

## 2021 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

### HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 584

*Commending Ebenezer Baptist Church.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 25, 2021

WHEREAS, Ebenezer Baptist Church in Woodbridge, which has long offered sage spiritual leadership, generous outreach, and opportunities for uplifting worship to the residents of Prince William County, celebrates its 138th anniversary in 2021; and

WHEREAS, Ebenezer Baptist Church was founded by a freed slave, Lewis Henry Bailey, who walked from Texas to the Commonwealth to rejoin his family after emancipation; and

WHEREAS, in 1881, seven years after the incorporation of the Town of Occoquan, land was purchased for the erection of the church's first edifice, and Ebenezer Baptist Church became the first African American church established in that part of Northern Virginia; and

WHEREAS, working with devout men and women who toiled diligently to establish a church home for themselves and their descendants, the Reverend Lewis Henry Bailey led Ebenezer Baptist Church in laying the cornerstone for its building in May 1883; and

WHEREAS, since 1883, the congregation of Ebenezer Baptist Church has paused on the first Sunday in May of each year to commemorate the laying of the cornerstone and to express thanksgiving and gratitude unto God for His many blessings; and

WHEREAS, on the first Sunday in May 1914 at the Occoquan River, Ebenezer Baptist Church held the largest baptismal ceremony in the history of the church, welcoming into its fold 40 converts to the Christian faith; and

WHEREAS, from its humble beginnings, Ebenezer Baptist Church has continued to grow, prosper, and expand, becoming a vital and active congregation that serves and ministers to the spiritual and physical needs of congregants and the community through its vast outreach programs; and

WHEREAS, Ebenezer Baptist Church is a warm and inviting church family whose mantra is "We are a family of friends and a friend to the family"; its many ministries are biblically based and designed to meet the spiritual needs of every member, promote unity and faithfulness to the Christian walk, support the renewal and reunion of families, provide and encourage Bible study for all ages, and offer special events and activities for children and various programs for adults that facilitate a well-rounded approach to bringing families closer to one another and to God; and

WHEREAS, through several ministries, Ebenezer Baptist Church provides diverse opportunities and wholesome experiences for members and the community to become engaged in personal growth and service to others; and

WHEREAS, Ebenezer Baptist Church's role and ministry in the community has grown over many years, and on June 23, 1990, God called and the people affirmed the Reverend Charles A. Lundy as pastor to lead the church through the difficult and arduous task of constructing a larger sanctuary to accommodate the fast-growing church family; and

WHEREAS, together with the abiding faith and dedication of its members and its outstanding ministries, and working cooperatively with other churches to address pressing community needs, the expansion of Ebenezer Baptist Church enabled it to enter its second century of service to the Woodbridge community and the Commonwealth on a sure and solid foundation, looking toward the many great milestones that lie ahead; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Ebenezer Baptist Church hereby be commended on the occasion of its 138th 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 Charles A. Lundy, pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church, as an expression of the House of Delegates' appreciation and recognition of the church's outstanding contributions to Woodbridge and the Commonwealth.

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