

On Appreciation to the Host Church and City

From the 2022 Kentucky Baptist Convention Annual Meeting in Bowling Green, Kentucky

WHEREAS, the messengers to the 185th session of the Kentucky Baptist Convention are a deliberative assembly who are drawn together for the propagation of the gospel, and

WHEREAS, we acknowledge God's sovereignty and providence in this sacred task, and

WHEREAS, we also acknowledge the kind hospitality of the people of First Baptist Church, Bowling Green, Kentucky, and

WHEREAS, we also express our gratitude to Mayor Todd Alcott and the members of the Bowling Green Board of Commissioners, Judge Executive Mike Buchanan and the Warren County Fiscal Court, as well as the citizens of Bowling Green, Kentucky, for their gracious welcome, and

WHEREAS, we especially acknowledge the Lord's grace in enabling our Kentucky Baptist Convention president, officers, various committees, musicians, and other platform personnel to conduct the affairs of this convention with dignity and a Christlike spirit.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the messengers to the Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting in Bowling Green, Kentucky, November 15, 2022, express our profound gratitude to the Lord and to all those through whom He is working to bring about an annual meeting characterized by prayer, grace, humility, evangelism, worship, encouragement, unity, and purpose.

On Abortion

WHEREAS, on June 24, 2022, in the decision of Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization the United States Supreme Court overturned the horrific and unjust Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion in 1973, thus sending the issue of abortion back to the individual states to decide on, and

WHEREAS, it is estimated that more than 63 million unborn children have been aborted nationwide and nearly 300,000 Kentuckians have been aborted since the legalization of abortion in 1973 (Roe v. Wade), and

WHEREAS, the Bible clearly and consistently declares that human life is a special and unique creation of God, the only creatures made in His image, and is of the utmost value to God and therefore worthy of honor and dignity (Genesis 1:27; 9:6; James 3:9), and

WHEREAS, the Bible declares that God has established the life of every person from before conception and follows each life through until death (Job 10:8, 14:5; Psalm 116:15, 139:15-16), and

WHEREAS, both medical science and biblical references indicate that human life begins at conception, and

WHEREAS, abortion is a serious moral and spiritual problem that has led to the overall devaluation and marginalization of human life at all stages of development, as well as all physical and mental states, and

WHEREAS, the abortion industry has intentionally and disproportionately targeted minorities, as

well as the most vulnerable members of our communities, and

WHEREAS, abortion has included the ongoing assault on human life through the harvesting of human embryos for the purpose of medical experimentation, and

WHEREAS, the 1973 Supreme Court decision (Roe v. Wade) denied the right of the citizens and legislators of the United States, as well as the Congress of the United States, to protect the unborn by law, and

WHEREAS, tax dollars are deceptively funneled into the abortion industry despite existing laws that prohibit this action (KRS 311.715; Hyde Amendment), and

WHEREAS, the defense of the most vulnerable humans among us is a value that defines both the character and soul of any people (Proverbs 24:11-12), and

WHEREAS, abortion has left in its wake long-term mental and emotional devastation in the lives and families of those who have undergone the procedure, and

WHEREAS, Christians are called on to be committed to the redemptive ministry of Christ by embracing and supporting those who have experienced abortion, and

WHEREAS, the Kentucky Baptist Convention has consistently stood firm in its support for the authority of the word of God as our guide for all matters of life, death, and faith, and

WHEREAS, the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 affirms that we should "speak on behalf of the unborn and contend for the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death" (Article XV), and

WHEREAS, the Baptist Faith and Message 2000 also affirms that "Every Christian should seek to bring industry, government, and society as a whole under the sway of the principles of righteousness, truth, and brotherly love" (Article XV).

