

2022 SPECIAL SESSION I

ENROLLED

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 807

Commending Bethlehem Christian Church.

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, September 7, 2022

WHEREAS, for 175 years, Bethlehem Christian Church of Suffolk has provided spiritual guidance, generous community outreach, and opportunities for joyful worship to members of the community; and

WHEREAS, Bethlehem Christian Church was founded in 1847 by the Reverend William B. Wellons and on October 9 of that same year, two men and five women joined the church as its first official members; and

WHEREAS, the Reverend Wellons served as pastor of Bethlehem Christian Church until 1871, overseeing the growth of a thriving and diverse congregation and helping the church to navigate the ravages of the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, before the Civil War, church leader Thomas J. Kilby guided Bethlehem Christian Church in its decision to join the Eastern Virginia Association of the Southern Christian Church, which later merged with other denominations to form the United Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS, Bethlehem Christian Church was a part of the United Church of Christ until 2003, when it became an independent, nondenominational church that today proudly welcomes members from various denominations and creeds; and

WHEREAS, as Bethlehem Christian Church continued to grow more than a century after its founding, the Reverend Dr. R. E. Brittle led efforts in the 1950s to expand the sanctuary in order to accommodate new members; and

WHEREAS, following the completion of the new sanctuary in 1961, Bethlehem Christian Church subsequently added an education wing in 1971 and more administrative space and a larger fellowship hall in the 1990s; and

WHEREAS, Bethlehem Christian Church has recently begun live streaming its worship services on Facebook, enabling those unable to attend in person the opportunity to feel closer to the community; and

WHEREAS, the members of Bethlehem Christian Church will commemorate the church's 175th anniversary with special events on September 11, 2022; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Bethlehem Christian Church of Suffolk hereby be commended on the occasion of its 175th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Rob Slengluff, pastor of Bethlehem Christian Church, as an expression of the House of Delegates' admiration for the church's legacy of service and its contributions to the Commonwealth.

ENROLLED

HR807ER