**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE GRACE BAPTIST CHURCH OF WEST COLUMBIA ON THE OCCASION OF ITS FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY, AND TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR A HALF CENTURY OF SERVICE TO GOD AND THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, having been founded in 1960, Grace Baptist Church of West Columbia will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary in 2010; and

Whereas, half a century ago, Grace Baptist Church was organized by a handful of dedicated Christians who were burdened to establish a solid, Bible‑preaching, missionary‑minded, Christ‑centered Baptist church in West Columbia; and

Whereas, the congregation commenced worship in a small white wood‑frame church building on three small lots. Following the faithful early shepherding of the Reverend Moody Roberts, the Reverend Marshall Godfrey, the Reverend Floyd Paschall, Dr. B. Clayton Shumpert, and Dr. Bob Kelley successively served the church as pastor. In 2007, Dr. Bill Egerdahl became the sixth pastor of Grace Baptist Church; and

Whereas, in 2000, Grace Baptist rejoiced in the completion of a new fourteen‑hundred‑seat auditorium costing three million dollars. Having also increased its property to approximately thirteen acres of land, the church now carries out numerous ministries covering the needs of shut‑ins, the children in Grace Baptist’s day care, its youth, Grace Correspondence Bible Studies, the AWANA program, jail inmates, hispanics, and Fort Jackson soldiers, among others; and

Whereas, believing that Christian children should have the opportunity to acquire a Christ‑centered education, the church established Grace Christian School in 1973 as a cherished ministry. With students in kindergarten through grade twelve, the school has over four hundred graduates, now serves many second‑generation students, and enjoys an excellent reputation as one of the largest private schools in South Carolina; and

Whereas, thousands of souls have come to know Christ as personal Saviour through the ministry of Grace Baptist Church. Now more than fourteen hundred strong in membership, the church supports over one hundred sixty missionaries and mission projects; and

Whereas, during its anniversary year, Grace Baptist will observe monthly special events. Perhaps the most highly anticipated among these, the church’s anniversary worship service will be held on Sunday, July 25, 2010, followed by dinner on the church grounds. All those present will join together to praise Almighty God for His gift to the church of half a century of fruitful ministry in His name; and

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

Whereas, Grace Baptist Church has been a beacon of light and a community worship center in the Greater Columbia area for 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 Grace Baptist Church of West Columbia on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary, and commend the church for a half century of service to God and the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to the congregation of Grace Baptist Church.

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