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the messengers of the Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting in Bowling Green, Kentucky, November 15, 2022, express our gratitude to the Lord for the overturning of Roe v. Wade and recommit to join ourselves together, in accordance with the revealed will of God through His word, to focus our efforts to be a voice for the unborn with the ultimate goal of abolishing abortion in Kentucky, and be it

RESOLVED, that we commit to building awareness among Kentucky Baptists about the practice of abortion, what is not abortion, and alternatives to abortion, and be it

RESOLVED, that we commit to efforts to build awareness among Kentucky Baptists about the details of the abortion industry in Kentucky (both who is being targeted and how they are being targeted), and be it

RESOLVED, that we commit to provide resources to Kentucky Baptist churches so that they will be fully prepared to support and defend the reality that all human life is created in the image of God, and be it

RESOLVED, that we commit to building awareness among Kentucky Baptists about the social and emotional impacts of abortion and how it devastates individuals and families, so that they are prepared to provide hope and support to all those who have experienced the effects of abortion, and be it

RESOLVED, that we commit to supporting both local and state political leaders who will promote pro-life policies as they remain consistent to that conviction, and be it

RESOLVED, that we commit to encourage Kentucky Baptist congregations to partner with Kentucky's pregnancy care centers who provide help to expectant mothers and families in need, and be it

RESOLVED, that we commit to pray for an outpouring of God's Spirit on Kentucky Baptist congregations such that we might one day soon see an end to the scourge of legalized abortion in our state and our nation, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we commit to prayerfully continue the battle against the destructive and unbiblical practice of abortion with the ultimate goal being complete abolition.

On Calling Out the Called Day

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ was moved with compassion when He saw that the multitudes were like sheep having no shepherd (Matthew 9:36), and

WHEREAS, Jesus Christ instructed the disciples to pray that the Lord of the harvest would send out laborers into His harvest (Matthew 9:38), and

WHEREAS, the majority of Kentucky Baptist churches utilize bivocational pastors, and

WHEREAS, Kentucky Baptist churches are having great difficulty finding candidates to fill their bivocational pastorate positions, and

WHEREAS, Kentucky Baptists recognize an urgent need for men and women to be called to other appropriate ministry areas.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that we encourage Kentucky Baptists churches to set aside one Sunday in 2023 as a Calling Out the Called Sunday with a focus on emphasizing the need for more laborers in God's work and appealing to listeners to respond to God's call on their lives, and be it

RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptists will continue to faithfully pray that the Lord would send laborers into His harvest, and be it

RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptists, like Jesus, be moved with compassion for churches who have no pastor to serve as their shepherd demonstrated by participation in this initiative, and be it

RESOLVED, that pastors and ministry leaders will teach and preach to all age groups about what it means to be called to pastoral ministry, and be it

RESOLVED, that pastors and ministry leaders will appeal to listeners in their sermons and conversations throughout the year to respond to God's call on their lives, and be it

RESOLVED, that pastors will seek to mentor those who feel called to ministry, and be it

RESOLVED, that pastors, associations, and the KBC will provide appropriate training, educational advice, and resources for those who are called, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that pastors, associations, organizations, and the KBC will seek to assist the called, connecting them with the ministries to which God has called them.

On 'Every Church on Mission'

WHEREAS, Jesus identified the mission of the church as making disciples (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15; Luke 24:46-48; John 20:21-23; Acts 1:8), and

WHEREAS, after seeking God's direction through prayer and fasting, the church at Antioch sent out Barnabas and Saul (Acts 13:1-3), and

WHEREAS, people hear, believe and are saved when the word is proclaimed by those the church has sent (Romans 10:13-15), and

WHEREAS, Jesus commanded us to go into all the world and preach the gospel (Mark 16:15), and

WHEREAS, over 42% of the world's population is unreached and has little or no access to the gospel, and

WHEREAS, only 13% of Kentuckians attend any church on a given Sunday, and

WHEREAS, Kentucky Baptists recognize that making disciples involves local churches sending and believers going, proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, Kentucky Baptists have endeavored since 1837 to assist churches in reaching Kentucky and the world for Christ.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptists demonstrate their participation in the Every Church on Mission initiative with every church taking its next step toward fulfillment of the Great Commission, and be it

RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptists covenant to faithfully pray that the Lord would send laborers into His harvest, and be it

RESOLVED, that pastors and ministry leaders guide churches to assess their level of missions involvement and commit to do more in fulfilling the Great Commission, and be it

RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptist churches identify their unique role in fulfillment of the Great Commission by discovering opportunities for missions engagement, and be it

RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptists equip and prepare members for responding to our Lord's command to go and make disciples, and be it

RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptists, in obedience to scripture, send members to reach those who have not yet heard and responded to the gospel message of Jesus Christ, and be it

RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptists commit to care for those who are sent both locally and globally, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that Kentucky Baptists will be found faithful in going and making disciples of all nations when Jesus Christ returns to earth.

