



HR0639

LRB100 14910 ALS 29887 r

1

HOUSE RESOLUTION

2           WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of  
3 Representatives wish to congratulate the congregation of the  
4 West Point Missionary Baptist Church on the occasion of the  
5 100th anniversary of its founding; and

6           WHEREAS, On April 19, 1917, a small group of baptized  
7 believers met to discuss the organization of a Missionary  
8 Baptist Church; the group established the West Point Baptist  
9 Church, named after the city in Mississippi from which a number  
10 of the organizers transitioned; Reverend R. H. Harmon was  
11 called to be their first pastor; and

12           WHEREAS, Reverend Harmon's primary responsibility was to  
13 secure an independent place of worship; Reverend Harmon and the  
14 West Point Missionary Church members purchased the old St. Mark  
15 Methodist Episcopal Church in the winter of 1917; after several  
16 weeks of hard labor by the church's members, the building was  
17 ready for occupancy; the congregation moved into the church on  
18 the third Sunday of May 1918; to date, the building is 141  
19 years old and is still owned and operated by the church; and

20           WHEREAS, In July 1922, Reverend Brown became the church's  
21 second pastor; through his powerful gospel preaching and  
22 spiritual leadership, the membership increased from 85 to

1 3,000; he cast the vision for a new, modern facility and  
2 completed the purchase of additional land to build a parking  
3 lot and a new church center; however, his health began to fail,  
4 and he subsequently discontinued active leadership; and

5 WHEREAS, At the request of Reverend James H. Brown, one of  
6 the church's staff ministers, Reverend Dr. Carroll J. Thompson,  
7 served as interim pastor; he was a scholar and prolific writer;  
8 after the death of Reverend Brown, Reverend Thompson was  
9 elected as the church's third pastor; he was known as a caring  
10 and compassionate pastor, who regularly visited his  
11 parishioners; he made it his goal to fulfill Reverend Brown's  
12 dream of building a new church; he retired in 1997; and

13 WHEREAS, Reverend Corey Brooks became the fourth pastor of  
14 the church; he introduced a new methodology of worship, which  
15 resulted in a substantial growth of younger parishioners; under  
16 his leadership, several activities, including clothing and  
17 hospitality ministries were implemented; after three years of  
18 service, Reverend Brooks resigned his position; and

19 WHEREAS, In November 2001, after a yearlong search, Dr. L.  
20 Bernard Jakes was elected as the fifth pastor of West Point  
21 Baptist Church; he was responsible for bringing healing,  
22 reconciliation, and restoration; Reverend Dr. Jakes started  
23 many new programs, including a community Thanksgiving dinner;

1 youth Bible study, family and friends community day, and a  
2 health fair; he has led the church in Operation Divine  
3 Restoration and constructed neighborhood town homes, created  
4 new ministries for the community, and empowered the laity to  
5 actively engage in social justice; in 2010, Dr. Jakes began  
6 referring to West Point as The Faith Family of West Point  
7 Missionary Baptist Church; while not a constitutional name  
8 change, it is a description as to who the local church is, a  
9 family of faith; and

10 WHEREAS, Dr. Jakes is highly involved with local, state,  
11 and federal policy makers and utilizes his voice as a local  
12 pastor to speak truth to power as it relates to social justice,  
13 social action, and social accountability; he serves as a  
14 working member on The Mayor's Commission for a Safer Chicago,  
15 the Faith Based Leaders Advisory Board of the Cook County  
16 Public Defender's Office, and a member of the Board of Trustees  
17 for Elmhurst College; additionally, he serves as a spiritual  
18 advisor to several local and state politicians; he shares his  
19 ministry with his wife, Lady Carole Denise and their children,  
20 Brandon and Erika; and

21 WHEREAS, The accomplishments of The Faith Family of West  
22 Point Missionary Baptist Church could not have been achieved  
23 without the dedication and commitment of its members;  
24 therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
2 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
3 congratulate the congregation of the West Point Missionary  
4 Baptist Church on the creation of a divinely inspired ministry  
5 and community outreach effort over the course of 100 years in  
6 the Chicago area; and be it further

7           RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be presented to  
8 Reverend Dr. L. Bernard Jakes, Senior Pastor and teacher of The  
9 Faith Family of West Point Missionary Baptist Church in  
10 Chicago.