**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHARLESTON ON THE OCCASION OF ITS HISTORIC ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY, TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR A CENTURY AND A HALF OF SERVICE TO GOD AND THE COMMUNITY, AND TO DECLARE OCTOBER 11, 2015, AS CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH DAY IN SOUTH CAROLINA.

Whereas, having been founded in 1865, Calvary Baptist Church of Charleston is celebrating its historic one hundred fiftieth anniversary in 2015; and

Whereas, Calvary Baptist’s beginnings are rooted in the Civil War era of American history. At its founding, Calvary was named the Baptist Church in Charleston, but to distinguish it from other Baptist churches in the area, it was called Colored Baptist Church. The Reverend Charles Smalls was named the fledgling church’s first pastor; and

Whereas, once Calvary Baptist was established, it began to work with other black Baptist churches to organize a local association and the state convention. It was a founding member of the Gethsemane Baptist Association in November 1865. Gethsemane, predecessor of the Charleston County Baptist Association, was the first African‑American Baptist association in the State, and Calvary’s pastors served as leaders in the new organization. Calvary Baptist Church was also a founding member of the Baptist Educational and Missionary Convention of South Carolina in 1877; and

Whereas, the church also has provided leadership to its city in the area of civil rights, as during the pastoral service of the Reverend Frederick Dawson, elected Calvary’s sixteenth pastor in 1948; and

Whereas, in 1877, the Baptist Church in Charleston changed its official name to the Calvary Baptist Church of Charleston for the Advancement of Christianity in the State of South Carolina; and

Whereas, over the years, Calvary Baptist has weathered many natural disasters, as when on August 31, 1886, Charleston was hit by one of the greatest earthquakes in American history. In that crisis, Calvary’s facilities were damaged but not destroyed, by the grace of God. In 1989, the church purchased property at 620 Rutledge Avenue in Charleston and in time built its present sanctuary there; and

Whereas, in 2007, Calvary elected its current pastor, the Reverend Arthur Evans, Sr. Under Pastor Evans’ leadership, Calvary serves the Lord as “A Kingdom Church on a Kingdom Mission” and seeks to live out its Scripture text, found in Matthew 6:33 (KJV): “But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you”; and

Whereas, to celebrate its milestone sesquicentennial anniversary, the church held special services on October 11, 2015, as well as a black‑tie gala on October 2, 2015; and

Whereas, Calvary Baptist Church has been a beacon of light and a community worship center in the Charleston area for one hundred fifty years, and, God willing, will continue its godly heritage for many more years of worship and service. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and congratulate Calvary Baptist Church of Charleston on the occasion of its historic one hundred fiftieth anniversary, commend the church for a century and a half of service to God and the community, and declare October 11, 2015, as Calvary Baptist Church Day in South Carolina.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Calvary Baptist Church.

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