On KBC Churches, the Gospel, and Transgenderism

WHEREAS, the Scriptures teach that God created men and women in his own image, "Male and female, He created them" (Gen. 1:27), and

WHEREAS, the Scriptures teach the goodness of the human body and calls us to glorify God with our bodies (Gen. 1:31, John 1:14, 1 Cor. 6:12-20), and

WHEREAS, the Scriptures teach the inherent honor, dignity, value, and equality of the two sexes as created in God's image, male and female, each bringing unique and complementary qualities to sexuality and relationships, and

WHEREAS, Jesus affirmed God's order, design, and continuing work of creating His image bearers "male and female" (Matt. 19:4), and

WHEREAS, God opposes any rejection of His purpose and design, including the confusion of man as woman and woman as man, and

WHEREAS, many in today's culture consider gender a social and mental construct, severed from biological and physical reality created by God, and

WHEREAS, United States courts and governmental agencies have wrongly used Title IX, allowing for one's sex to be solely determined by one's own self-identification and not by biological reality, and

WHEREAS, ongoing support for legislation like the Equality Act seeks to erase biological sex as a legal category, and

WHEREAS, such actions seek to normalize and legally enshrine confusion about sexual identity and promote hormonal and surgical procedures in order to externally modify one's anatomy from male to female and from female to male, and

WHEREAS, evangelical Christian churches are not without guilt in failing to reach out and minister the gospel of Christ with compassion and respect to those who struggle with same-sex attraction and gender dysphoria while at the same time often failing to address the sexual sins of heterosexual congregants, and

WHEREAS, Kentucky Baptist institutions and churches face continuing pressure to compromise biblical teaching on sexuality.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the messengers to the Kentucky Baptist Convention in 2022 call on Kentucky Baptist churches to faithfully and unapologetically confess the biblical sexual ethic in all of its fullness, including the fact God created humanity male and female, and be it

RESOLVED, that we resist the spirit of the age that would pressure us to ignore sin and to call evil good and good evil on all matters, including sexual ethics (Isa. 5:20, 2 Tim. 3:1-5), and that resistance of the spirit of the age also includes any who suggest we must abandon a display of Christian love, kindness, and gentleness in order to stand boldly for and proclaim Christian truth and clarify sin (1 Pet. 3:15), and be it

RESOLVED, that all of our image bearing neighbors who struggle with sexual identity, sexual confusion, and gender dysphoria will be met with love, compassion, prayer, truth, and gospel witness in our churches, and be it

RESOLVED, that we oppose all efforts to legally enshrine the notion that one's sex can be self-determined rather than by biological reality, and be it

RESOLVED, that we oppose any effort to erase biological sex as a legal category, and be it

RESOLVED, that we oppose the use of cross-sex hormones and puberty blockers in children, and be it

RESOLVED, that a failure to speak the truth in love (Eph. 4:15) in our churches and to the culture on these fundamental matters of God's design and purpose would be both a failure to love God and our neighbor, and be it

RESOLVED, that we will minister compassionately to families, friends, and others impacted by a loved one's decision to live at odds with their biological sex, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that because of our undying commitment to love God's image bearers by preaching the gospel of Jesus Christ to all without exception (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 20:27; Rom. 11:36) we will be able to echo the words of the apostle Paul about those trapped in sin, including sexual sin, "And such were some of you. But you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. 6:11).

