

Resolution of Appreciation

Diane Smith

Diane Smith has declared her intention to retire as Children's Ministry Strategist from the staff of the Virginia Baptist Mission Board's Emerging Leaders' team on December 31, 2011, after twenty-eight years of service.

Whereas, by age eight, Diane, a native daughter of Stanley County in North Carolina, discerned her destiny was to teach children. After making her own profession of faith in Christ during her teen years, Diane's first teaching experience was with preschoolers in her congregation's Vacation Bible School. Soon, Diane's calling focused specifically on Christian education, emerging from two summers as a counselor at Women's Missionary Union of North Carolina's Camp Mundo Vista.

Whereas, Diane was trained as an educator at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte, with graduate studies in Christian Education for Children at Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary and Georgia State University. As a ministry practitioner, Diane served the First Baptist Churches of Jackson, Tennessee and Marietta, Georgia before committing, in 1983, to the faith development of the Virginia Baptist family's children.

Whereas, Diane is widely recognized as an innovator in equipping leaders of children's ministry. Internationally, she has trained leaders in Germany, Denmark, Italy, Austria, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, and Tanzania. Nationally, she served as southeastern region vice-president of the Southern Baptist Religious Education Association, as president of the Georgia Baptist Religious Education Association, and as an advisor to LifeWay and to "FaithSteps," a resource ministry of Smyth & Helwys Publishers. In Virginia, she served as president and vice-president of the Metro-Richmond Religious Education Association and was honored as 1999's Christian Educator of the Year by the Virginia Baptist Religious Education Association.

Whereas, among many contributions to Virginia Baptists, Diane will be especially remembered for establishing Preschool and Children's Resource Teams, creating a process of Certification in Children's Ministry, directing our Missions Connection Celebrations at Eagle Eyrie, and securing our children's disaster relief trailer. The Board staff will miss Diane's kindness, and the children's ministry leaders of Virginia's Baptist churches will miss her love and instruction.

Therefore Be It Resolved, that we, the elected members of the Virginia Baptist Mission Board meeting on October 4-5, 2011, convey our deep appreciation to Diane Smith for her faithful and creative service to the Mission Board staff and Virginia Baptists, and we pledge our prayers for her, and

Be It Further Resolved, that we ask the messengers of the Annual Meeting of the Baptist General Association of Virginia on November 8-9, 2011, in Richmond to extend our thanks to God for the life and ministry of Diane Smith.

