**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CELEBRATE THE JOYOUS OCCASION OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE MOUNT ZION UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND TO CONGRATULATE AND COMMEND PASTOR DORIS R. BRIGHT AND THE CONGREGATION FOR THEIR YEARS OF FAITHFUL MINISTRY IN THE SUMTER COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives are pleased to learn that Mount Zion United Methodist Church of Sumter will celebrate its sesquicentennial anniversary on October 28, 2012; and

Whereas, in 1862, a small company of Christian men and women in Sumter banded together, going from house to house, to worship God, and in 1864, Mount Zion Harbor was organized; and

Whereas, shortly after, the small assembly moved to Eliza Branch at the Spring where they remained there for several years under the care of local preachers and members and with an increasing desire to establish a permanent house of worship; and

Whereas, in 1873, Reverend True Whittler, the presiding elder of the Charleston District, sent Reverend B. James to be Mount Zion’s first pastor; and

Whereas, by 1876, their hopes for a permanent place of worship were realized when Colonel James D. Blanding granted a parcel of land for one cent to be used by the congregation of Mount Zion Episcopal Church for public worship and Sabbath school only; and

Whereas, several years later in 1883, Colonel Blanding sold the trustees of Mt. Zion Episcopal Church about 2.2 acres of land for twenty‑two dollars to be used for public worship, church school, and all community purposes as well as a public school; and

Whereas, a tragic fire in 1913 destroyed the structure erected on the property, but services continued under a tree there, and offerings were taken until the cornerstone was laid for the present church in 1914 with Reverend S. A. Funchess as pastor; and

Whereas, under the leadership of Reverend F. G. Dubose, the congregation purchased an organ, and Reverend Samuel Miller strengthened the church and followed more closely the guidelines for the United Methodist Church; and

Whereas, during the ministry of Reverend H. B. Shaw, the Young Adult Choir was formed, which later became the Zionites, and the sanctuary was beautified under Reverend R. M. McFadden; and

Whereas, in 1975, Reverend Dr. I. DeQuincey Newman was appointed pastor, who taught the congregation parliamentary procedure, duties of the officers, and the organization of the Methodist Church and inspired a debt‑free renovation plan that began in 1981; and

Whereas, Reverend Cassandra Jackson, the church’s first female pastor followed to complete the renovations, then Reverend Thurmond Williams; Reverend Otis Jerome Nelson, Sr., in 1986; Reverend Rosetta Ross in 1992; Reverend Kenneth Nelson in 1993; Reverend Robert Mack in 1994; Reverend Jonathan Brown in 1995; Reverend Telley Lynette Gadson in 1999; Reverend Nathaniel A. Evans, Jr., in 2004; Reverend Robert Thompson in 2005; Reverend Barbara L. Reid in 2006; Reverend Doris R. Bright in 2011; and

Whereas, these pastors led the church as they celebrated the burning of the mortgage, erected a church sign and later an historical marker, purchased a 25‑passenger shuttle bus and public‑address system, held their first joint Easter Sunrise Service, published the first *Mount Zion Flyer* newsletter, designated the fourth Sunday of each month as Children/Youth Sunday, added a Sacrificial Prayer Ministry, and united in ministry with Antioch and Shepherd United Methodist churches in the North Sumter Charge. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the House of Representatives, by this resolution, wish to celebrate the joyous occasion of the one hundred fiftieth anniversary of Mount Zion United Methodist Church and congratulate and commend Pastor Doris R. Bright and the congregation for their years of faithful ministry in the Sumter community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Mount Zion United Methodist Church of Sumter.

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