**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE REVEREND JOE SEAY AND THE MEMBERS OF EL BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH OF GREENVILLE COUNTY, AND TO COMMEND THEM, UPON THE OCCASION OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CHURCH AND ITS MINISTRY IN THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the members of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina are pleased to learn that El Bethel Baptist Church will celebrate the milestone of its centennial anniversary in special services to be held on September 18 and 25, 2011; and

Whereas, in the fall of 1911, El Bethel Baptist Church was organized with twelve charter members that met in a house on Bobo Street, and the church called Reverend Charles W. Smith as its first pastor; and

Whereas, the church held consecutive membership from 1912 to 1914 in the Spartanburg, North Spartanburg, and North Greenville Baptist associations, and was officially named El Bethel Baptist Church in 1915, just as the patriarch Jacob named the place El Bethel where he had built an altar, “because there God appeared to him”; and

Whereas, in 1916, the Victor‑Monaghan Company and J. P. Stevens erected a church building and gave it for a union church to be shared by the Methodists and Baptists, and later the Baptists bought it and added Sunday school rooms, using it until 1951; and

Whereas, in 1951, J. P. Stevens donated two adjoining lots to the church, on one of which El Bethel built a new sanctuary, and the church joined the Greer Baptist Association in 1959; and

Whereas, by 1960, membership of El Bethel had grown to three hundred forty‑one, and J. P. Stevens donated a new parsonage to the church, the third of such to the congregation; and

Whereas, in 1972, a new three‑story educational building was dedicated, and the church purchased its first new van in 1979 and a twenty‑five passenger bus in 1989; and

Whereas, with a desire to impact the community, the church sponsors annual Vacation Bible School, an Easter celebration for children, a Back to School Bash, and weekly Awana clubs for children of all ages; and

Whereas, the church sponsored the first Greer community‑wide revival “Cross Roads” in 1996, organized the More than Conquerors Baseball Clinic and helps to conduct the Clinic each spring, helped to organize and support the Piedmont Women’s Center to reach out to pregnant women caught in crisis situations, and helps to support Greer Community Ministries; and

Whereas, El Bethel receives the Annie Armstrong Offering for home missions, the Janie Chapman Offering for state missions, and the Lottie Moon Offering for foreign missions; and the church sponsors many mission organizations for all ages; and

Whereas, in order to strengthen the family, two months of the annual preaching ministry is devoted to family topics, and family events and marriage seminars are held throughout the year; and

Whereas, by 1999, church membership had exceeded seven hundred, and the purchase of a ten‑acre lot began plans to build new facilities that culminated when an eighteen thousand square‑foot education building was dedicated at the end of 2001; and

Whereas, during its one‑hundred‑year history almost twenty members of the church have gone into Christian ministry, and since 2006, some twenty church members have taken mission trips to Trinidad, Guyana, Ecuador, Nicaragua, Kenya, and Greece; and

Whereas, over the century, El Bethel Baptist Church has had seventeen pastors who built a heritage for the church of reaching the lost and making disciples of the saved; and

Whereas, members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are grateful for the century of ministry that El Bethel Baptist Church has had to worship and glorify their Master: God and His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; to be a light to the multitudes; and to help members grow in the knowledge of Christ. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina, by this resolution, recognize and congratulate Reverend Joe Seay and the members of El Bethel Baptist Church of Greenville County, and commend them, upon the occasion of the one hundredth anniversary of the church and its ministry in the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Reverend Joe Seay, pastor of El Bethel Baptist Church.

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