

A Proclamation  
By  
Governor Ronnie Musgrove

**WHEREAS**, in 1882, the late Reverend Harry Body founded the Brown Missionary Baptist Church—they initially held their worship services in a Bush Harbor, near the existing cemetery until they were able to erect a log cabin—from this site, Pastor Body with the assistance and dedication of his officers, mothers, missionaries, and members, erected their first frame structure on the corner of Swinnea and Stateline Road in Southaven, Mississippi, where it still remains; and

**WHEREAS**, the first men and women of the church played a key role in creating a spiritually and materially strong foundation for this church and sustained it with prayers, love and dedication; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1946, Reverend Sherman Champion accepted the leadership role at Brown Baptist Church—he was a dedicated man of great faith, patience and endurance who served God and man with humility until his death; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1972, Reverend Leon M. Acey became Reverend Champion’s successor, his goals were a continuation of the ideas set forth by his predecessors and with the assistance of a consecrated membership, Brown Baptist Church expanded to a multi-purpose facility on one and one-half acres of land—the church was now able to accommodate 500-600 people and expanded to include numerous departments, organizations and auxiliaries which offered a variety of services which included: Sunday school, Usher Board, Choirs, Christian Society, Boy Scouts and a Day Care Center; and

**WHEREAS**, tragedy struck Brown Baptist Church on November 22, 1987, when the church was destroyed by fire—neighboring churches made their buildings available for Brown Baptist’s Pastor and worshippers—on November 29, 1987, the following Sunday, Brown Baptist held its first evening worship at Faith United Methodist Church and continued worshipping there until the new church was rebuilt; and

**WHEREAS**, in August 1988, the officer and members of BMBC, held a ground breaking service at the old Stateline/Swinnea Road site, their inspiration, dedication and faith in God enabled them to erect a beautiful structure with accommodations for approximately 400 persons—the new facility was completed and dedicated in May 1989; and

**WHEREAS**, in January 1989, Reverend Bartholomew Orr became the eighth pastor of BMBC and, under his pastoral leadership, Brown Baptist has become an organized and progressive church with the vision “Exalting the Savior, Equipping the Saints, and Evangelizing the Sinners”—the church now has a membership of 1,400 plus and sits on 16 acres of land and is developing the Jessie James Smith Ministry Building which will serve the members of BMBC and our community with a business development, career center, clothes closet and food pantry; and

**WHEREAS**, on November 24, 2002, the congregation of Brown Missionary Baptist Church, located in Southaven, Mississippi, will celebrate its 120<sup>th</sup> church anniversary

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Ronnie Musgrove, Governor of the State of Mississippi, hereby proclaim November 24, 2002, in honor of

**BROWN MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH**

of Southaven, Mississippi, and their love and dedication to an awesome God, their community and the State of Mississippi.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Mississippi to be affixed.

DONE in the City of Jackson, November 21, 2002, in the two hundred and twenty-sixth year of the United States of America.

RONNIE MUSGROVE  
GOVERNOR