On Mandatory Reporting

WHEREAS, overseers of the Christian church are to live lives above reproach (1 Timothy 3:2, Titus 1:5-7), and

WHEREAS, Christians are to be governed by the laws of the land in so much as they do not conflict with the laws of God (Romans 13:1-5), and

WHEREAS, God hates sexual immorality (1 Corinthians 6:9-11,18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5), and

WHEREAS, God executes justice for the vulnerable and calls His people to act in accordance (Deuteronomy 10:18), and

WHEREAS, sexual abuse has left in its wake long-term mental and emotional devastation in the lives and families of those who have endured suffering and been ignored, and

WHEREAS, the Kentucky Baptist Convention has consistently stood firm in its support for the authority of the word of God as our guide for all matters of life, death, and faith.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the messengers of the Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting in Bowling Green, Kentucky, November 15, 2022, commit to immediately report all suspicions and accusations of sexual abuse to necessary legal authorities when brought to our attention, regardless of legal exemptions, and be it further

RESOLVED, that should a survivor of abuse report their abuse to any person in the KBC or affiliated churches, the KBC will support churches when they report abuses to authorities by providing non-legal counsel, wisdom in ways to care for victims, and recommendations for church procedures, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that the people of the church would plead to the Lord for open hearts to mourn fully with the victim of abuse as taught in Romans 12:9-15. "Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil;

cling to what is good. Be devoted to one another in brotherly love. Honor one another above yourselves. ... Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn."

On Religious Liberty

WHEREAS, the church, possessing the Great Commission of her Lord Jesus to make disciples of all nations, must have license in every nation to fulfill this task as God ordains it (Matt. 28:18-20), and

WHEREAS, liberty of conscience, being regarded for that which is solely God's (Mk. 12:17), is essential for the flourishing of the gospel to the good of those made in His image and the unhindered advancement of God's glory (Acts 17:27-28; John 17:1-3), and

WHEREAS, the state, having no right to come between man and his Creator concerning his right and true worship (Rom. 13:3-4) as the sword it wields is not competent to quicken the spiritually dead, should submit to and honor God by recognizing the freedom of His church to propagate the truth (Eph. 2:1-9), and

WHEREAS, Baptists, wherever they be found, have sought to protect and promote the religious liberty of all peoples, Christian and non-Christian alike, in recognition of liberty's theological foundation, and

WHEREAS, threats to religious freedom have been waged in the context of excessive, unequal, and unjust pandemic measures, disparaging treatment of Christian adoption and foster care agencies, and corrupting ideologies that trample on Christian liberty.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the Kentucky Baptist Convention, on this the 15th day of November in the year of our Lord 2022, reaffirms the historic Baptist confession that God alone is "Lord of the conscience," and be it

RESOLVED, that the churches of God should do all that is available to them to advance in our society the protection of the sacred rights of conscience endowed to us, and be it

RESOLVED, that these rights are not only to be applied to one's inward conscience but must attend the freedom to act from one's convictions in all spheres of life touched by religious duty (Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 4:1; Col. 1:9-10), and be it finally

RESOLVED, that despite how ungodly authorities might seek to bind the people of God against the will of their sovereign Lord by suppressing, targeting, and harassing true religion, we recognize that nothing can ultimately separate those who have invested their trust in Christ from their true belief (Matt. 10:28; Rom. 8:38-39) and therefore "we must obey God rather than man" for He will one day judge all consciences in perfect justice (Acts 5:29; Acts 17:31).

On the Rural Church

WHEREAS, Scripture declares that Christ commands His church to make disciples of all nations and that we are called to be witnesses to the ends of the earth (Matthew 28:18-20; Acts 1:8), and

WHEREAS, Kentucky Baptists have endeavored since 1837 to spread the gospel across Kentucky and around the globe, and

WHEREAS, Jesus regularly identified himself with rural and small places like Nazareth (Matthew 2:23), and

WHEREAS, over 75 percent of all towns and cities in the United States are small non-urban communities of no more than 25,000 people, and

WHEREAS, approximately 19 percent (or 60 million people) of the population in the United States reside in rural areas, and approximately 41 percent (or 1.8 million people) of the 4.5 million population in Kentucky reside in rural areas, and

WHEREAS, rural church pastors often suffer from isolation and loneliness, lacking ministry partnerships and resources, and

WHEREAS, every person in a rural community is made in the image of God and needs to hear the gospel.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the messengers to the Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting in Bowling Green, Kentucky, November 15, 2022, express our commitment to and recognition of the mission field in rural places, and be it

