



First Baptist Church of James Island

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Reverend Dr. Bernard J. Gadsden, Sr., Pastor

March 24, 2015

Governor Nikki R. Haley
Office of the Governor
1205 Pendleton Street
Columbia, SC 29201

The Honorable Nikki Haley:

It is truly an honor to make contact with you and to share with you our congregation's pride for the work you are doing for the citizens of South Carolina.

I was given the task of writing to request a congratulatory letter/recognition/proclamation signed by you commemorating 30 years of service by our beloved Pastor, the Reverend Dr. Bernard Joseph Gadsden, Sr.

Pastor Gadsden has lead the congregation of First Baptist Church of James Island and has impacted the communities of Charleston, Berkeley, Beaufort, Colleton, Dorchester, Jasper counties and served so many others in such a humble and motivating way. His leadership has changed the lives of many and influenced far more than we can calculate. Pastor Gadsden will officially retire on May 1, 2015 with an extravagant celebration in his honor on Saturday, May 2, 2015.

A letter from you recognizing his work in the community, his passion for people and his tireless mission to teach others to live a good life for the betterment of mankind and the world would be greatly appreciated.

Please see the attached biography of Reverend Gadsden. Do not hesitate to call me should you have a question regarding this request and the service of Pastor Bernard Gadsden.

Thanking you in advance,

Rhonda Walters

Rhonda Walters

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Reverend Dr. Bernard Joseph. Gadsden, Sr.

Rev. Dr. Bernard Joseph Gadsden, Sr., son of Mrs. Mae Gadsden and the late Rev. Jeronica Gadsden, he was born in Bolton, South Carolina and graduated from Wallace High School of St. Andrews Parish in 1965. Rev. Dr. Gadsden became a member of New Hope Baptist Church located in Red Top, SC in 1964. There he served in the following capacities: Sunday School Teacher, Sunday School Superintendent, Choir Member, Assistant Church Secretary, member of the Pastor's Aide Board, Chairman of the Program Committee, Deacon Board and Associate Minister.

He served his country in the U.S. Army from 1969 to 1971. He is married to Georgetta Parker Gadsden of Red Top, SC. They are the parents of one son, Bernard J. Gadsden, Jr.

Pastor Gadsden was ordained in May of 1983 and was elected Pastor of **First Baptist Church of James Island** in December of 1984. He began his official duties on the first Sunday in January, 1985, and was later installed as pastor on March 10, 1985.

Rev. Dr. Gadsden is the recipient of the following degrees:

- ❖ Associates Degree in General Business and Civil Engineering from Trident Technical College
- ❖ Bachelors Degree in Organizational Management from Voorhees College in Denmark, SC
- ❖ Master's Degree in Theology from Cummins Theological Memorial Seminary in Summerville, SC
- ❖ Doctor of Humane Letters-Honorary Degree, awarded by Canaan Bible College in North Charleston, SC.

Rev. Dr. Gadsden is a member of the following organizations:

- ❖ North Charleston Branch of the NAACP
- ❖ South Carolina Black Voters Participation
- ❖ Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Sea Island Community Development Fund
- ❖ Board of Directors of Canaan Bible College
- ❖ Board of Directors of James Island Outreach
- ❖ Vice-Chairman of the James Island Interfaith Action Committee
- ❖ Member of the Executive Ministry and Treasurer of the Old Ashley Baptist Association

Reverend Dr. Gadsden believes ***"To whom much is given, much is required"*** and his philosophy is "If I can help somebody as I pass along this way, if I can spread the love message that the Master taught, if I can show somebody that he is traveling wrong, if I can do my duty as a good man ought, then my living will not be in vain."

Reverend Dr. Gadsden has been serving as the Pastor of First Baptist Church on James Island for the past 30 years. Reverend Gadsden official retirement date is May 1, 2015.

Some of Rev. Dr. Gadsden's Awards and Honors include:

- ❖ Distinguished Service Award presented by New Hope Baptist Church
- ❖ Leadership Award as Sunday School Superintendent presented by New Hope Baptist Church
- ❖ Dynamic Leadership Award presented by First Baptist Church
- ❖ Man-of-the-Year Award presented by First Baptist Church
- ❖ Certificate of Achievement presented by Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.
- ❖ Outstanding Leadership as a Deacon presented by New Hope Baptist Church
- ❖ Department Award for 1997 and 1998 presented by Voorhees College-Honor Student
- ❖ Soldier of the month presented by the United States Army in April 1969, and
- ❖ Numerous plaques and awards from New Hope Baptist Church, First Baptist Church and many other organizations.