**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE GOOD HOPE AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ORANGEBURG COUNTY, UPON THE OCCASION OF THE CHURCH’S ONE HUNDRED FIFTY‑SEVENTH ANNIVERSARY, AND TO COMMEND THE PASTORS AND THE CONGREGATION FOR THEIR MEANINGFUL MINISTRY IN THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that Good Hope African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Cope celebrated one hundred fifty‑seven years as a congregation on September 19, 2020; and

Whereas, as the first members of the church, just emerging from slavery, began to meet in a thick grove of trees called a bush harbor, Good Hope African Methodist Episcopal Church was organized between the years 1863 and 1864; and

Whereas, the first pastor of the church was Reverend Goings; the first presiding elder was Reverend Pruitt; and the first bishop was Daniel Alexander Payne. Its original annual conference was the Central Conference, and the church district was in Orangeburg; and

Whereas, an African American member of the church donated the land to the church, and the original sanctuary, constructed by members of the church, was completed in the Spring of 1897. Individuals who organized and established Good Hope AME Church included Scipio Huggins, Ellen Busby, Burl Huggins, Rita Huggins, Frank Coad, A. J. Ballard, and Victoria Huggins; and

Whereas, instructors from Claflin College and South Carolina State University visited the church and chose its location as a sight to establish a Masonic organization, and the Masonic Temple was located on the church grounds; and

Whereas, other ministers who served the Good Hope Circuit over the years were Reverends Player; Richardson; H. L. Haynes; Brooks; Coaxon; F. J. McFadden; W. Walker Jones; C. C. Burgess; Paul Carmichael; J. L. Fogle; C. L. Bars; J. J. Jackson; O. A. Morant; John Scott; Lemon; W. K. Wilson; Clarence Bennett; Harvey Sutton, Sr.; Robert C. Freeman, Jr.; Dr. Juenarral Keith; Ronnie Brown; Alfred Bradley; John A. Lewis; and Dr. Georgeann T. Pringle, the church’s first female pastor; and

Whereas, through the years, God has called five members from the congregation to preach His Word: Reverends Robert Lewis Cleckley, Ella Bamberg, Roberta Jackson, Tiffiny Jamison, and Sonovia Guinyard. Members of the congregation have been elected as officers of the Seventh Episcopal District Lay Organization, the Central Conference Sons of Allen, as well as area, district, conference, and Episcopal levels; and

Whereas, by June 1992, a much‑needed new and modern sanctuary was constructed and dedicated, and at the 1993 South Carolina Central Annual Conference, Good Hope AME Church was chosen to become a station church under the pastoral care of the Reverend Harvey Sutton, Sr.; and

Whereas, in 1995, the steeple, an organ, and stained‑glass windows were added to the church, and a licensed and fully operational Child Development Center was organized in the church’s fellowship hall in 1997 with numerous improvements in that building; and

Whereas, Good Hope began offering two Sunday morning worship services in 2001, and the Child Development Center received two educational grants totaling twenty‑eight and a half thousand dollars from the Sisters of Charity Foundation and two grants from the First Steps Program totaling seven thousand dollars in 1999 and 2004; and

Whereas, some of the outreach programs of the church include a summer feeding program, prison ministry, nursing home ministry, vacation Bible school, and a voter registration drive. Within the church additional ministries have included those for singles, couples and seniors; and

Whereas, the House of Representatives of the State of South Carolina commends the members and pastors of Good Hope AME Church as they celebrate one hundred fifty‑seven years of outstanding service to the community. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate and recognize Good Hope African Methodist Episcopal Church in Orangeburg County, upon the occasion of the church’s one hundred fifty‑seventh anniversary, and commend the pastors and the congregation for their meaningful ministry in the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be provided to the Reverend Dr. Georgeann T. Pringle.

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