

# RESOLUTION OF APPRECIATION FOR REV. DR. JOHN VINCENT UPTON, JR.

Whereas, John Vincent Upton, Jr. retired on July 31, 2022 after serving as Executive Director of Baptist General Association of Virginia since March 1, 2002 having previously served as Group Leader for Virginia Baptist Mission Board Mission Mobilization Group (1995-2001) and prior to that served as a missionary in Taiwan, as a church planter in New Jersey, and as pastor of Urbanna Baptist Church; and

Whereas, John consistently provided vision for the BGAV, listening for the voice of God, listening to the BGAV family, and being willing to take a risk to strategically guide the BGAV through an ever-changing mission field, while always keeping the emphasis on advancing the Kingdom of God, and

Whereas, John realized his vision by implementing Kingdom Advance in 2002, enabling diverse Baptists to cooperate in spreading the gospel and ministry of Jesus Christ while maintaining church autonomy and promoting unity, and a decade later recognized the need for entrepreneurs with new ideas and launched several new initiatives that grew and developed relationships beyond traditional geographic and Baptist boundaries, which led to the development of Ascent; and

Whereas, John built relationships across Virginia and beyond by visiting and speaking and eating and laughing in churches large and small, urban and rural, sitting with us through our joys and sorrows, connecting us as a Virginia Baptist family, and by collaborating with various partners, agencies, and institutions; and

Whereas, John helped us understand our place in the larger Baptist family as he served the Baptist World Alliance for many years, starting a five year term as President in 2010, and sharing stories of his experiences from at least thirty-five countries, meeting with Popes and Presidents, farmers and refugees, brothers and sisters in Christ; and

Whereas, John gave us words for who we are and continue to strive to be: Gospel centric; relationally rich; reasonable, gracious and civil; people who have a heart for the not yet, and who invest generously in shared mission; and

Whereas, John's wife, Deborah, has been gracious and generous with time and patience permitting John's numerous absences and supporting his ministry.

Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that we, the elected members of the BGAV Executive Board meeting on October 6, 2022, offer our deep appreciation for the life and work of John Upton, and we vow to support John and Deborah with our prayers as they move into a new stage of life and a new chapter of ministry; and

Be It Further Resolved, that we ask the messengers of the Annual Meeting of the Baptist General Association of Virginia meeting in Hampton on November 15, 2022, to express our gratitude for the ministry of John Upton and to designate John Upton Executive Director Emeritus.