RESOLVED, that we pledge to continue to support the work of the Cooperative Program to help spread the gospel in rural places, and be it

RESOLVED, that we encourage our churches to look for opportunities to establish, help, and revitalize churches in rural communities, and be it

RESOLVED, that we state our support for the work rural churches do to spread the gospel, and be it

RESOLVED, that we pledge to remember that all of mankind is made in the image of God and deserving of our love and gospel outreach, regardless of the size of their community, and be it

RESOLVED, that we encourage and celebrate the work of the North American Mission Board, the Kentucky Baptist Convention, local associations, rural churches, and their ministry leaders in their ongoing efforts to spread the gospel, plant new churches, and revitalize established ones in rural places, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we urge all Kentucky Baptists to dedicate our time, money, and lives to the furtherance of the good news of Jesus Christ across every area of the world, home and abroad, in city centers, suburbs, small towns, and rural places.

On Sexual Abuse Prevention, Response, and Care

WHEREAS, sexual abuse is an abomination before God and an affront to the teachings of Scripture (Psalm 11:5; Proverbs 6:16-20; Mark 7:20-23; 1 Corinthians 5:1-2; Hebrews 13:4; 1 Peter 1:15-17), and

WHEREAS, sexual abuse grieves Christ and contradicts the heart of the gospel (Mark 12:31; 1 Corinthians 6:18-19; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Ephesians 4:1; Philippians 1:27), and

WHEREAS, sexual abuse abandons the demands of Scripture for the holy living of God's people (1 Corinthians 6:18-19; Galatians 5:19-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:1-8; 1 Timothy 1:8-11), and

WHEREAS, sexual abuse is a violation of the Image of God, dishonoring and degrading human dignity, especially in those most vulnerable among us (Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 9:6; Psalm 8:3-5), and

WHEREAS, sexual abuse causes harm to those who are entrusted to the church's care and protection (Proverbs 31:8-9; Isaiah 1:17; Jeremiah 22:3-5; Micah 6:8; 1 John 3:16-18), and

WHEREAS, sexual abuse has occurred in and among our churches, sometimes at the hands of church members and sometimes at the hands of pastoral leaders, and

WHEREAS, sexual abuse in the church is a failure of personal and public witness (1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 1 Corinthians 10:8; Ephesians 5:1-15; Ephesians 5:25-27), and

WHEREAS, the messengers of the Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting in Elizabethtown, KY, November 16, 2021, expressed their desire for a Sexual Abuse Task Force to be formed in order to review the policies of the Kentucky Baptist Convention in responding to sexual abuse and to explore how the churches of the Kentucky Baptist Convention may best address and prevent any instances of sexual abuse.

Therefore, be it RESOLVED, that the messengers of the Kentucky Baptist Convention meeting in Bowling Green, November 15, 2022, denounce in the strongest possible terms every instance of sexual abuse, those who perpetrate abuse, and those who seek to defend or protect these perpetrators, and be it

RESOLVED, that we affirm the Bible's teaching to seek justice for those who have been harmed, protect the vulnerable, and honor the dignity and worth of survivors of sexual abuse (Genesis 1:26, Psalm 82:2-4, Isaiah 1:17, Micah 6:8), and be it

RESOLVED, that we publicly lament the harm that any actions and inactions of Kentucky Baptists have caused to survivors of sexual abuse, and be it

RESOLVED, that we desire to establish policies and procedures within our churches that best protect our members from any instances of abuse, and be it

RESOLVED, that we will prayerfully endeavor to respond to any reports of abuse in a way that seeks justice, holiness, care, and grace, recognizing our roles as citizens within a commonwealth governed by laws and as citizens of a heavenly kingdom accountable to God's standards, and be it

RESOLVED, that we will seek wisdom to care for the victims of sexual abuse and for all affected by the harmful effects that each occurrence of abuse creates, and be it

RESOLVED, that we call on each cooperating Kentucky Baptist Convention church to avail itself to training, preparation, and practices that best care for the members of their church, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that we encourage churches to teach the importance of loving neighbor and living righteously regarding sexuality so that churches are safe places that protect and help the vulnerable and hurt.