**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE FRANCIS BURNS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF COLUMBIA ON THE OCCASION OF ITS FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY AND TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR HALF A CENTURY OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, having been founded in 1962, Francis Burns United Methodist Church of Columbia will celebrate its fiftieth anniversary in 2012; and

Whereas, in the fall of 1961, Reverend I. DeQuincey Newman, field director of the NAACP and active member of the South Carolina Conference of the Methodist Church, joined with the Wesley United Methodist Church Board of Missions to determine the need for a new church in the Northeast section of Columbia. The result of their labors was the creation of Francis Burns United Methodist Church (UMC), the first worship service of which was held on January 14, 1962, at Fairwold Elementary School; and

Whereas, the fledgling church’s chartering ceremony was conducted in February 1962, with twenty‑two charter members, including Reverend and Mrs. I. DeQuincey Newman (Ann), whose initial efforts had done so much to forward the establishment of the church; and

Whereas, the name Francis Burns United Methodist Church was designated to honor and perpetuate the name of the first African American to be elevated to the episcopacy of the Methodist Church. Reverend Burns, a native of Albany, New York, and a highly cultivated, dedicated minister of the Gospel, was elected bishop in 1805. He also served in the mission conference of Liberia, West Africa; and

Whereas, until land for building on Ames Road was purchased in February 1963, worship services were held at the homes of Mr. and Mrs. John D. Gass and Reverend and Mrs. Newman. On April 7, 1963, a formal opening service was held at a house on the building site. Reverend Newman served as pastor of Francis Burns United Methodist Church from the time of its birth until May 1964, at which time Reverend Samuel Gadsden was appointed pastor. Ten years later, Reverend William M. Stokes was appointed and served until his death in July 1983. Reverend H. Samuel Johnson served as interim pastor until the appointment of Reverend Edward H. McDowell, Jr., as pastor in October 1983; and

Whereas, throughout its history, the church has continued to grow spiritually and physically. During the late 1980s and early 1990s, members prayed, formulated a strategy, and planned for a new church building. Ground was broken at 5616 Farrow Road in 1992, and construction began in early 1993, with completion in 1994. On January 16, 1994, the church inaugurated worship at its new site; and

Whereas, its new church home has allowed Francis Burns UMC tremendous growth in its programs and ministries. Among its many ministries are Bible studies; programs focused on music, dance, children, older adults, and young adults; evangelism outreach; and the Burns Library; and

Whereas, on June 16, 1997, the Reverend Mack C. McClam was appointed pastor, and under his capable leadership the church prospered, as it has under its current pastor, Reverend Dr. Thomas Bowman; and

Whereas, standing on the faith and strength of its early pastors and members, Francis Burns United Methodist Church’s present congregation “press[es] 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, Francis Burns United Methodist Church has been a beacon of light in the 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 Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize Francis Burns United Methodist Church of Columbia on the occasion of its fiftieth anniversary and commend the church for half a century of service to the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to Reverend Dr. Thomas Bowman for the congregation of Francis Burns United Methodist Church.

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