**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**S. 552**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

Concurrent Resolution

Sponsors: Senator Devine

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Introduced in the Senate on April 15, 2025

Introduced in the House on April 22, 2025

Adopted by the General Assembly on April 22, 2025

Summary: Ridgewood Missionary Baptist Church - 100th anniversary

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

 Date Body Action Description with journal page number

 4/15/2025 Senate Introduced, adopted, sent to House (Senate Journal‑page 9)

 4/22/2025 House Introduced, adopted, returned with concurrence (House Journal‑page 55)

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[04/15/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/552_20250415.docx)

A concurrent RESOLUTION

TO congratulate Ridgewood Missionary Baptist church on the occasion of its centennial ANNIVERSArY AND TO CONGRATULATE AND HONOR REVEREND DARRIUS GRAVES AND THE CONGREGATION FOR THEIR YEARS OF DEDICATED SERVICE TO THE RIDGEWOOD COMMUNITY.

Whereas, the members of the South Carolina General Assembly are pleased to learn that Ridgewood Missionary Baptist Church of Richland County will celebrate its one-hundred-year anniversary in November 2025; and

Whereas, founded in 1925 by Reverend Zachariah E. Dennis, the first service for the Ridgewood Tabernacle was held in the living room of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Knightner. As the congregation grew, the location, affectionately remembered as “Brush Arbor,” moved to the front yard of the Knightner’s home on Monticello Road. The edifice had no floors and the benches they sat on had no backs; and

Whereas, a building fund committee, formed in 1927 to raise monies for land in the Ridgewood community, purchased the lot at 5326 Ridgeway Street in Columbia. The first church was erected by Reverend Z.E. Dennis and men of the Ridgewood community. Candidates for baptism were baptized in a branch behind the church until a pool could be built under the pulpit inside of the church. Mr. Talley T. Marsh was the first person to be baptized in the branch; and

Whereas, upon the death of Rev. Dennis in 1955, Assistant Pastor Jeremiah W. Witherspoon was elected to serve as pastor. During his twelve-year tenure, ground was broken for the building of a new sanctuary in 1963. A time capsule was placed in the cornerstone of the new church; and

Whereas, Reverend Levi C. Chavous, a true visionary, took the helm of Ridgewood Missionary in 1967 and led the congregation to what would become decades worth of expansion and opportunity for community involvement, programs, community service, and interpersonal growth. Ridgewood Foundation Incorporated, a nonprofit tax-exempt organization was established, and the building fund grew. Improvements included a central heating and air system, carpeting, new pews, a ten thousand dollar organ, a communion table, and a surface parking lot. A new Family Life Center, now known as the L.C. Chavous Conference Center, added a daycare center, and gymnasium; and

Whereas, Reverend Chavous pastored Ridgewood Missionary for forty years before retiring and handing the torch to Assistant Pastor Reverend Fred W. Coit, who was installed on June 1, 2008. Under Reverend Coit’s guidance, business operations, ministries, and committees were expanded. Reverend Coit also appointed deacons, trustees, and named Reverend Darrius Graves as assistant pastor; and

Whereas, while serving Ridgewood Missionary, Reverend Graves has been a member of the male chorus, the first responders ministry, and youth minister. On the retirement of Reverend Coit’s June 1, 2024, Pastor Graves became the senior pastor and was installed in September of that year; and

Whereas, community involvement always has been a key component of Ridgewood Missionary as it enters its second century, with celebrations set for November 2025. A banquet, old-fashioned service, neighborhood picnic, a celebratory Sunday service, and the opening of a fifty-year-old time capsule are planned; and

Whereas, it is only fitting and proper that the South Carolina General Assembly pause to congratulate Ridgewood Missionary on the occasion of its century of serving God and the community. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate, the House of Representatives concurring:

That the members of the South Carolina General Assembly, by this resolution, congratulate Ridgewood Missionary Baptist church on the occasion of its centennial anniversary, and congratulate and honor Reverend Darrius Graves and the congregation for their years of dedicated service to the Ridgewood community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be presented to Reverend Darrius Graves, executive pastor of Ridgewood Missionary Baptist Church.

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