**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE ZION MOUNT MORIAH BAPTIST CHURCH, UPON THE OCCASION OF ITS ONE HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY, AND TO WISH THE PASTOR AND THE CONGREGATION MANY MORE YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE SPIRITUAL NEEDS OF THEIR COMMUNITY AND BEYOND.

Whereas, Zion Mount Moriah Baptist Church was organized in 1872 with sixty‑three charter members who had withdrawn from what were then called Zion Benevolent and Beulah Baptist churches in order to have a more convenient place of worship for African Americans living in the areas of Log Castle, Adams Bluff, Meeting House, and Dry Branch Plantations; and

Whereas, the nascent church called Simon Jenkins to serve as its first pastor and Pelham H. Jones, Robert Boyd, Scipio Green, Lewis Baily, Samuel Johnson, James Bolton, and Joseph Sumter, Sr., to serve as deacons. Pelham Jones was elected as chairman of the deacons; and

Whereas, within two years after the church was organized, it was agreed to purchase land to build a sanctuary, land which was purchased in 1870 from fellow member and church trustee Wilson Sumter. Construction on the sanctuary began in 1880; and

Whereas, in its century and a half, the church has been blessed with godly men to serve as pastors: Reverend George Washington Taylor from 1886; Reverend Oliver H. Hopkins, in 1887; Reverend Andrew Richbourg in 1889; Reverend Daniel Boyd; Reverend William Lowman in 1892; Reverend Spencer Adams in 1895; Reverend Pelham Jones in the early 1900s; and Reverend Harrison Gallman in 1916; and

Whereas, Reverend Westbury H. Neal was called as the tenth pastor of the church in 1942, and shortly after his arrival, a visiting minister observed the crowd and commented, “Build a new sanctuary or get rid of your pastor.” Under the leadership of Pastor Neal and the deacons, Zion Mount Moriah rebuilt the sanctuary in 1959, the entire church was bricked in 1968, and Pastor Neal resigned in 1978 after serving the congregation for thirty‑six years; and

Whereas, Zion Mount Moriah elected Reverend Blakely N. Scott III as the eleventh pastor in 1978, and under his leadership, the church was renovated in 1986. The church began plans to construct a new facility in 1995, which was completed on June 24, 2001, and the mortgage for the new edifice has been satisfied. The congregation purchased an additional 69.5 acres of land for future use; and

Whereas, Dr. Scott retired from Mount Moriah in December 2017, after serving as pastor for forty years. Deacon Lindburgh Sumter led the church in search of the next pastor, and in May 2018, the congregation elected one of the associate ministers, Reverend Dezmond B. Sumter, M. D., as the church’s twelfth pastor; and

Whereas, Dr. Sumter led Mount Moriah through the unprecedented times of the COVID‑19 pandemic, and the ministry has remained faithful to its mission of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Under Dr. Sumter’s leadership, the church paid off its land debt on 69.5 acres in September 2021; and

Whereas, several ministers have grown out of Mount Moriah Baptist Church, including Reverends Eddie Davis, William Dwight, and Yolanda Phillips. Reverends Cheryl English, Edna Grant, Ronald Jumper, Brenda Miller, and Lisa Prince currently serve as associate ministers; and

Whereas, believing “Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him,” Zion Mount Moriah Baptist Church continues its ministry to the community, and the South Carolina Senate wishes the congregation many years of fruitful ministry. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That that the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, congratulate Zion Mount Moriah Baptist Church, upon the occasion of its one hundred fiftieth anniversary, and wish the pastor and the congregation many more years of service to the spiritual needs of their community and beyond.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Reverend Dezmond B. Sumter.

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