



For Immediate Release:

Georgia Baptist Mission Board Supports Decision by the Mallery Association to Remove Raleigh White Baptist Church on Racism Claims

DULUTH, GEORGIA – April 05, 2018 – On the eve of the 50th anniversary of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Memphis, Tennessee, the Mallery Baptist Association of churches (Albany, Georgia) removed one of their churches from its roster of congregations because of racism. It was the first time in the history of the Southern Baptist Convention and the Georgia Baptist Mission Board that a church was removed for this cause. The Raleigh White Baptist Church, which had opened its doors to the New Seasons Church, an African American Georgia Baptist church plant, became contentious and abusive to the growing African American congregation, which in the last two years, under the leadership of their pastor, Marcus Glass, has baptized 178 new believers in Christ.

Through the years Southern Baptists have passed at least 18 resolutions on racial reconciliation or racism. In addition, Georgia Baptists have passed five resolutions addressing the issue.

J. Robert White, Executive Director of the Georgia Baptist Mission Board said, “It is very disappointing that some have apparently made no progress after fifty years. Jesus taught us to love one another. In John 15: 17, Jesus said, ‘This I command you, that you love one another.’ There are no exceptions to Jesus’ command. The Georgia Baptist Mission Board cannot and will not tolerate racism. It is incompatible with what we believe.”

Hans Wunch, Associational Missionary for the Mallery Baptist Association, one of ninety-two associations of the Georgia Baptist Mission Board, provided clear and decisive leadership throughout the crisis. He was joined by the Moderator of the association, Butch Knight, and Vice Moderator, Chad Ellis, who gave unified support in leading the association’s Executive Committee to vote unanimously to remove the Raleigh White Church from the association.

The vote came after extensive efforts to mediate by representatives of both the association and the Georgia Baptist Mission Board. Further, importantly, the recommendation included “a pathway to reinstatement to fellowship with our association if the church openly repents of their sin against the other church and demonstrates the genuineness of repentance.”

White commented that Georgia Baptists rejoice in the diversity of their churches. “One of the fastest segments of growth in number of churches is among our African American churches. We are very thankful for them, and for the rapid growth in ethnic congregations representing over 60 nations throughout the world.”

The Georgia Baptist Mission Board is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention and has approximately 3,600 churches and 1.4 million members.

About Georgia Baptist Convention

The Georgia Baptist Convention is made up of autonomous, cooperating churches that partner together through the Cooperative Program, special mission offerings and mission efforts to share Jesus Christ across Georgia, throughout North America, and around the world. Churches give through the Cooperative Program and the State Missions Offering to support the missionaries and ministries of the Georgia Baptist Convention. In turn, Georgia state missionaries aid, training, encouragement, and support for the ministries of Georgia Baptist churches and associations. <http://www.gabaptist.org/>

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