

**Presbytery of St. Augustine Memorial Resolution
The Rev. John Morgan Harris**

1936 – 2020

Whereas the Rev. John Morgan Harris was born on December 14, 1936 and entered into eternal rest on December 3, 2020, we the Presbytery of St. Augustine, Florida do resolve to give thanks to God for John's life, ministry, faith, and witness to God's many blessings with the following memorial:

The most influential forces on John's early life were his public education in Madisonville, Kentucky, the church of his teenage and early adult life – First Baptist Church, Madisonville, and the Boy Scouts of America. In 1954, as John approached his senior year of high school, he joined the U.S. Navy Reserve, and was honorably discharged eight years later.

John graduated from Georgetown College in Georgetown, Kentucky with a major in sociology and economics and a minor in Biblical studies. He received his Bachelor of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, Kentucky and was ordained on June 7, 1959. Following his ordination, John served three Southern Baptist congregations: Concord Baptist Church in White Plains, Kentucky, First Baptist Church in Florence, South Carolina, and First Baptist Church in Fort Pierce, Florida. Two American Baptist congregations in Charlestown and Commiskey, Indiana also enjoyed John's excellent preaching and pastoral care.

In mid-career John left the pastoral ministry and entered secular employment. For a short time, John was Sales Director for a wholesale travel company. Along the way he became a certified family mediator in the family court system of Florida. This was then followed by several years in partnership with another person manufacturing, leasing, and servicing electric signs while concurrently owning and managing a small industrial park.

A denominational change, from Baptist to Presbyterian, began in 1978 and in John's words, "was not planned but turned out to be a very good blessing." He served ten Presbyterian congregations as both an installed pastor and transitional or stated supply pastor. Churches that benefitted from John's ministerial skills were located in the following cities and towns in Florida: High Springs, Tampa, Brandon, Zephyrhills, Clearwater, Lutz, and Inverness. John was received into the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) as a member of the Presbytery of Tampa Bay in 1996, was honorably retired in 2002 (while continuing to serve congregations) and became

a member of our presbytery in 2016. He was a resident of Westminster Woods on Julington Creek. He served the Faith Presbyterian Church in Melrose as stated supply pastor.

Following his service at the Melrose church, John attended services at the South Jacksonville Presbyterian Church. His wife of forty-one years, Gretchen, who survives, is an active member of this congregation.

In the first half of John's ministerial career, he wrote several educational articles, published mostly in denominational journals. In 2005 he published a book of sermons on the Psalms of the Old Testament entitled *Jesus Sang the Psalms – Learning About God While Singing the Psalms*.

John Harris was a kind and loving pastor who possessed a keen intellect and gentle spirit. His love of God and others had a lasting, powerful impact, not only on his family, but also on all the congregations he served throughout his ministry.

Now be it resolved that the Presbytery of St. Augustine does remember in love our brother and colleague in ministry John Morgan Harris, giving thanks for his presence with us.

To God be the glory on this 6th day of February 2021, during the Winter Stated Meeting.