our servicemen and servicewomen in harm's way; and

WHEREAS, the President has been a courageous leader in his valiant opposition to terrorism; and

WHEREAS, the Scriptures command us to pray "for kings and all those who are in authority so that we may lead a tranquil and quiet life in all godliness and dignity" (1 Timothy 2:2, HCSB); therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 185th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, November 15-16, 2005, express appreciation to our servicemen and servicewomen in all branches of the military, who are serving faithfully and honorably, both at home and abroad; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we encourage South Carolina Baptists to pray for the safety and well-being of our military personnel at all times; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we offer prayer for, support of, and appreciation for the families of our service members in every capacity of our nation's military; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we express pride and strong support for our American military and eagerly anticipate the day our troops return home upon successful completion of their missions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we express deepest gratitude and respect for our President in light of the gravity of the decisions he must make and the leadership role he fills; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we encourage all South Carolina Baptists to pray regularly for our President and to stand with him in opposing global terrorism as he makes decisions that have an impact on the entire earth.

4. South Carolina Marriage Amendment

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, all across our nation, the American people have spoken clearly, denying attempts to redefine marriage; and

WHEREAS, in every state in which citizens have been given the opportunity, they have voted to reaffirm the historic position of marriage as being the union between one man and one woman; and

WHEREAS, some activist judges have demonstrated their willingness to invalidate state laws against same-sex marriage; and

WHEREAS, the mainstream news media and some educational institutions promote same-sex marriage as a healthy and acceptable alternative for family life; and

WHEREAS, Scripture clearly states that marriage is a sacred relationship and a lifelong bond between one man and one woman (Genesis 2:24-25; Matthew 19:4-6); and

WHEREAS, legalizing same-sex marriage would imply society's approval of a homosexual lifestyle, which the Bible calls sinful and dangerous both to individuals involved and to society at large (Romans 1:24-27; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Leviticus 18:22); and

WHEREAS, the South Carolina legislature has given the citizens the opportunity in the 2006 General Election to approve a constitutional amendment defining marriage as the union between one man and one woman; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the South Carolina Baptist Convention, November 15-16, 2005, affirm that legal and biblical marriage can occur only between one man and one woman; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commend the husbands and wives of our churches who have dedicated their lives to God and to each other, to live out their marriages before us as examples of God's design; and be it further

RESOLVED, that South Carolina Baptists continue diligently to oppose all efforts by any court or legislature to validate or legalize same-sex marriage or any other equivalent unions; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to pray for passage of legislation that opposes legalization of same-sex marriage; and be it further

RESOLVED, that Christians reach out in love to homosexual men and women to help them abandon homosexual behavior; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge Christians to strengthen their bonds of love and commitment to their children and to model biblical marriage in the home so that their children will have a better opportunity to develop God-honoring, healthy, heterosexual orientation; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we encourage pastors and church leaders to support, and to communicate to their members, the urgency of voting for the proposed constitutional amendment in the 2006 General Election.

5. Christian World View

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, a world view is any ideology, philosophy, theology, movement, or religion that provides an comprehensive approach to understanding God, the world, and man's relations to God and the world; and

WHEREAS, our world view forms the foundation of how we determine our purpose in life including our responsibilities, moral actions, and our interpretation and judgment of reality; and

WHEREAS, Christian pollster George Barna's research reveals that ninety-one percent of all born-again, evangelical Christians do not have a well developed Christian world view; and

WHEREAS, the Bible speaks directly in many passages concerning how we should view, understand, interpret, and interact with the world (2 Timothy 3:16); and

WHEREAS, a Christian should view the world as a cohesive whole, according to the concepts presented in the Bible (Deuteronomy 17:18-19); and

WHEREAS, the Bible says that we are engaged in a culture war with a worldly philosophy, the empty deception of the enemy, the traditions of men, and the elementary principles of this world rather than according to Christ (Colossians 2:8); and

WHEREAS, the Bible says that its truths are spiritual weapons having power from God to destroy worldly arguments (2 Corinthians 10:3-4); and

WHEREAS, the Bible instructs us to "always be ready to make a defense to everyone who asks you to give an account for the hope that is in you, gently and with respect," (1 Peter 3:15-16 HCSB); and

WHEREAS, Jesus set the standard in the Sermon on the Mount for our involvement in the world by instructing us to be "salt" and "light" in the culture (Matthew 5:15-16), and in John 17, he described our relationship to the world as being not of the world but sent into the world; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 185th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, November 15-16, 2005, express our belief that Christians should form their concepts from the truth of the Bible, and that believers in Christ should possess, maintain and express a Christian world view in every area of life.

6. Teaching of Intelligent Design

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, the Theory of Evolution has never been proven to be scientific fact; and

WHEREAS, South Carolina public school students are now being indoctrinated in the Theory of Evolution; and

WHEREAS, a growing number of scientists in the fields of biochemistry, biology, microbiology, oceanography, geology, astronomy and others are beginning to question the underlying foundations of the Theory of Evolution; and

WHEREAS, many of these scientists have begun to support the concept of origins known as Intelligent Design; and

WHEREAS, Intelligent Design can be presented solely on the basis of scientific evidence without relying on any religious doctrines or concepts; and

WHEREAS, the complexity of some parts of the natural world suggests that the most reasonable explanation for them is that they were made by intelligent design; and

WHEREAS, all truth, whether revealed in Scripture or revealed through the scientific observation of God's creation, is God's truth and can lead to the realization that God is the author of the intelligent design that is evidenced in nature; and

WHEREAS, academic freedom and free speech should be encouraged rather than suppressed; and

WHEREAS, the education of our South Carolina public school students should expose them to alternatives to the Theory of Evolution as it relates to the understanding of origins; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 185th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, November 15-16, 2005, express our support for the teaching of Intelligent Design in the South Carolina public school system.

