**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE ECCLESIA CHURCH OF GOD IN CHRIST OF COLUMBIA UPON THE OCCASION OF ITS THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY, TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR THE CHURCH FOR ITS HERITAGE IN COLUMBIA, AND TO COMMEND ITS LEADERSHIP AND CONGREGATION FOR THEIR MANY YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are pleased to recognize Ecclesia Church of God in Christ of Columbia as it celebrates this important milestone on January 29, 2019; and

Whereas, Columbia’s Ecclesia Church of God in Christ was founded in 1989. The church held its first Sunday morning service at the Quality Inn on Broad River Road in Columbia, with twenty adults and sixteen children in attendance. Shortly thereafter, the church rejoiced in the appointment of Elder Ernest Smith as pastor; and

Whereas, in 1990, by the grace of God, the church was able to purchase 7.3 acres of land at 533 Sharpe Road and was further able to pay it off within four years. Also in 1990, Pastor Smith appointed Missionary Emma Lewis as Chairperson for the Ecclesia Women’s Department; and

Whereas, Pastor Smith preached unity to his flock, teaching them several times a week and witnessing the call of several Ministers from among the members of the congregation under his leadership, including Superintendent Douglas Macklin of Tipton Church of God in Christ in Tennessee, Elder Anderson Gray of James Hopewell Baptist Church in Newberry, and Elder Luther H. Holmes, Jr. of Genesis Church of God in Christ in Germany; and

Whereas, at the time of Pastor Ernest Smith’s homegoing to be with the Lord in 2004, the pastoral mantle was laid upon Elder Luther H. Holmes, Jr.; and

Whereas, since beginning worship in the Sharpe Road sanctuary on August 20, 2006, Ecclesia has been a beacon of light to its community, and the name of its people continues to ring out as *Ecclesia*, the “Called Out Ones”; and

Whereas, standing on the faith and strength of their first pastor and members, Ecclesia Church of God in Christ’s present pastor and congregation “press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus,” preaching and teaching the Word of God, and will continue their godly heritage in many more years of worship and service. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, congratulate Ecclesia Church of God in Christ of Columbia upon the occasion of its thirtieth anniversary, recognize and honor the church for its heritage in Columbia, and commend its leadership and congregation for their many years of service to the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Ecclesia Church of God in Christ of Columbia.

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