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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 291

Offered March 9, 2026

Commending Little Bethel Baptist Church.

Patrons—Jordan; Delegate: Clark

WHEREAS, for 160 years, Little Bethel Baptist Church in Suffolk has greatly served the community by providing uplifting spiritual guidance, joyous occasions for worship and fellowship, and meaningful opportunities for charitable outreach; and

WHEREAS, one of the first Black Baptist churches in Hampton Roads, Little Bethel Baptist Church was organized in 1866 by a group of recently freed and formerly enslaved individuals who gathered under an oak tree on the P.L. Beale estate in the former Nansemond County to plan their Christian future; and

WHEREAS, Little Bethel Baptist Church's first church structure was completed in 1867, and the congregation met there for 27 years before relocating to its current location in Suffolk, which was formally dedicated in 1893; and

WHEREAS, from its first pastor, the Reverend W.M. Reid, to its current pastor, Tyrell K. Morris, Little Bethel Baptist Church has been led by a distinguished line of pastors; and

WHEREAS, Little Bethel Baptist Church has organized and supported a number of ministries and outreach activities over the years to help its members grow in their faith and to make a positive and lasting impact on the lives of others; and

WHEREAS, by serving as a beacon of hope and faith in the community, Little Bethel Baptist Church has helped to make Suffolk a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the Senate, the House of Delegates concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commend Little Bethel Baptist Church for its legacy of service on the occasion of its 160th anniversary; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the Senate prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to Little Bethel Baptist Church as an expression of the General Assembly's admiration for the church's contributions to Suffolk and the Commonwealth.

INTRODUCED

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