**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR METROPOLITAN AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL ZION CHURCH UPON THE OCCASION OF ITS SESQUICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY AND TO CONGRATULATE THE PASTOR AND THE CONGREGATION FOR ONE HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS OF MINISTRY IN THE CHESTER COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) Zion Church of Chester County will celebrate its one hundred fiftieth anniversary on Sunday, April 10, 2016; and

Whereas, founded in 1866 by a group of colored people who “wanted to exercise their religious liberties by worshipping God under their own vine and fig tree,” the church began worshiping from house to house until a permanent location was available; and

Whereas, in 1866, Barney Burton called for Reverend Byrd Hampton Taylor, the pastor of Clinton Chapel A.M.E. Zion Church in Charlotte, North Carolina, to come to Chester for a meeting of these worshipers at the County Courthouse; and

Whereas, Reverend Taylor issued a local preacher’s license to Dublin Isaac “D. I.” Walker at this meeting and appointed Barney Burton to have charge of the congregation which chose the name Mount Zion A.M.E. Zion Church; and

Whereas, on March 24, 1867, Bishop Joseph J. Clinton organized the South Carolina Conference in Chester and ordained Reverend D. I. Walker deacon and elder and appointed him as pastor of the Mount Zion Church, as the presiding elder of Chester County, and as a missionary; and

Whereas, James Hemphill, a prominent lawyer, donated land for Mt. Zion where worship was held under a brush arbor, and the deed was signed by the trustees on July 12, 1868. On August 6, 1874, Mr. Hemphill deeded the cemetery property to the trustees; and

Whereas, renamed Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church, Mt. Zion used wood donated by a freedman and estate owner, Moses Benson, to erect a wooden structure between 1874 and 1877 while the Reverends Phelix Thompson and J. C. Price served as pastors; and

Whereas, a place of worship and an intellectual center in the historic district of Chester, the church grew and raised funds to build a brick structure without assuming debt, and the new Romanesque Revival edifice was dedicated on Sunday, August 2, 1914; and

Whereas, at the dedication services, the sermon was delivered by the Right Reverend Bishop A. J. Warner, A.M., D.D., of Charlotte, presiding bishop of the 8th Episcopal District of the A.M.E. Zion Church, and the pastor was the Reverend H. S. McMullen, B.D., and the presiding elder was Reverend W. M. Robinson, D.D.; and

Whereas, throughout a century and a half, God has used spirit‑led gospel trumpeters and laity to continue the legacy of worshipful zeal and faith in God exhibited by the builders of Mount Zion, the Mother House of the South Carolina Conference, serving to transform all who worship there; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is grateful for the ministry of Metropolitan A.M.E. Zion Church in Chester County, and the members celebrate the joyous milestone of the church’s one hundred fiftieth anniversary with the congregation. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, recognize and honor Metropolitan African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church upon the occasion of its sesquicentennial anniversary and congratulate the pastor and the congregation for one hundred fifty years of ministry in the Chester community.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