**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEND MOUNT ZION BAPTIST CHURCH IN BLACKVILLE FOR ONE AND A HALF CENTURIES OF MINISTRY IN AND SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY AND TO EXTEND WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE CHURCH’S HISTORIC ANNIVERSARY.

Whereas, founded in 1869, Mount Zion Baptist Church had fifteen charter members set up a bush arbor for a place of worship near the Holman Bridge, which was later named Mount Zion; and

Whereas, the church grew rapidly until a committee was tasked with finding a suitable tract of land for a church, which resulted in the purchase of six acres on which the church still stands; and

Whereas, R. D. Rice was selected as the second Pastor of the Church. He was ordained during the pastorate of Reverend Peter Rice. Being the first ordained pastor, he served for twenty years. Reverend Rice provided strong leadership and Mount Zion grew to be a strong Church. Reverend Rice was followed by Reverend Haggard, Reverend G. G. Daniels served for seven years, Reverend J. H. Posey served for two years, Reverend Callahan for one year, and Reverend R. F. Lee served Mount Zion for three years; and

Whereas, Reverend O. T. McPherson served faithfully for fourteen years, followed by Reverend G. W. Block who served for ten years, Reverend Sammie J. Rice for five, Reverend Henry Bush for four, and Reverend C. L. Anderson for six; and

Whereas, for ten years, Reverend Morris Wright, Sr., served as pastor until he became ill, and his son Reverend John Wright served shortly in his place, overseeing major repairs to the building and grounds and creating a current, active church roster. Next Reverend W. B. Coleman, Jr., established the first Vacation Bible School; and

Whereas, from 1961 until his death eighteen years later, Reverend Aaron Bush, son of a previous pastor Henry Bush, served Mount Zion as pastor, overseeing improvements, renovations, and the addition of an education room. He instituted a planning committee in 1964, which changed the church’s organizational structure, reinstated services on second Sundays, issued yearly budgets and quarterly financial reports, and introduced Sunday bulletins and tithe envelopes. He added a Pastor’s Aide Club, Floral Club, and Missionary Circles, and W. M. Barton became associate pastor; and

Whereas, Reverend Alvin C. Settles, Jr., followed as pastor in 1980, and an annex and baptismal pool were installed, two buses purchased, some eleven acres purchased for use as a memorial garden and for recreational activities, and two choirs organized; and

Whereas, he was followed by Reverend Freddie L. Wright in 1995, who began holding services every Sunday, oversaw major renovations and the purchase of two vans, and founded several new ministries. In 2003, Clary Green became the first church member to be ordained as a preacher, and more members followed; and

Whereas, in 2017, Reverend Charles Allen Moses accepted the charge to pastor Mount Zion, which has continued to grow spiritually and physically under his leadership and through such activities as hosting the first College Day with the South Carolina State University Gospel Choir; and

Whereas, Mount Zion Baptist has been a beacon of light in Barnwell County for one hundred fifty years, and by God’s providential hand, the congregation will continue its treasured heritage of worship and service for many years to come. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, commend Mount Zion Baptist Church in Blackville for one and a half centuries of ministry in and service to the community and extend warmest congratulations on the occasion of the church’s historic anniversary.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Reverend Charles Allen Moses.

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