**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO CELEBRATE THE JOYOUS OCCASION OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY‑FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF ST. JOHN BAPTIST CHURCH OF RICHLAND COUNTY, AND TO CONGRATULATE AND COMMEND PASTOR SAMMY L. WADE AND THE CONGREGATION FOR THEIR YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE HOPKINS COMMUNITY.

Whereas, since its formation in 1875, St. John Baptist Church has stood as a beacon of the Gospel and has ministered not only to the spiritual needs of the residents of Hopkins but also to their material and social needs; and

Whereas, although their first place of worship was a brush arbor, they soon received land donated by Mr. Ephraim Neal, and the building there was adjacent to Chappell Creek where baptisms were held for the new congregation; and

Whereas, St. John Baptist Church ministers to the congregation through numerous choirs, a praise dance ministry, and special auxiliaries; and

Whereas, among their many notable services to the community have been feeding the homeless, the Angel Food Network, and the Lower Richland Veterans Formation, and they also offer courses of study through International Seminary; and

Whereas, some of the most vulnerable members of society who could never repay their kindness have received the church’s charitable compassion through home health services and missionary societies; and

Whereas, in one hundred thirty‑five years, the church has had four ordained ministers: Reverend William Lowman from 1875 to 1893, who also served in the South Carolina House of Representatives from 1876 to 1878; Reverend Jesse W. Neal, who served for fifty‑one years beginning in 1893; his son, Reverend Jesse Neal, who served for fifty‑eight years; and presently Reverend Sammy L. Wade, who has served since 2001 and who previously served in the United States Army as a chaplain; and

Whereas, the South Carolina Senate is grateful for the work of St. John Baptist Church and congratulates the members for their shining example of “how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.” Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, celebrate the joyous occasion of the one hundred thirty‑fifth anniversary of St. John Baptist Church of Richland County, and congratulate and commend Pastor Sammy L. Wade and the congregation for their years of service to the Hopkins community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to St. John Baptist Church.

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