



HR1237

LRB100 23813 ALS 42879 r

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of Representatives wish to congratulate the Wayman African Methodist Episcopal Church on the occasion of its 175th anniversary on October 21, 2018; and

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WHEREAS, In 1836, Reverend Paul Quinn was assigned the task of expanding the African Methodist Episcopal Church to the western states; while on his journey, he became closely associated with the Underground Railroad; the churches and schooled he established became stops on the Underground Railroad; in 1843, he reached Bloomington, Illinois, and he met Moses Bird, Joseph Hobson, and James Hill, visionary and energetic African Americans who were ready to establish a place of worship; On January 16, 1847, the deed for the land was secured for \$20.00, and a small-frame building was erected; and

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WHEREAS, The first pastor, Reverend P.H. Ward, was a grocer in the community, and the congregation had 20 members; the school teacher was Matilda E. Davidson; in 1855, an itinerant circuit rider named Austin Woodford became the next pastor, and the congregation grew to 50 members; in 1859, the original building was moved and used as the parsonage; that same year, a new church was built; in 1860, Miss English supervised the school and, within six years, had 40 students; for the first 20

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1 years, the African Methodist Education Society was the only
2 African American church in the community; the new church
3 building was expanded in 1871, and the membership grew to over
4 100; in 1879, Reverend C.S. Jacobs became pastor; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1880, Reverend Charles Spencer Smith was
6 appointed pastor of the African Methodist Education Society; he
7 believed that racial uplift was through religious education,
8 and he developed a plan for a universal Sunday school
9 literature that was adopted by a special Bishops Council in
10 1882; this was the humble beginning of the African Methodist
11 Episcopal Church Sunday School Union, which later moved to
12 Nashville, Tennessee; and

13 WHEREAS, On January 26, 1910, the church was renamed the
14 Wayman African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church; in 1918, the
15 Bloomington National Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was
16 formed, and the meetings were held at Wayman AMEC; through the
17 years, Wayman was the church home to several pioneers in the
18 Bloomington African American community; in 1970, Reverend
19 Walter Walters became pastor, and he completed extensive
20 remodeling; his quiet dignity, vision, and confidence did much
21 to encourage a progressive effort; and

22 WHEREAS, In August of 1978, Reverend David Jarrett, the
23 newly assigned pastor, established a good rapport with the

1 youth in town and at the church; and

2 WHEREAS, In September of 1990, Reverend Robert E. Harvey
3 brought vision, insight, and energy to the church; he relocated
4 the church from its original home on Center Street to the
5 current building on West Olive; in 1993, the congregation
6 celebrated 150 years of ministry in McLean County; and

7 WHEREAS, In 2001, Reverend Nathan Dixon became the pastor:
8 in preparation for hosting the Illinois Annual Conference, new
9 windows were installed in the church and parsonage, the
10 sanctuary was repaired, and new tile was added in the foyer;
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12 WHEREAS, In 2005, Reverend Charles Orr was assigned, and
13 under his leadership the mortgage was paid off and burned;
14 additionally, he spearheaded a capital campaign to cover the
15 cost of major renovations, maintenance, and repair; he served
16 with distinction for 11 years; and

17 WHEREAS, On September 11, 2016, history was made when
18 Bishop John Franklin White, Bishop of the Fourth Episcopal
19 District, assigned Reverend Dr. Brigitte A. Black, the first
20 female pastor, to Wayman AME Church; a new furnace was
21 installed, and the church is embarking on a project that
22 includes major repairs to the infrastructure and interior;

1 therefore, be it

2 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
3 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
4 congratulate the Wayman African Methodist Episcopal Church on
5 the occasion of its 175th anniversary; and be it further

6 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
7 presented to the Wayman African Methodist Episcopal Church as
8 an expression of our esteem and respect.