

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 649

By Pitts

A RESOLUTION to honor and recognize the leaders and congregants of the Faith Outreach Church on the occasion of that institution's twentieth anniversary.

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this General Assembly should recognize those religious institutions and their congregations that, through their limitless capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, enrich the lives of the people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, the good people of Faith Outreach Church in Clarksville comprise one such congregation, and in August 2009, they will be celebrating the church's twentieth anniversary; and

WHEREAS, the church's beginnings were humble; in the late summer of 1989, eight adult congregants, with little money but plenty of faith between them, began meeting in a building that once housed an automotive paint and body shop; and

WHEREAS, their first place of worship included a large garage door, appropriate to the building's former function, and a low-income housing area stood across the street; it was not a place most people wanted to visit after dark, but the faithful arrived for worship nonetheless, singing and praying and inviting friends and paying tithes just as they would have in any other church; and

WHEREAS, after three years, the congregation began to grow; when membership reached seventy-seven, Faith Outreach began looking for a new home, and the congregants found one in downtown Clarksville; and

WHEREAS, their new church had once been a shoe factory, which was later converted into police offices; with very little money and a considerable amount of energy, the congregation

created a nice sanctuary and several classrooms from a building that had recently been all but condemned; and

WHEREAS, the church pastor could now enjoy an office, while there was adequate space for both a church secretary and a finance office; and

WHEREAS, on the first Sunday in their new building, Faith Outreach included 101 members, but in only eight years the congregation expanded to include twelve hundred people; with a membership of that size, Faith Outreach Church had to hold three services every Sunday; and

WHEREAS, rather than locate and renovate an existing structure again, the congregation sought its own land on which to build; in 1995, the church identified a suitable tract, and they submitted the final payment for that land in 1998, allowing them to begin construction on their next church building; and

WHEREAS, in April 2001, Faith Outreach Church held its first service in the new building, and the excitement generated another growth spurt; the new sanctuary was soon too packed for one Sunday service, so Pastors William and Ginger Luffman began conducting two services every Sunday morning; and

WHEREAS, in the spring of 2006, Faith Outreach added a second building, which includes a gymnasium and ample room to accommodate all the teen activities the church offers; with regular church attendance at twenty-three hundred every Sunday, the church leadership is currently working to add a third morning service; and

WHEREAS, this diverse and dynamic congregation is ably served by nine employees who support the work of Pastors Tommy Vallejos, David Wesner, Paul Chisenhall, and the Luffmans; and

WHEREAS, with congregational input, expectant prayer, and acts of faith throughout their history, the devout members of Faith Outreach Church have faithfully striven to carry out God's work in the world; and

WHEREAS, as a powerful tool in the service of the Kingdom of God, Faith Outreach Church is truly one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and Nation, and the members of this exceptional congregation should be appropriately

honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of their community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED SIXTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join in celebrating the twentieth anniversary of Faith Outreach Church, thank the good people of this congregation and their pastors for their notable service to Clarksville and the State of Tennessee, and wish them much continued success and happiness in the years to come.

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