



1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The First Christian Church of Villa Grove will  
3 celebrate its 100th anniversary this year; and

4 WHEREAS, The conclusion of a five week revival that began  
5 on May 11, 1906, saw the beginning of the Villa Grove Christian  
6 Church with 67 charter members; Evangelist Harold E. Monser was  
7 employed by the Sixth District Board of the Illinois Christian  
8 Missionary Society to hold these meetings; the first week of  
9 meetings were held in the center room of the Lawrence building;  
10 the remaining meetings were held in a tent erected on a vacant  
11 lot; a unique and modern addition to this tent meeting was the  
12 use of electric lights; and

13 WHEREAS, On June 24, 1906, the new church met for the first  
14 time in Gamin's Hall with Dr. J.E. Powell of Bloomington  
15 delivering the sermon; on Sunday, July 29, Rev. Monser returned  
16 to preach at a service held in a tent on newly acquired  
17 property at the corner of Pine and Monroe Streets; this  
18 location would be the future site of a new church building; on  
19 October 3, 1907, the congregation called Robert L. Cartwright  
20 of Herrin to serve in a permanent capacity as minister; he  
21 would have a dual position as minister at Villa Grove and at  
22 Longview, preaching at each location on alternate Sundays; and

23 WHEREAS, Ground was broken on July 16, 1908, for the new  
24 church building; construction began immediately and by October  
25 27, 1908, the cornerstone was ceremoniously laid by Elder Matt  
26 Bengé, a member and leader in the church and a local builder  
27 who designed and oversaw the construction of the new building;  
28 by December, 1908, the congregation began meeting in the  
29 basement of the unfinished church; and

30 WHEREAS, On Sunday, May 2, 1909, the newly completed church  
31 building was dedicated with services held throughout the day;

1 in September, 1940, a parsonage was purchased at 5 South Pine;  
2 in 1951, the first major repairs and remodeling of the original  
3 church building were completed; in 1954, a basement on the east  
4 side of the building was constructed with the upper east annex  
5 being added in 1957; this addition was dedicated on June 23,  
6 1957; in 1963, a new parsonage was built in the McCoy  
7 Subdivision, and the old parsonage was used for Sunday School  
8 classrooms; and

9 WHEREAS, In the mid 1970s, a decision was made to build a  
10 new church building; in 1977, five and one half acres of land  
11 were purchased for the proposed building; on March 7, 1979, the  
12 original building was sold; during the construction period,  
13 worship services were held in the Gem Theatre with Sunday  
14 School being held in the theatre, the old parsonage, and the  
15 temporary church office on East Adams Street; and

16 WHEREAS, Ground breaking services for the new church  
17 building were held on May 2, 1979, and building began on June  
18 8, 1979, with Zion Church Builders supervising the  
19 construction; the first worship service in the new building was  
20 held on Sunday, January 20, 1980, with the dedication service  
21 on Sunday, April 20, 1980; in 1985, the auditorium was enlarged  
22 to increase seating and provide more adult Sunday School area;  
23 the new addition was dedicated on May 4, 1986; therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
25 NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
26 we congratulate the First Christian Church of Villa Grove on  
27 the occasion of its 100th anniversary; and be it further

28 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
29 presented to the First Christian Church of Villa Grove as an  
30 expression of our esteem and with best wishes for the future.