**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CELEBRATE THE JOYOUS OCCASION OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRTY‑FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF BETHLEHEM BAPTIST CHURCH, AND TO CONGRATULATE AND COMMEND THE CONGREGATION AND ITS PASTORS, PRESENT AND PAST, FOR THEIR YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE HAMPTON COMMUNITY.

Whereas, in 1878, a group of believers, who knew Christ as their Savior, came out of Macedonia Baptist Church and built a bush arbor, which they called Everniza; and

Whereas, later these believers purchased an acre of land with a vision to build a church to worship God, and with much prayer the church was built, and the name was changed to Bethlehem; and

Whereas, the pioneer members included the late Reverend Jefferson Davis, Deacon York Jones, Deacon Ben Bostic, Reverend Charlie Bostick, Deacon J. W. Smith, Deacon Bennie Thames, Deacon John Youmans, Deacon Harkles Patterson, and Deacon Lander Jones; and

Whereas, the Reverend Jefferson Davis was chosen to be the first pastor, and upon his death, the church was blessed with a number of distinguished pastors who served the church and its congregation with great faith and devotion; and

Whereas, the church during its history has ordained a number of ministers of the gospel, along with many deacons; and

Whereas, the physical plant and programs of the church have also been expanded through the years. In its early years, land was acquired for expansion of the church, and a Sunday school was organized as well as a senior choir, the Benevolent Society, an usher board, and Pastor’s Aid Club; and

Whereas, one highlight of the church’s expansion was the remodeling of the church moving the front of the church to face the highway; and

Whereas, since 1960, several more ministers have been licensed and ordained, and a trustee board was organized, along with the youth choir, the young adult choir, the United Gospel Ensemble, the B. J. Burison Choir, the prayer band, the Bible Study Class, and the deaconess board; and

Whereas, for the years ahead as in those that have passed, the members of Bethlehem Baptist Church heartily believe and adhere to the words of the prophet Isaiah: “they that wait on the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint”; and

Whereas, the members of the House of Representatives would like to publicly recognize and extend heartiest congratulations to the church’s congregation, its ministers and staff, and its countless friends and admirers on the occasion of this meaningful anniversary. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives celebrate the joyous occasion of the one hundred thirty‑fifth anniversary of Bethlehem Baptist Church, and congratulate and commend the congregation and its pastors, present and past, for their years of service to the Hampton community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Bethlehem Baptist Church of Hampton, South Carolina.

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