**A** **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

TO CONGRATULATE UNION MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH OF BARNWELL ON THE OCCASION OF ITS HISTORIC ONE HUNDRED TWENTY‑NINTH ANNIVERSARY AND TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR MORE THAN A CENTURY AND A QUARTER OF SERVICE TO GOD AND THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, organized in the late 1800s, Union Missionary Baptist Church of Barnwell is celebrating its one hundred twenty‑ninth anniversary of gospel ministry in 2022; and

Whereas, in the year 1893, Sister Emily Coleman Rouse and her four children; the Reverend J.D. Coleman; and B.J. Coleman purchased land consisting of one‑half acre and built a bush harbor. They named it Bentley Branch. Membership consisted of B.J. Coleman, John Williams, W.M. Bing, Emily Rouse, Sarah Williamson, Susan Williamson, and Mary Bing; and

Whereas, in 1901, the church’s name was changed to Bethlehem Baptist Church. The congregation chose as deacons William Bing, J.D. Coleman, and Samuel Odom; and

Whereas, the Reverend S.J. Davis was the church’s first pastor. Reverend Davis ordained as deacons William Bing and W.M. Bing and ministered to the church for eleven years; and

Whereas, the Reverend G.W. Cherry was called as pastor in 1912. He ordained the following as deacons: Lee Dunbar, D.B. Williamson, W.M. Ashley, and B.T. Williamson. He also licensed and ordained the Reverend J.D. Coleman. Reverend Cherry having passed away in 1924, the Reverend G.C. Williams became pastor in 1925 and served for two years; and

Whereas, in 1927, the church called the Reverend W.M. Phinizy as pastor. Reverend Phinizy ordained the following deacons: Bryant Williamson, Otis Williamson, S.E. Roundtree, M. Buggs, Edgar Morris, Stephen Odom, and Cleveland Coleman. Further, Reverend Phinizy licensed and ordained the Reverend David Scott; and

Whereas, due to governmental plans that required everyone to move, in 1951 Bethlehem and sister church St. Luke decided to unite their two congregations under the name Union Baptist Church and under the leadership of the Reverend W.M. Phinizy. Following in his grandfather’s footsteps, the Reverend C.W. Phinizy took up his duties as pastor, and church officers were selected; and

Whereas, under the Reverend C.W. Phinizy’s leadership, the church was renovated. New pews were purchased, pulpit furniture and central heating and air were installed, and the baptism pool was relocated inside the church. Additionally, the church acquired a fellowship hall, kitchen, and intercom system; and

Whereas, notably, Deacon Bryant Williamson, nephew of the Reverend J.D. Coleman, one of the church’s early fathers, served as church treasurer for fifty‑nine years before his passing in 1981; and

Whereas, in 2005, the Reverend C.W. Phinizy went to be with the Lord. Today, the Reverend John Wesley Dingle shepherds the congregation as presiding pastor, and the church has been renamed Union Missionary Baptist Church. Over the years, the church has grown into a blessed meeting place for both members and friends, and many young souls have been baptized into the church; and

Whereas, Union Missionary Baptist Church has been a beacon of light and a community worship center in Barnwell for one hundred twenty‑nine years, and, God willing, will continue its godly heritage for many more years of worship and service. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the House of Representatives:

That the members of the South Carolina House of Representatives, by this resolution, congratulate Union Missionary Baptist Church of Barnwell on the occasion of its historic one hundred twenty‑ninth anniversary and commend the church for more than a century and a quarter of service to God and the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Union Missionary Baptist Church of Barnwell.

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