**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE PLEASANT GROVE MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH, OF MARION COUNTY, ON THE OCCASION OF ITS HISTORIC TWO HUNDRED TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY, AND TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR NEARLY TWO AND A QUARTER CENTURIES OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, having been founded in 1789 during the era of slavery, Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church, of Marion County, will celebrate its historic two hundred twentieth anniversary in 2009; and

Whereas, although the earliest records of the church’s founding were destroyed by hurricane, some records remain of those first years. As a granddaughter of one of the church founders attested, “There was no fashion, but instead devotion. There was no light, but the Bible led the way. There was very little warmth except for maybe one stove, but there was deep in their hearts the warmth of God’s love and the love they had for each other”; and

Whereas, after the Civil War and during the days of Reconstruction, the church began to show visible signs of organization. In 1879, Elly and Ann Eliza Gerald purchased, for the sum of five dollars, one acre of land about six miles east of Marion County Courthouse for the purpose of building a new Baptist church. For many years, the church remained on this same site, at first using the fellowship hall for a sanctuary; and

Whereas, in 1995, an act of God destroyed the church, and members found refuge for worship in a city‑owned auditorium while a new structure was built. Less than a year and a half later, God’s mighty hand reopened the doors of Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church, and members celebrated with a triumphal motorcade from the site of the former building to the new, more spacious one sitting on five acres of land just three and a half miles away. The church rejoiced to see that rising above obstacles had made it grow stronger; and

Whereas, believing it must minister to the whole person, Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church has long been known as a compassionate neighbor to the surrounding community, including in its current ministry an all‑day nursery, an after‑school tutoring program for children ages six through fourteen, and a 4K all‑day school called First Steps, all of which are conducted under the auspices of the church’s school, Pleasant Grove Academy. Moreover, the church partners with other organizations, among them the Marion County Library, Crescendo Music Academy, Clemson University Extension 4‑H, and Marion County Medical Center’s healthy-meal educator, in order to increase the church’s impact in the community; and

Whereas, other ministries include a food bank, a clothing closet, and special help for families that lose their homes by fire; and

Whereas, in addition to offering a spiritual home to local residents, the church sends forth missionaries all over South Carolina who serve the Lord in a multitude of different capacities; and

Whereas, standing on the faith and strength of its early pastors and members, Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church’s present congregation “presses toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus” (Philippians 3:14), continuing to preach and teach the Word of God and serving its own, as well as the community; and

Whereas, Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church has been a beacon of light in Marion County for more than two hundred years, and, God willing, will continue its godly heritage in many more years of worship and service. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church, of Marion County, on the occasion of its historic two hundred twentieth anniversary, and commend the church for nearly two and a quarter centuries of service to the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Pleasant Grove Missionary Baptist Church.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