**A** **SENATE RESOLUTION**

TO RECOGNIZE AND CONGRATULATE BETHEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH IN CLOVER, SOUTH CAROLINA, UPON THE OCCASION OF ITS TWO HUNDRED FIFTIETH ANNIVERSARY IN 2014 AND TO COMMEND THE CHURCH FOR MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES OF SERVICE TO GOD AND THE COMMUNITY.

Whereas, Bethel Presbyterian Church, founded in 1764, will celebrate its two hundred fiftieth anniversary in 2014; and

Whereas, Bethel Church is the oldest church in York County. It was established under the leadership of Reverend William Richardson. The church was incorporated by the South Carolina Legislature on March 22, 1786, under the title “The Presbyterian Church of Bethel Congregation”; and

Whereas, there is no record of when the church’s first and second buildings were built. The church’s third building was constructed sometime between 1801 and 1811, and the fourth and current building was constructed in 1873. The structure was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1980; and

Whereas, the church is also home to the historic Bethel Cemetery. Bethel Cemetery holds the graves of veterans who have served in all of America’s wars. The earliest known grave in Bethel Cemetery dates back to 1774; and

Whereas, many of the church’s first elders also fought in the Revolutionary War. Bethel Church as well as other Presbyterian churches in the area were the center of the opposition against the British. As such, many battles were fought near the church, including the well‑known Battle of Kings Mountain; and

Whereas, Bethel Church strives to live out the command given in Matthew 28:19 to “Go ye therefore, and teach all nations” by planting new churches. Bethel Church is the “Mother Church” to eight churches in the area. Twenty‑five of its members have entered full‑time Christian work; and

Whereas, the members will celebrate the church’s two hundred fiftieth anniversary on May 31, 2014 with a ceremony commemorating twenty‑three patriot soldiers, and on June 1, 2014 with a “Colonial Days Celebration”, to include church and cemetery tours, colonial games, and living history demonstrations; and

Whereas, the South Carolina Senate finds it appropriate to look back at Bethel Presbyterian Church’s rich heritage and to join with the church members at the celebration of this significant milestone. Now, therefore,

Be it resolved by the Senate:

That the Senate, by this resolution, recognizes and congratulates Bethel Presbyterian Church in Clover, South Carolina upon the occasion of its two hundred fiftieth anniversary and commends the church for more than two centuries of service to God and the community.

Be it further resolved that a copy of this resolution be forwarded to Bethel Presbyterian Church.

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