**A** **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION**

TO COMMEND MOUNT PISGAH BAPTIST CHURCH OF ORANGEBURG FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY AND A HALF OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY AND TO EXTEND WARMEST CONGRATULATIONS ON THE OCCASION OF THE CHURCH’S HISTORIC ONE HUNDRED SIXTY‑SIXTH ANNIVERSARY.

Whereas, having had its earliest beginnings circa 1854, Mount Pisgah Baptist Church of Orangeburg is celebrating its historic one hundred sixty‑sixth anniversary in 2020; and

Whereas, although there are conflicting views on the origin of the church, it is believed by church members that the congregation had its unofficial beginnings in 1853 or 1854, when its people banded together, even though they were slaves, to serve God. However, the church was officially organized after the emancipation of slaves in 1865 when a small number of black members belonging to First Baptist Church withdrew to form their own church. Mount Pisgah Baptist Church thus became the first organized black church in Orangeburg, and it is considered to be the “mother” of all of the black Baptist churches in Orangeburg; and

Whereas, Mount Pisgah’s original name was Sunnyside Baptist Church, and the Reverend Jacob Govan, a Branchville resident, served as its first pastor from 1865 to 1877. Sunnyside Baptist changed its name to Mount Pisgah Baptist Church in 1870; and

Whereas, the original church structure was destroyed by fire in 1902, but the congregation rebuilt it the following year. A.W. Thorne, a black builder, constructed the larger and more functional new facility. It was constructed in an early 20th‑century Romanesque Revival style, and its brick construction and sophisticated design are seen as evidence of the dedication of its congregation during a period when few African Americans made more than a basic living. The pyramid with cross‑gable design of the church, as well as its fenestration detail and interior features, make Mount Pisgah an important example of turn‑of‑the‑century religious architecture in Orangeburg. One of the oldest churches in both Orangeburg and South Carolina, Mount Pisgah was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1985; and

Whereas, Mount Pisgah Baptist Church has as its mission “to make disciples of the unchurched, evangelize the whole world, and to represent Christ in all we do.” To accomplish its mission, its members serve in numerous ministries within the church, such as the Christian Education Ministry, Deacons’ Ministry, Floral Club, Health/Wellness Ministry, Human Resource Ministry, Media Ministry, Music Ministry, Prayer Intercessors, Senior Missionary Ministry, and Youth Ministry; and

Whereas, Mount Pisgah has been served by thirteen ministers, the first twelve being the Reverends Jacob Govan, J. Harvey, J. Williams, A.J. Stokes, Samuel W. Flynn, R. Rice, J.H. Posey, Charles D. Salley, Nelson C. Nix, John D. Rhodes, F.G.S. Everett, and D. Edward Chaney. During its one hundred fifty‑seventh year, on March 1, 2011, the members of Mt. Pisgah rejoiced as the Reverend Gregory A. Young officially began his service as the thirteenth pastor of this historic church; and

Whereas, Mount Pisgah Baptist Church has been a beacon of light in Orangeburg for one hundred sixty‑six years, and, God willing, will continue its godly heritage in many more years of worship and service. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives, the Senate concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, commend Mount Pisgah Baptist Church of Orangeburg for more than a century and a half of service to the community and extend warmest congratulations on the occasion of the church’s historic one hundred sixty‑sixth anniversary.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to the Reverend Gregory A. Young for Mount Pisgah Baptist Church.

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