

2006 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 509

Offered March 6, 2006

Commending the Morning Star Baptist Church on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

Patron—Jones, D.C.

WHEREAS, founded in 1906, the Morning Star Baptist Church, located on Midlothian Turnpike in Richmond, celebrates its 100th anniversary in 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Morning Star Baptist Church grew from a small Bible study and prayer group that met in 1904 in the home of a church founder Tom Dowden, which was located in the downtown section of Southside, then known as Manchester; and

WHEREAS, other founding members of the church were Betty Dowden, Junious Dowden, and Nero Dowden; and

WHEREAS, after much debate, the prayer group became a mission to establish a church, and a building on East Sixth Street in Richmond was secured for the fledgling congregation of mostly Richmonders and migrant North Carolinians with the Reverend Jerry Miles as their first preacher; and

WHEREAS, the first church was recognized as Missionary Baptist Church until in 1906 the interim pastor, J. S. Clayborne, suggested officially naming the mission the Morning Star Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, under its fourth pastor, the Reverend T. W. Smith, a new church building was completed at 317 East Fifth Street, where the congregation remained until 1951, when it moved to Decatur Street; and

WHEREAS, in May 1954, the church experienced a split and two years later Dr. D. C. Chavis was ordained the 11th pastor of Morning Star Baptist Church on March 23, 1956, and Betty Dowden, one of the church pioneers, was named "Mother of Morning Star Baptist Church"; and

WHEREAS, the church grew and flourished and eventually the Morning Star Baptist Church congregation and Dr. Chavis relocated to their present church address at 3509 Midlothian Turnpike on the first Sunday in September 1976; and

WHEREAS, throughout its long history of ministry, the Morning Star Baptist Church has remained an integral and dynamic part of the Richmond community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend and congratulate the Morning Star Baptist Church on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Reverend Tyrell O. Brown on behalf of the Morning Star Baptist Church as an expression of the General Assembly's best wishes for future success in its ministry.

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