**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR SAINT PETER AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate are pleased to recognize Saint Peter African Methodist Episcopal Church; and

Whereas, St. Peter’s was founded in 1880 by Peter Caldwell, Henry Glover, Albert Pauling, Elijah Robinson, and F. W. Williams, five former slaves who purchased a parcel of land from Thomas Ulmer for the sum of eight dollars. At the time of this transaction, the land was part of Orangeburg County; therefore, the deed was recorded in Orangeburg on August 4, 1881, by Donald Barton, the auditor. The deed stipulated that the land was to be utilized for construction of the proposed house of worship only; and

Whereas, Caldwell, Glover, Pauling, Robinson, and Williams, who became the first trustees of the church, were unable to fulfill their dream to erect a church due to insufficient funds. Thus, the church had its humble beginnings as a bush harbor; and

Whereas, the first pastor of the organized church was the Reverend Adam Williams. He was succeeded by the Reverend W. M. McDuffie, who worked diligently to realize the dream deferred. The construction of the church was completed in July of 1906; and

Whereas, St. Peter’s purpose was twofold. A school built next to the church served as the first school for African American children in Calhoun County. Professor Andrew Black was the principal and head teacher until his death in 1942. He also taught St. Peter’s Church School from the bush harbor days; and

Whereas, St. Peter’s has been blessed with several outstanding pastors, including the late Reverend B. F. Hildebrand, the late Reverend B. F. Sumter, the late Reverend J. S. Hunter, and the late Reverend W. J. Baxter. Reverend W. J. Baxter and Reverend J. C. Roberts were both appointed Presiding Elder; and

Whereas, the church has been modernized spiritually and materially through the years. Under the pastorate of the late Reverend E. O. Vance, the original building was brick veneered. During the inspired leadership of Reverend Baxter, the church was refurnished. Stained-glass windows were donated, the church’s first organ was purchased, and a phonics system was installed; and

Whereas, during Reverend Virginia Stith’s tenure, the church was re-roofed. Under Reverend Saint Julian Snider’s auspices, the Educational Complex was renovated. The Senior Classroom was transformed into the W. D. Shepard Conference Room, named in honor of a pastor who contributed generously to the building fund. During these improvements, Sister Ethel Joseph, president of the St. Peter AME Church of New York Club, donated a new steeple; and

Whereas, St. Peter’s was blessed with the appointment of Reverend Archie R. Fair in November of 2011. The church experienced a “renaissance” as a result of Reverend Fair’s character, vision, inspiration, dynamic preaching, and excellent teaching; and

Whereas, the annual Homecoming Observance was inaugurated during Reverend Bowman’s tenure. The event provides the members of the St. Peter AME Church New York Club the opportunity to worship collectively in their home church; and

Whereas, in 2016, St. Peter’s was damaged due to weather. Gladys G. Simmons received a vision from God to repair or build a new church. Following the prayers and persistence of David Glivens, Howard Jackson, Carl Simmons, and Gladys Simmons, and under the leadership of Reverend Archie Fair and with permission from Bishop Samuel L. Green, the building of a new church, on land donated by Cora B. Black and her daughters, began; and

Whereas, during the building process, Reverend Fair received a new assignment. Reverend Eduardo Curry stepped into leadership before also being given a new assignment. Reverend Larry J. Nelson then took on leadership, and the new church building, now Greater Saint Peter AME, was completed in January of 2020; and

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina Senate greatly appreciate the dedication and commitment that Saint Peter African Methodist Episcopal Church has shown in serving the people and the State of South Carolina. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the members of the South Carolina Senate, by this resolution, recognize and honor Saint Peter African Methodist Episcopal Church for the church’s contributions to the Cameron community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Pastor Larry J. Nelson.

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