State of Tennessee

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 28

By Southerland

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate St. James Lutheran Church on the occasion of its 200th anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that this General Assembly should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations whose commitment to the people of the State of Tennessee have set an example of mercy, compassion, and outreach to which we should all aspire; and

WHEREAS, St. James Lutheran Church is one such institution, as it has proudly served the people in the southern Greene County and northern Cocke County areas for 200 years; and

WHEREAS, most knowledgeable sources place the date of the founding of St. James Lutheran Church about 1800, with the likely organizer of the congregation known to be Charles Z. H. Schmidt, a lay preacher; and

WHEREAS, in 1811, it is believed that a German Lutheran and a German Reformed congregation chose to merge as the newly organized St. Jacobus Keirich, which translates into English as St. James Church; and

WHEREAS, on September 24, 1811, St. Jacobus Keirich was admitted to the Lutheran Synod of North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, thirty-four full-time pastors have committed their time and efforts in serving St. James Lutheran Church; and

WHEREAS, St. James Lutheran Church has raised several "sons" who have gone on to serve as pastors, including: George Easterly, Jr., Andrew Rader, Auburn Bowers, T. Cloyd Neas, Luke Linebarger, Michael Shackelford, and Stephen Shackelford; and

WHEREAS, one of St. James's pastors, Bishop James R. Crumley, Jr., served in the capacity of bishop of the Lutheran Church in America (LCA), from 1978 to 1987; and

WHEREAS, St. James Lutheran Church has congregated in four buildings throughout its history; the first building was made of hewn pine logs, 40 x 40 feet square, with a high, narrow pulpit on the front side, with a 2 x 3 foot floor, walled up in front; and

WHEREAS, the second building was built in 1870 and was a frame building, 45 x 60 feet square, low, one-story building with a low, more modern pulpit in the back end; and

WHEREAS, the third building was built in 1901; 93 members met to tear down the old building, and, three days later, 104 people came back to raise the frame structure, which was 30 x 60 feet, with rooms on either side of the front that were 12 x 20 feet; and

WHEREAS, the fourth and current building was constructed in 1937; it seats 400 people and is built of brick, concrete, and steel, with classrooms in the basement and a sanctuary on the main floor; and

WHEREAS, in 1975, to celebrate the Nation's bicentennial, the church members reconstructed the old log (first) church, in which St. James currently holds weddings and other special worship services throughout the year; and

WHEREAS, in 2002, St. James Lutheran Church obtained full ownership of the old St. James School as a community center, educational building, office, and cafeteria; and

WHEREAS, the St. James Community Center has become a central gathering place for the St. James Community, hosting events such as reunions, concerts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Vacation Bible School, and many other community-oriented activities; and

WHEREAS, since 2004, the St. James Community Center has housed a food and clothing closet, known as Appalachian Helping Hands, which has served over 1,800 families, and given away over 250,000 household items and over 300 boxes of food; and

WHEREAS, St. James Lutheran Church has provided much money, time, and other resources to the ministry of Appalachian Helping Hands; and

WHEREAS, the St. James Women of the ELCA have been instrumental in providing strong faith and discipleship to this congregation; and

WHEREAS, the youth of St. James Lutheran Church have always been a focus of discipleship, from the days of Luther League to today's Confirmation classes; and

WHEREAS, many members of St. James Lutheran Church have been pivotal members, including founding members, of the local Ruritan club; and

WHEREAS, "Young at Hearts," a local St. James social club, has also had many active and founding members from St. James Lutheran Church; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that this General Assembly should honor St. James Lutheran Church for its commitment to its community and State; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate St. James Lutheran Church on reaching the milestone of 200 years, applaud its diligence in fostering upright living in its community, and offer our sincerest wishes for its continued success in the future.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.

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ADOPTED: February 16, 2011

RON RAMSEY
SPEAKER OF THE SENATE

BETH HARWELL, *SPEAKER*
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APPROVED this 17th day of February 2011

BILL HASLAM, *GOVERNOR*