**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND COMMEND REVEREND ADRIAN WIDEMAN AND THE MOUNT OLIVE BAPTIST CHURCH CONGREGATION FOR THEIR MEANINGFUL SPIRITUAL MINISTRY IN THE TOWN OF NINETY SIX AND TO CONGRATULATE THEM UPON THE OCCASION OF THE ONE HUNDRED FORTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH.

Whereas, the inscription on the cornerstone of Mount Olive Baptist Church proudly attests that the church was organized in 1874, and the first congregants met on land donated by the Payne family; and

Whereas, the congregation’s first pastor was Reverend Ned Starks, followed by his own son, Reverend P. Starks. Several pastors filled the pulpit from that time until the 1930s when Reverend C. B. Freeman began a ministry that lasted thirty‑eight years; and

Whereas, after the church building was completely destroyed by fire during a lightning storm in 1960, Antioch and Old Mount Zion churches opened their doors for the congregation to hold services, and revival services were held under a tent; and

Whereas, the first rally to raise funds to rebuild Mount Olive raised $3,700. A finance committee was organized, and the church structure was completely renovated in the early 1970s; and

Whereas, in 1976, Reverend H. T. Legons was installed as pastor, and he served faithfully for almost thirty‑four years until his death in 2010. He led the congregation in a complete renovation of the church in 1980, the construction of a new fellowship hall; the establishment of a board of trustees; the installation of central heat and air conditioning; upholstering of the pews; and the purchase of hymnals, Bibles, and a copy machine; and

Whereas, in the late 1990s and early 2000s, Deacon Joe Johnson built, installed, and donated church bulletin boards, pew racks for Bibles and hymnals, standing lecterns, and flower stands. Deacon William Jones and his staff constructed a lighted entrance sign and brick flower boxes to beautify the grounds, and funds were raised in 2003 for the installation of stained‑glass windows; and

Whereas, in March 2006, Mount Olive paid off the mortgage for the Fellowship Hall three years early and celebrated with a mortgage‑burning, and in 2008, the congregation began renovations for the church building that included paneling, new lighting, a sound system, and repair of the church’s steeple; and

Whereas, under the Reverend Adrian Wideman’s leadership since 2011, the church has hired a minister of music, formed new choirs, and added a young adult Sunday school class and a nursery; and

Whereas, in 2013, corporate prayer and prayer walks became part of the church life, and the taping of the worship services was begun. The church auxiliaries now include a deacon board; a trustee board; Sunday school; an usher board; a choir for seniors, youth, young adults, and males; a praise dance team; deaconesses; women’s auxiliary; and culinary and wellness ministries; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives appreciate the long and exemplary ministry of Mount Olive Baptist Church and celebrate with the congregation and pastor as they reach this significant milestone. 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 commend Reverend Adrian Wideman and the Mount Olive Baptist Church congregation for their meaningful spiritual ministry in the Town of Ninety Six and congratulate them upon the occasion of the one hundred fortieth anniversary of the organization of the church.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Reverend Adrian Wideman.

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