7. Human Embryonic and Stem Cell Research

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, the Bible teaches that human beings are made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1:27; 9:6) and that human life begins at fertilization; and

WHEREAS, developments in human stem cell research have brought into focus the dignity and status of the human embryo; and

WHEREAS, the National Bioethics Advisory Commission has called for the removal of the ban on public funding of human embryo research; and

WHEREAS, efforts to rescind the ban on public funding of human embryo research rely on a crass, utilitarian ethic that would sacrifice the lives of the few for the benefits of the many; and

WHEREAS, current law against federal funding of research in which human embryos are harmed and/or destroyed reflects well-established national and international legal and ethical norms against misusing any human being for research purposes; and

WHEREAS, the existing law forbidding public funding of human embryo research is built upon universally held principles governing experiments on human subjects, including principles contained in the Nuremberg Code, the World Medical Association's Declaration of Helsinki and the United Nations Declaration of Human Rights; and

WHEREAS, the use of human embryos in research likely would lead to an increase in the number of abortions and create a market for aborted embryos and other fetal tissues; and

WHEREAS, some forms of human stem cell research require the destruction of human embryos in order to obtain the cells for such research, and Southern Baptists are on record for their decades-long opposition not only to abortion but also to destructive, human embryo research; and

WHEREAS, exciting advances in human cell research, such as the discovery by scientists at Harvard University that an ordinary skin cell can be transformed into an embryonic stem cell, make it completely unnecessary to destroy human embryos, a discovery that supports the findings of the British Medical Journal that embryonic stem cells "may soon be eclipsed by the more readily available and less controversial adult stem cells"; and

WHEREAS, treatments for diabetes, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease, and a host of maladies are, or may soon be, within our reach without sacrificing human embryos; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 185th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, November 15-16, 2005, reaffirm our vigorous opposition to the destruction of innocent human life, including the destruction of human embryos; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we call upon President George W. Bush and the United States Congress to maintain the existing ban on the use of tax dollars to support research that requires the destruction of human embryos; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we call upon private research centers that perform such experiments to abandon research that destroys human embryos, the most vulnerable members of the human community; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we encourage support for the development of alternative treatments that do not require human embryos to be killed.

8. Cooperative Program

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, 2005 marks the eightieth anniversary of the Cooperative Program, the plan of the Southern Baptist Convention and its affiliated state Baptist conventions to share the gifts of cooperating churches to support mission, ministry, and education; and

WHEREAS, the genius of the Cooperative Program led to the most efficient missionary effort in all Christian history, and has continued to enable Southern Baptists to have a significant, global impact for Christ, far exceeding what many churches could do, acting individually; and

WHEREAS, the goal of South Carolina Baptists is well expressed by the theme of the 185th annual meeting, “All for One”; and

WHEREAS, the future of the Cooperative Program lies in continuing to educate every generation of Baptists in the unparalleled strategy of the Cooperative Program, and continuing to lead our churches to place priority on Cooperative Program giving, undiluted by worthy gifts to other mission causes; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 185th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, November 15-16, 2005, uphold the Cooperative Program of Southern Baptists as the providential plan of God for our mission support; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we urge every church of the South Carolina Baptist Convention to educate its members about the Cooperative Program, to prayerfully reemphasize Cooperative Program giving as the first fruits of its budget, and to systematically increase its Cooperative Program giving, in order to honor God in a greater way and enable an advance in the Kingdom effort.

9. Empowering Kingdom Growth

Approved by the messengers at the 185th South Carolina Baptist Convention Annual Meeting at The Columbia Metropolitan Convention Center, Columbia, SC, on 11/15/05

WHEREAS, The South Carolina Baptist Convention, being led by the Holy Spirit, conceived and adopted a plan called Empowering Kingdom Growth (EKG) in 1992, a decade-long plan designed to empower churches to fulfill their vision for the growth of the Kingdom of God; and

WHEREAS, under the effective leadership of our South Carolina Baptist Convention, EKG has revitalized the work of our Convention and helped to reshape and refocus the vision of our churches as they commit themselves to seeking first the kingdom and righteousness of God (Matthew 6:33); and

WHEREAS, the Southern Baptist Convention, in recognition of the superior strategy of EKG in the South Carolina Baptist Convention, adopted EKG as a strategy of the SBC; and

WHEREAS, in the wake of the initial decade of EKG in South Carolina, the emphasis continues to be implemented in our work in a five-year thrust continuing through 2007, as we seek to communicate the vision of Kingdom Growth, and to develop the values, strengths, and initiatives that empower that growth; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we, the messengers to the 185th annual meeting of the South Carolina Baptist Convention, November 15-16, 2005, heartily recommit ourselves to EKG, to the enlightenment of ourselves and our churches about the ongoing strategy and opportunities of EKG, and most of all to a spiritual awakening in South Carolina that will bring persons to Christ in unprecedented numbers and grow churches in a way that alters our culture for the glory of God.