**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE PASTOR AND CONGREGATION OF TRINITY BAPTIST CHURCH OF FLORENCE FOR ONE HUNDRED FIFTY YEARS OF FAITHFUL MINISTRY IN THE COMMUNITY AND TO CELEBRATE WITH THEM UPON THE CHURCH’S SESQUICENTENNIAL ANNIVERSARY.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that Trinity Baptist Church, which began when a group of recently freed slaves in the Florence community gathered to worship God, will celebrate its one hundred fiftieth anniversary in 2019; and

Whereas, in 1867, Reverend Wesley J. Parnell came to Florence and led the group of believers to organize as a church. They met in the small house of Jacob and Sarah Lindsay on Front Street which they soon outgrew because of the effectual care of Reverend Parnell; and

Whereas, through the persistent efforts of Brother Jack Quillen, a site was granted by Colonel George Dargan of Darlington where they worshiped under a brush arbor, and Trinity Baptist Church came into being with Reverend Parnell as the official pastor; and

Whereas, Trinity soon outgrew this sanctuary, and the growing congregation undertook the purchase of a permanent home, a frame structure about fifty by seventy‑five feet in size, in which the church flourished, sending her influence out into the world. During this time, Trinity played a vital role in forming what is now the Baptist Missionary and Educational Convention of South Carolina, but the church suffered a loss at the death of Reverend Parnell in 1873; and

Whereas, the second pastor, Reverend Grief Carter of Virginia, brought many new members during his eleven years of service at the church. In 1884, Reverend Eden Rainey Roberts from Kingstree came to serve as pastor, and during his seventeen years, he led the congregation to its third site where the sanctuary now stands; and

Whereas, three pastors followed Reverend Roberts from 1901 to 1907, when Reverend Charles T. Taylor accepted the call. During his nineteen years as pastor, the church prospered spiritually and financially, and membership almost doubled. The church, through Reverend Taylor, helped to establish Morris College; and

Whereas, in 1927, Reverend William Preston Jones of Charleston began serving as pastor during a financial crisis. He formed the Reference Board that empowered the church, and he organized the Deaconess Board to assist the Deacon Board in its work; and

Whereas, after his death in 1932, Reverend Andrew W. Hill of Charlotte became pastor in 1934 and remained until his death in 1952. Under his leadership, a parsonage was purchased, as well as a heating unit and the pipe organ; and

Whereas, Reverend James J. Abney of Columbia was then called to pastor Trinity and served for seven years. While he was there, the church added a nursery, conference room, and kitchen; ministries were begun; and Carver Street Baptist Church was organized; and

Whereas, Reverend Horace P. Sharper from Sumter served as pastor from 1959 to 1961, when Reverend William P. Diggs of Rock Hill came to lead the church. Reverend Diggs stayed for over fifty years, leading the church in giving to missions, benevolences, and education; organizing many facets of ministry; and making significant improvements and additions to the physical plant; and

Whereas, a pastoral search that began in 2013 led to a call in 2015 to Reverend Dr. Calvin E. Robinson, Jr., from Milford, Connecticut. Today, midweek Bible study at Trinity is filled with hungry learners; choirs have reorganized to assist the growing congregation; and fellowship hall and sanctuary renovations have been completed; and

Whereas, through a century and a half of changes, Trinity Baptist Church has been faithful to its call to worship and serve God, and the House of Representatives wishes the congregation many more years of growth and prosperity. 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 the pastor and congregation of Trinity Baptist Church of Florence for one hundred fifty years of faithful ministry in the community and celebrate with them upon the church’s sesquicentennial anniversary.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Reverend Dr. Calvin E. Robinson.

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