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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 473 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY ROTHMAN, NEILSON, BAKER, KINSEY, MEHAFFIE, BURNS,  
DIGIROLAMO, SACCONI, MURT, READSHAW, HENNESSEY, GREINER,  
MARSICO, PHILLIPS-HILL, WARD, MILLARD, MALONEY, D. COSTA,  
WHEELAND AND A. HARRIS, SEPTEMBER 6, 2017

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
SEPTEMBER 6, 2017

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A RESOLUTION

1 Commemorating the 250th anniversary of St. Stephen Evangelical  
2 Lutheran Church in New Kingstown, Cumberland County, which  
3 coincides with the 500th anniversary of the Protestant  
4 Reformation advanced by German theologian Martin Luther.

5 WHEREAS, St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church is  
6 celebrating these milestone anniversaries on October 29, 2017;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, Having well-established ties with local, regional  
9 and global communities, the congregational community of St.  
10 Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church has affirmed many of the  
11 practices and foundational documents introduced by 16th century  
12 Protestant reformers and their successors; and

13 WHEREAS, Early German settlers in the Province of  
14 Pennsylvania founded the Cumberland County church; and

15 WHEREAS, Their original log building was sited on the Henry  
16 Longsdorf farm; and

17 WHEREAS, A meeting house was constructed in 1774, and a

1 larger stone church was later built on a donated lot; and  
2 WHEREAS, The congregation recognized the sacraments of  
3 baptism and communion, recording the first baptism in 1775 and  
4 the first communion in 1789; and

5 WHEREAS, Worship services were conducted in German through  
6 the 1820s; and

7 WHEREAS, The original burial ground is maintained as the  
8 Longsdorf Cemetery; and

9 WHEREAS, In 1844, the congregation became known as the  
10 Evangelical Lutheran Congregation of St. Stephen at Kingston;  
11 and

12 WHEREAS, The village name changed to New Kingstown when a  
13 post office was established in 1851; and

14 WHEREAS, The congregation enjoyed a close association with a  
15 congregation in Churchtown from 1854 through 1965; and

16 WHEREAS, On July 15, 1911, fires affecting multiple dwellings  
17 and other buildings along West Main Street spread to the church;  
18 and

19 WHEREAS, A bucket brigade of residents and parishioners,  
20 joined by firefighters from Carlisle and Mechanicsburg, could  
21 not stop the resulting property loss; and

22 WHEREAS, In September 1912, the congregation dedicated a new  
23 church; and

24 WHEREAS, Moving forward in faith and service, generations of  
25 St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church leaders and members have  
26 developed and participated in significant outreach ministries  
27 and pastoral care programs; and

28 WHEREAS, In conjunction with the celebration of the 250th  
29 anniversary of its founding, St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran  
30 Church is marking the 500th anniversary of the start of the

1 Protestant Reformation; and

2 WHEREAS, Martin Luther, a theology professor and ordained  
3 priest who had experienced Augustinian monastic life, sparked a  
4 European movement in October 1517 by breaking with the Roman  
5 Catholic Church on the late-medieval sale of indulgences; and

6 WHEREAS, Martin Luther and other dissenters and reformers  
7 throughout the continent attained fundamental unity, variously  
8 altering rites and liturgies, limiting church governance and  
9 emphasizing the obligation of the individual conscience; and

10 WHEREAS, Their critiques of abuses, confessions of faith,  
11 liturgical revisions and sacred writings demonstrably influenced  
12 religious, political, legal, moral, linguistic and economic  
13 traditions that arose in the New World; and

14 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives notes the imprint of  
15 these historical figures who divided and transformed western  
16 religious and secular spheres; and

17 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives applauds the vibrant  
18 history and continuing stewardship of St. Stephen Evangelical  
19 Lutheran Church and gives thanks for its steadfast presence in  
20 our Commonwealth; therefore be it

21 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives commemorate the  
22 250th anniversary of St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church in  
23 New Kingstown, Cumberland County, which coincides with the 500th  
24 anniversary of the Protestant Reformation advanced by German  
25 theologian Martin Luther; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to  
27 St. Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church, 30 West Main Street,  
28 New Kingstown, PA 17072.