**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR MARIETTA FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF GREENVILLE COUNTY FOR ITS MANY YEARS OF DEDICATED CHRISTIAN MINISTRY AND TO EXTEND TO THE CHURCH SPECIAL THANKS FOR THE TIMELY ASSISTANCE IT PROVIDED, AND CONTINUES TO PROVIDE, TO THE RESIDENTS OF THE LAUREL AND HARDY LAKE COMMUNITY AFTER TORNADOES RAVAGED THIS AREA IN APRIL 2020.

Whereas, it is entirely appropriate to honor those organizations and individuals who give tirelessly of themselves to nourish the souls of men and assist the needy; and

Whereas, Marietta First Baptist Church of Greenville County stands among their number as an outstanding Gospel and humanitarian‑aid ministry, one much admired by all who know its work and who have benefited from it throughout the church’s many years as a major community supporter. As part of its ministry, the church serves its neighbors through an extensive and expansive list of mission projects to benefit children, the elderly, our veterans, and less advantaged citizens; and

Whereas, this spring, Marietta First Baptist was called on once again to demonstrate its heart for helping and caring; and

Whereas, after severe tornadoes hit the Greenville‑Pickens County line community of Laurel and Hardy Lake on April 13, 2020, roads were impassable, manufactured homes were ripped from their foundations, and large vehicles were turned on their sides; and

Whereas, distressingly, trees were uprooted and tossed across the main‑entrance road. Their limbs and debris were scattered everywhere, making it difficult to locate residences or even recognize where everything was located because no landmarks survived; and

Whereas, a myriad of hair‑raising stories of survival blew into public view from this catastrophe, including reports of residents who had trees crash through their roofs and land in bed beside them; and

Whereas, in the wake of this natural disaster, there was no access to this community, and no electrical power was functioning, nor could emergency or first responders provide desperately needed emergency services or help. People were truly suffering; and

Whereas, in response, Senior Pastor Brian Spearman and Building & Special Projects Coordinator Tedd Barnette of Marietta First Baptist, as well as volunteer members of the congregation, made it their mission to provide aid, comfort, and much‑needed resources to these injured and suffering community members by clearing roads, cutting and removing trees and limbs, and disposing of everything else that blocked the road into the community; and

Whereas, the Marietta First Baptist workers selflessly gave their time, treasure, and talent to the Laurel and Hardy Lake community residents to feed, house, clothe, comfort, and otherwise minister to them in the face of severe loss of property; and

Whereas, in responding to needs brought on by the recent tornadoes, Marietta First Baptist Church continues to accomplish its purpose of preaching the Gospel and serving its community. Grateful for Marietta First Baptist’s spiritual and material blessing on the people of South Carolina, particularly those of Greenville County, the House takes great pleasure in extending best wishes for God’s richest blessings as the church’s staff and volunteers continue to run the race the Lord has set before them. 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 Marietta First Baptist Church of Greenville County for its many years of dedicated Christian ministry and extend to the church special thanks for the timely assistance it provided, and continues to provide, to the residents of the Laurel and Hardy Lake community after tornadoes ravaged this area in April 2020.

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

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