

2008 SESSION

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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 338

Offered February 4, 2008

Commending Jerusalem Baptist Church on the occasion of its 130th anniversary.

Patron—Lewis

WHEREAS, when the Civil War came to a bitter end in 1865, former slaves began to organize churches, and the Log Chapel was the first African-American church established in the northern part of Accomack County; and

WHEREAS, Jimmie Cluff, a strong leader, former slave, and Civil War veteran, realized the great need of a town church located in close proximity to where believers lived, and he and a group of loyal followers helped organize a church in Temperanceville, which they called Jerusalem Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, in 1878 Jimmie Cluff and the founding trustees purchased land from Albert S. and Anna Matthews, and together they planned and constructed a new church building for the congregation of Jerusalem Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, a charismatic preacher, Jimmie Cluff became the minister of many area churches, and he left the church for a time, only to return to serve Jerusalem Baptist Church until he retired; and

WHEREAS, during the ministry of the Reverend Thomas Turlington, Jerusalem Baptist Church was damaged by fire; the congregation united to rebuild and the church's current edifice was constructed; and

WHEREAS, the congregation was very fortunate in late 1970 when the Reverend Dr. Edward Leroy Bruce began his service to Jerusalem Baptist Church; he was the first seminary-trained minister and through his visionary leadership, the church made substantial improvements, including the addition in 1982-1983 of the educational wing with an office and classrooms for Sunday school; and

WHEREAS, a powerful speaker and exceptional leader, the Reverend Dr. Bruce served Jerusalem Baptist Church for 27 years until his death in 1997; and

WHEREAS, two years later, in June 1999, the current pastor, the Reverend Michael Thomas Scott accepted the call to minister in Temperanceville; under his guidance, the church began a period of expanded evangelism, and Jerusalem Baptist Church became known as the "Church on Virginia's Eastern Shore for People on the Grow"; and

WHEREAS, Jerusalem Baptist Church, under Pastor Scott's skilled leadership, has continued to improve the church building, including adding a commercial kitchen, fellowship hall, finance office, pastor's study, lady's lounge, dining facility, and many other projects, and the congregation joyfully fulfilled its mortgage obligation on December 31, 2007; and

WHEREAS, over the years, Jerusalem Baptist Church has also expanded its outstanding programs, outreach, and missions in the community, which include the Jimmie Cluff Memorial Scholarship fund for high school seniors entering a four-year college and the Imani Leadership Institute of the Eastern Shore; and

WHEREAS, the Jerusalem Baptist Church has been served throughout its glorious history by immensely dedicated and able pastors and lay people, who have provided visionary leadership, devout worship, meaningful Christian education, and enthusiastic ministry and community missions; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Jerusalem Baptist Church on the occasion of its 130th 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 Michael Thomas Scott on behalf of the members of Jerusalem Baptist Church as an expression of the General Assembly's best wishes for a joyful celebration and future success in the church's ministry.

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