**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE CAMPBELL CHAPEL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH UPON THE OCCASION OF ITS 144TH ANNIVERSARY, TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE CHURCH FOR ITS DEEP HERITAGE IN BLUFFTON, AND TO COMMEND ITS LEADERSHIP AND CONGREGATION FOR THEIR MANY YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are pleased to recognize and honor Campbell Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church as it celebrates this important milestone on July 15, 2018; and

Whereas, Campbell Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church was founded in 1874 when its original building, the former Bluffton Methodist Episcopal Church, was purchased by nine courageous former slaves: Jacob Chisholm, Renty Fields, Williams Ferguson, Jeffrey Bumcombe, William Smiley, David Heyward, Theodore Wilson, Christopher Bryan, and William Lightburn. The church was named Campbell Chapel A.M.E. in honor of Bishop J. P. Campbell, who was Presiding Bishop over South Carolina at that time; and

Whereas, the local ministers of the original church were Reverend J. J. Johnson; Reverend Elijah Grant; Reverend Jeffery Bumcombe, who later became pastor; Reverend Willie A. Hamilton; and Reverend Ben Mitchell. The ministers who pastored in the original church were Reverends Miles, Holmes, Williams, Gibbs, Wolff, Glen, Kelly, Jennings, Chisholms, Burgess, Gillison, Jenkins, Brown, Tolbert, Atkins, Green, James, William Green, T. D. Graham, L. T. Baker, Jeffery Bumcombe, John Washington, George Flowers, Samuel S. McPherson, A.C. Keitt, Willie Brown, and I. W. Wilborn, Jr.; and

Whereas, under the leadership of these pastors, the church’s original building and congregation expanded and grew. Although the building eventually became too expensive to repair, it was named a national historic site in 2002 and is now being preserved for future generations. The church’s current building, dedicated in 2001, consists of a sanctuary that seats approximately three hundred fifty, a multi‑purpose room, a library, a pastor’s study, an administrative assistant’s office, a fellowship hall, five classrooms, a finance room, a narthex, seven restrooms, and a commercial kitchen; and

Whereas, since the church’s inception, Campbell Chapel’s ministries have grown significantly, and the church currently thrives under the leadership of Reverend Dr. Jon R. Black, who has served as pastor since March 2015. Reverend Black has organized Campbell Chapel’s ministries around health and wholeness, personal stewardship, and family life, and his work in these arenas has been recognized nationally. Under Reverend Black’s leadership, Campbell Chapel even paid off its mortgage in May of 2018. Looking forward, the church plans to adopt several low‑income communities, resurrect its historic chapel, provide childcare for local families, and combat the destruction of African-American culture through a cultural arts center; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are grateful for the ministry of Campbell Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church and its service to the community of Bluffton and the State of South Carolina. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, congratulate Campbell Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church upon the occasion of its 144th anniversary, recognize and honor the church for its deep heritage in Bluffton, and commend its leadership and congregation for their many years of service to the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Campbell Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church.

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