

2012 SESSION

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12100528D

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 79

Offered January 11, 2012

Prefiled January 10, 2012

Commending Sweet Union Baptist Church on the occasion of its 100th anniversary.

Patron—Ware, O.

WHEREAS, Sweet Union Baptist Church of Roanoke celebrated 100 years of "advanc[ing] God's Kingdom through love, faith, and obedience to The Word" in 2010; and

WHEREAS, in 1910 a group of devoted Christians met in an old store building on the corner of Park Street and Fairfax Avenue in Roanoke to found the church; and

WHEREAS, at that meeting, Sister Hallie Manns suggested the name Sweet Union in anticipation of the sweet spirit that would become a hallmark of the congregation; and

WHEREAS, one month later, the members stepped forward in faith, purchasing a lot on Fern Street that had two small cottages that were joined to create Sweet Union Baptist Church's first building; and

WHEREAS, ably led by the Reverends Sandy Davis, W.A. Hanes, and W.G. Johnson in its early years, Sweet Union Baptist Church was blessed to have the Reverends William Gilbert and Edward T. Burton minister to the congregation and provide stable leadership for 44 years and 50 years, respectively; and

WHEREAS, as the congregation grew in faith and numbers, the church building itself grew as well; two lots were purchased on Fern Street with a new church dedicated in 1919 that was remodeled in the 1950s to accommodate a larger congregation; and

WHEREAS, in 1959 a parsonage was purchased and in the 1970s, additional land was purchased and Sweet Union Baptist Church expanded to include an educational building and parking lot; the congregation began to use a new sanctuary in 1997 and the leadership moved to a new administrative suite in 2006; and

WHEREAS, the Sweet Union Baptist Church members share a great faith and love of their neighbors, as evidenced by numerous ministries, including a food and clothes closet, Community Outreach Ministry, Communication Ministry, Benevolence Ministry, and Revival Ministry; and

WHEREAS, today, the congregation has grown from its original 33 members to nearly 600, who strive to share their faith and love with one another and the community; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly commend Sweet Union 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 Sylvia Ball, pastor of Sweet Union Baptist Church, as an expression of the General Assembly's congratulations and best wishes for the church's continued success in its ministries.

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