

## **COMMITTEE ON RESOLUTIONS AND MEMORIALS**

The Committee on Resolutions and Memorials has the responsibility of reviewing all properly submitted resolutions and presenting those resolutions to messengers for consideration at each year's annual meeting. The committee also has the responsibility of preparing a report memorializing ministers and lay leaders who have died in the precious year and recommending names of individuals to whom the "Annual of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina" will be dedicated.

### **Resolutions**

A resolution has traditionally been defined as an expression of sentiment or concern, as compared to a motion, which calls for action. A resolution is not used to direct a specific action other than to communicate the sentiment or concern that is being expressed.

The Committee on Resolutions and Memorials received a single resolution for consideration for the 2021 annual meeting. The resolution was submitted by David R. Oyster. The committee is pleased to present the following resolution to the messengers for consideration at the 2021 annual meeting of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina.

### **"Resolution on Prayer and Spiritual Awakening"**

WHEREAS, our American society has been drawing further away from God and the gospel of Jesus Christ for several decades; and

WHEREAS, the many societal evils that we see continuing to worsen are the direct result of this drawing away from God; and

WHEREAS, a nation-wide spiritual awakening to the gospel of Jesus Christ is gravely needed for the continuation of our Christian heritage in America; and

WHEREAS, our churches share a significant responsibility for this societal drawing away from God through our general prayerlessness, and the failure to practice evangelism and true discipling; and

WHEREAS, the vast majority of churches in the United States, including N.C. Baptist churches, need revival, renewal and revitalization; and

WHEREAS, the Bible clearly teaches the necessity of repentance on the part of God's people for God to send a spiritual awakening; and,

WHEREAS, the Bible also teaches the necessity of God's people to pray and seek God and His kingdom first; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the messengers of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina in annual meeting on November 8-9, 2021, strongly encourage the pastors of N.C. Baptist churches to teach and lead their congregations to pray fervently in every worship service for a nation-wide spiritual awakening to the gospel; and be it further

RESOLVED, that N.C. Baptist pastors be challenged to teach and encourage the members of their churches to pray daily for a nation-wide spiritual awakening to the Gospel and to practice repentance, confession, and surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, thereby receiving forgiveness and cleansing from sin, resulting in renewed commitments to obedience by the empowering of the Holy Spirit; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that this earnest prayer effort continue until God sends a nation-wide spiritual awakening to the gospel of Jesus Christ and throughout that spiritual awakening.

### **Memorials and Dedication**

The Committee on Resolutions and Memorials met on July 13, 2021 to consider those names of the men and women who had faithfully served North Carolina Baptists over the years and had received their eternal rewards during the time period of July 2020 through June 2021. In appreciation and honor, the committee presents the following person to whom we dedicate this 2021 Baptist State Convention of North Carolina annual. Because of the depth of Dr. James Royston's ministry in the lives of North Carolina Baptists, the committee believes we should dedicate the annual solely to him.

#### **James "Jim Royston"**

James "Jim" Royston, former executive director-treasurer of the Baptist State Convention of North Carolina (BSCNC ), died Tuesday, June 29, following a recurrence of cancer. He was 73.

Royston led the work of the state convention from 1998 until he resigned in 2005 to return to the pastorate. A native of Johnson City, Tenn., Royston served in a variety of ministry roles in North Carolina and his home state of Tennessee.

Early in his ministry, Royston served on staff at the Mecklenburg (now Metrolina) Baptist Association and later became pastor of First Baptist Church of Huntersville, N.C., in metro Charlotte.

Immediately prior to becoming the BSCNC's executive director-treasurer, Royston served as pastor of Colonial Heights Baptist Church, in Kingsport, Tenn., from 1991 to 1997. After leaving the state convention, Royston served as senior pastor of First Baptist Church in Mooresville, N.C.

Newly elected Executive Director-Treasurer Todd Unzicker praised Royston's legacy of faith.

"Jim served N.C. Baptists faithfully, and the faith that he proclaimed is now a reality in his own life," Unzicker said. "We look forward to building upon his legacy as we become a movement of churches on mission together."

