**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND HONOR NAZARETH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, ONE OF THE OLDEST AND MOST HISTORIC CHURCHES IN THE UPSTATE, AND TO CONGRATULATE THE PASTOR, DR. MARK E. DURRETT, AND THE MEMBERS OF THE CONGREGATION UPON THE OCCASION OF THE CHURCH’S TWO HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY.

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives is pleased to learn that Nazareth Presbyterian Church will celebrate its semiquincentennial anniversary in 2022, a time of reflection on the church’s significant history in Spartanburg County; and

Whereas, before the formation of the United States of America, the first permanent settlement in what is now Spartanburg County was formed by Scotch‑Irish Presbyterian families in the hunting ground of Cherokee Indians on the Tyger River around 1755; and

Whereas, the Presbyterian congregation worshiped in homes until 1765 when a log meetinghouse was built near a spring called Meeting‑House Spring on the land grant of John Caldwell. The land was later deeded to the church and was incorporated in 1772; and

Whereas, from its early days, the people of Nazareth Presbyterian Church ministered to the educational as well as the spiritual needs of the congregation. Reverend W. C. Davis, the first pastor, taught a classical school in the congregation. In 1794, the Nazareth Philanthropic Society was organized, and it was incorporated in 1797 “for the benevolent and patriotic purposes of patronizing and promoting the interest of learning…as far as our influence may extend.” This group of men provided teachers for neighborhood schools that needed them; and

Whereas, during the Revolutionary War, all able‑bodied men of Nazareth fought for the nation’s independence as part of the Spartan Regiment under Colonel John Thomas, from which Spartanburg derived its name. They participated in such major battles as King’s Mountain, Cowpens, Charles Towne, Blackstock, Valley Forge, Yorktown, and Ninety‑Six; and

Whereas, between 1785 and 1790, a larger house of worship was built, and in 1832, the present church was erected, using bricks made near the Tyger River and pews made of heart pines; and

Whereas, while studying for the ministry, James Gilliland taught a classical school at Rocky Springs near the present community of Moore, and upon ordination, he became the pastor of Nazareth; and

Whereas, from July 2‑7, 1802, an historic camp meeting revival was held at Nazareth during which some five thousand souls camped in Poplar Springs to hear thirteen Presbyterian ministers and many Baptist and Methodist ministers preaching in the services; and

Whereas, called “the mother of churches,” Nazareth Presbyterian, under the leadership of various ministers of the church, helped to form no fewer that ten churches from its congregation, including two churches of black congregations; and

Whereas, the South Carolina House of Representatives deeply appreciates the prosperous history of Nazareth Presbyterian Church in ministering to the educational and spiritual needs of the Spartanburg community for a quarter of a millennium and wish the members of the congregation continued blessings. 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 Nazareth Presbyterian Church, one of the oldest and most historic churches in the Upstate, and congratulate the pastor, Dr. Mark E. Durrett, and the members of the congregation upon the occasion of the church’s two hundred fiftieth anniversary.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Dr. Mark E. Durrett.

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