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SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 5

Offered January 14, 2026

Commending First Baptist Church of Midlothian.

Patron—Hashmi

WHEREAS, for 180 years, First Baptist Church of Midlothian has played a central role in community life by providing spiritual leadership, opportunities for joyful worship, and generous outreach programs to the residents of Chesterfield County; and

WHEREAS, First Baptist Church of Midlothian traces its roots to February 1846, when Jordan Martin, Matthew Winfree, James McIntyre, Zachariah McGruder, Samuel Winfree, and Nelson Turnley met to organize a new church for the Black community in the area around the Grove Shaft Mine; and

WHEREAS, one week later, the original organizers held a second meeting with Thomas Jewett, Robert Smith, Joseph Monroe, and Matthew Ford, then adjourned until the first Sunday in March, when they officially established the congregation as First African Baptist Church of Coalfield; and

WHEREAS, First African Baptist Church of Coalfield served the community until 1877 when it was destroyed by fire, and after a new building was constructed, the church adopted its current name, First Baptist Church of Midlothian; and

WHEREAS, First Baptist Church of Midlothian established its first choir under the direction of Cornelius H. Munford in 1919; the choir greatly enhanced regular worship services and developed a popular Biblical play, which was performed at several other local churches by request; and

WHEREAS, as First Baptist Church of Midlothian grew in faith and number, the church expanded its worship services from two Sundays per month to four Sundays per month in 1956 and now holds services every Sunday; and

WHEREAS, over the course of its history, First Baptist Church of Midlothian has benefited from the wise leadership of 29 pastors, including the current pastor, the Reverend Pernell J. Johnson, who was installed on May 20, 2007, and has guided the congregation through periods of significant growth and change; and

WHEREAS, as the oldest predominantly Black church of any denomination in Chesterfield County, First Baptist Church of Midlothian has had an incredible impact on the community and planted six other churches in the area, including Mt. Nebo Baptist Church, Mt. Calvary Baptist Church, Bethlehem Baptist Church, Spring Creek Baptist Church, Mt. Sinai Baptist Church, and Friendship Memorial Baptist Church; and

WHEREAS, First Baptist Church of Midlothian continues to serve as a beacon of compassion, hope, and fellowship for the faithful and any member of the community in need; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate of Virginia, That First Baptist Church of Midlothian hereby be commended on the occasion of its 180th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to First Baptist Church of Midlothian as an expression of the Senate of Virginia's admiration for the church's long history and legacy of contributions to the Chesterfield County community.