Milton A. Hollifield Jr., who served on the convention staff with Royston and followed him as the BSCNC's executive director-treasurer, described Royston as a caring, creative and forward-thinking leader.

"Jim loved the Lord, loved his family, cared for people, strengthened local churches and was committed to the work of the state convention," Hollifield said. "I was blessed to have the opportunity to work very closely with him. Much of what I know about serving as executive director-treasurer is what I learned from Jim."

Hollifield, who retired in February 2021, also credited Royston with emphasizing church planting in the state. When Royston left the state convention in 2005, an average of 75 new churches were started every year. Just prior to his departure, Royston worked to provide training for church planters in seven different languages.

Lynn Sasser, a longtime executive leader with the state convention, served on the search committee that recommended Royston to become executive director-treasurer. Royston and Sasser first met in seminary, where they developed and maintained a close friendship through the years. Royston later hired Sasser to the convention staff in 1999.

“Jim was a great friend who was always available for conversation,” Sasser said. “He was a great leader who served well in every position he was called to.”

John Butler, the BSCNC’s current executive leader for Business Services, served as president of the state convention’s board of directors in 2004 and 2005 during Royston’s final two years as executive director-treasurer.

“Jim was a statesman, a gifted mediator and a friend to everyone,” Butler said. “He cared more about people than programs and more about the mission than getting credit for the mission’s success. His legacy of missions and ministry partnership will not be forgotten.”

Greg Mathis, pastor of Mud Creek Baptist Church in Hendersonville, echoed Butler’s sentiments. Mathis served as president of the state convention in 1997 when Royston was nominated and elected executive director-treasurer.

“I remember Jim as being very committed to the ministry of the Baptist state convention,” Mathis said. “His heartbeat was for missions and evangelism.”

Current state convention staff member Merrie Johnson served on staff with Royston when he pastored Colonial Heights Baptist Church in Tennessee. Royston recommended Johnson when Hollifield was searching for someone to lead the state convention’s youth evangelism and discipleship ministry. Johnson has now led that work in North Carolina for 20 years.

“Dr. Royston was one of the most unifying leaders I’ve ever had the privilege to work with,” Johnson said. “He knew how to motivate people toward kingdom purposes which allowed everyone to come together around the goal of impacting the church and the community.”

Royston graduated from Carson-Newman College in Jefferson City, Tenn., and Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary in Wake Forest, N.C., where he earned a master of divinity and a doctor of ministry. He also received an honorary doctorate from Campbell University.

In addition to his ministerial service, Royston enjoyed carpentry and worked on a number of projects with Habitat for Humanity and N.C. Baptist Men, now known as Baptists on Mission.

Royston was preceded in death by his parents and two sisters. He is survived by his wife of 55 years, Jeannie; a son, Jeff, and his wife, Kelly; a daughter, Jennifer Fielden, and her husband, Kevin; four grandchildren; two great-grandchildren; a brother; three sisters; and several nieces, nephews and cousins.

**IN MEMORIUM**

Peggy Presnell..... Waynesville  
Alison Lusk..... Pinnacle  
Douglas McClain..... Lincolnton  
Gene Phillips..... Huntersville  
William Smith..... Burgaw  
Doris Clark..... Durham  
Robert Davis..... Smithfield  
Floyd Annas..... Sawmills  
Donnie Howell..... Wilson  
Robert Eskridge II..... Cary  
Frances Cooke..... Cary  
Lonnie Webb..... Bolivia  
Annie McDonald..... Winston-Salem  
Burton Campbell..... Rock Hill, S.C.  
Hal Aldridge..... Raleigh  
Virginia Beal..... Knightdale  
Fred McGehee..... Raleigh  
Donald Ingle..... Granite Falls  
James Royston..... Kingsport Tenn.

**2021 Committee on Resolutions and Memorials**

*Joel Stephens, Midland, chair*  
*Lance Cole, Reidsville*  
*Tim Hodges, Vilas*  
*Ken Jones, Lincolnton*  
*Bill Sturm, Conover*  
*Marty Tobin, Greensboro*  
*Chris Webb, Pembroke*  
*Bob Weathers, Shallotte*  
*Ben Whitmire, Weaverville*