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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 193

Offered January 8, 2025

Prefiled January 8, 2025

Commending Benn's United Methodist Church.

Patron—Jordan

WHEREAS, for more than 100 years, Benn's United Methodist Church has provided spiritual leadership and opportunities for worship from its current building on Benns Church Boulevard in Smithfield; and

WHEREAS, Benn's United Methodist Church traces its deepest roots to Saint Luke's Church, which was established in the 17th century; after protestants in the United States disestablished from the Church of England in favor of the Episcopal Church, members of Saint Luke's branched off to establish what is now Benn's United Methodist Church in 1789; and

WHEREAS, in the early days of American Methodism, congregations like those at Benn's United Methodist Church were served by traveling ministers who brought news from other communities in the region and held worship services in local homes; and

WHEREAS, the original meeting house for Benn's United Methodist Church was constructed on land deeded by local resident George Benn in 1813, and new structures were built on the same land in 1838 and 1888; and

WHEREAS, the current Benn's United Methodist Church building, designed in a Gothic style with a steep roof and brick buttresses as a homage to Saint Luke's Church, was completed in 1924; the building was designed to support community gatherings and activities and hosted meetings of the Smithfield Ruritan Club for many years; and

WHEREAS, to better serve the community, Benn's United Methodist Church expanded in the late 1960s with the addition of a two-story classroom wing and again in the early 2000s with a family life center; and

WHEREAS, on July 7, 2024, Benn's United Methodist Church commemorated its 100th anniversary by opening a time capsule that had been set into the cornerstone of the church; the capsule contained numerous mementos from a bygone era, including a copy of the Smithfield Times from July 4, 1924, which is now the second-oldest preserved edition of the newspaper; and

WHEREAS, Benn's United Methodist Church has endured through significant growth and changes in the community, providing the same beacon of faith and fellowship to generations of congregants; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That Benn's United Methodist Church hereby be commended on the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Benn's United Methodist Church as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the church's long history and legacy of service to the residents of the Smithfield area.

INTRODUCED

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