**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE BETHEL AME CHURCH OF GEORGETOWN ON THE OCCASION OF ITS HISTORIC ONE HUNDRED FORTY‑THIRD ANNIVERSARY, AND TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR NEARLY A CENTURY AND A HALF OF SERVICE TO GOD AND THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, having been founded in 1867, Bethel AME Church of Georgetown will celebrate its historic one hundred forty‑third anniversary in 2010; and

Whereas, almost one and a half centuries ago, Bethel AME Church of Georgetown was organized for the worship of Almighty God. The mission of the church has remained the same since its founding: to spread Christ’s liberating Gospel, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, house the homeless, cheer the fallen, provide jobs for the jobless, minister to those in prisons and other institutions, and encourage thrift and economic development; and

Whereas, constructed of wood and brick pillars from an old house located in the old Pee Dee community, the first Bethel AME Church sanctuary was built in the 1800s by sixty‑seven dedicated men and children. This and the second sanctuary were destroyed by fire. The third stood where the cemetery is now located. The church was surrounded by several plantations dating back to the days of slavery with their rice fields; and

Whereas, the new Bethel AME Church was relocated during Reverend Elmore Williams’ seventh year as pastor. It is located sixteen miles northeast of Georgetown and was one of the first churches to be organized in Georgetown County after President Abraham Lincoln’s famous Emancipation Proclamation; and

Whereas, standing on the faith and strength of its early pastors and members, Bethel AME 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

Whereas, the ministers who have served as great leaders are: Reverend W. P. Carolina, Reverend J.C. Williams, Reverend F. Kinlock, Reverend D.L. Johnson, Reverend L.W. Guerry, Reverend E.L. Guerry, Reverend P. M. Knox, Reverend M.R. Hudson, Reverend Richard Thompson, Reverend Moses B. Geathers, Reverend Isaiah Dingle, Reverend Thomas Addison, Reverend Elmore Williams, Reverend C.R. Vanderhorst, Reverend Carl L. Anderson, Sr., Reverend William McNeil, Reverend Richard A. Brown, Reverend Frankie White, and Reverend John F. Sumpter; and

Whereas, remembering the past to embark on today and tomorrow, the Church History Book Committee Members are: Sister Geneva F. Alston, Sister Helen R. Deas, Sister Rosette T. Farnan, Brother Stephen Grate, Sr., Steward Pro-Tem and Sister Marie V. Vernon, Chairperson; and

Whereas, Bethel AME Church has been a beacon of light and a community worship center in the Georgetown area for nearly one hundred fifty 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 and congratulate Bethel AME Church of Georgetown on the occasion of its historic one hundred forty‑third anniversary, and commend the church for nearly a century and a half of service to God and the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Bethel AME Church.

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