



HR1241

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives are pleased to recognize significant
4 contributions made by the people and communities of the State;
5 and

6 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
7 Representatives wish to congratulate the Greater New Hope
8 Missionary Baptist Church of East St. Louis on the occasion of
9 its 100th anniversary celebration on October 11, 2014; and

10 WHEREAS, In 1913, Rev. J.L. McBride, a local minister of
11 the Mount Olive Baptist Church, was asked by that congregation
12 and pastor, Rev. Borders, to begin a mission in the east end
13 section of the city, a section of town predominantly settled
14 with people of Polish descent; Rev. McBride organized a few
15 Christians who were living in this section, with Mount Olive
16 Baptist Church serving as the mother church; and

17 WHEREAS, These few faithful and loyal members worked
18 untiringly, adding new members to the mission roll during its
19 first year; in 1914, a council was called consisting of pastors
20 and churches; a new church was organized and given the name New
21 Hope; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1914, New Hope was born; the original church
2 (later known as the Little Hall) was bought by Bro. Marion E.
3 Officer; a new church building was erected in 1916; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1920, the congregation grew to the point that
5 the building had to be enlarged because of the increase in
6 membership; the remodeling program cost \$5,000, and New Hope
7 continued to grow in size, spiritual influence, and physical
8 plant; out of this period of church history came ministers W.P.
9 Alexander and Calvin Fearn, nationally known church missionary
10 Annette Officer, and Rev. J.L. McBride, who served as Moderator
11 of New Salem District Association and Vice-President of the
12 Baptist General State Convention of Illinois; and

13 WHEREAS, Around 1935, a group of young women, spearheaded
14 by Annette Harris Officer, started a building program; she
15 secured the services of the Works Progress Administration, and
16 a partial basement was added; and

17 WHEREAS, In 1944, the health of Rev. McBride, the first
18 pastor of New Hope, begin to fail; he was retired by the church
19 but continued to attend church and preach when able until his
20 death in 1945; and

21 WHEREAS, In 1944, Rev. William Peter Alexander was called
22 to become the second pastor of New Hope; the Sunday School and

1 Baptist Training Union were revamped by Rev. Alexander, and a
2 Christian Education Program was initiated; one of its early
3 programs was a foundation to aid in academic education of young
4 people who were members of the church; a tutoring and study
5 hall program was put into operation, and special days to honor
6 high school and college graduates were instituted; State grants
7 were also secured to sponsor summer camps for underprivileged
8 children in the church and community; this activity was
9 spearheaded by Fannie Jones and Bernice Howell for many years;
10 the church progress was natural for Rev. Alexander who was also
11 President of Congress of Christian Education for the Baptist
12 State Convention of Illinois, a post he held for more than 30
13 years; and

14 WHEREAS, In 1946, the congregation continued to grow under
15 Rev. Alexander's leadership; the front entrance of the church
16 was changed, a complete basement was built, and it became
17 necessary to enlarge the church again; a new wing was erected
18 and the building was able to seat more than 600 people; and

19 WHEREAS, On September 14, 1962, one of the founding
20 members, Sis. Jesse B. Petty, suffered a stroke as she sat in
21 her home behind the church and watched a newly renovated New
22 Hope burn for 3 hours as rains prolonged the arrival of
23 additional fire-fighting equipment; the "Friendly Church on
24 The Highway" was destroyed after 48 years of existence; the

1 pastor and more than 500 members were determined to rebuild and
2 set about the business of rebuilding; and

3 WHEREAS, The present edifice was entered in 1964,
4 incomplete and with a 30-year mortgage; Bro. Marion E. Officer
5 purchased the organ, the stained glass, and other prominences
6 for the church; the church name changed on the occasion of the
7 rebuilding and the present name of Greater New Hope Missionary
8 Baptist was adopted to signify its structural improvement and
9 the magnitude of its members' faith; and

10 WHEREAS, Rev. Alexander continued as the second pastor of
11 Greater New Hope until becoming infirmed in early 1977 and
12 expiring suddenly on May 31, 1977; he was dubbed the "Dean of
13 Ministers" in East St. Louis; he was a living legend in
14 religious circles and left a legacy of Christian performance to
15 the membership; at the time of his death, he had served as
16 Moderator of the New Salem District for many years, as
17 President of the New Salem Congress for a long tenure, and as
18 President of the Baptist General State Congress of Christian
19 Education until death; he did not live to see the mortgage
20 burned, but his leadership paved the way for the mortgage
21 payments on the edifice to be completed in 17 years; and

22 WHEREAS, On October 30, 1977, the membership gathered to
23 observe the burning of the 1964 mortgage, paid in full on March

1 31, 1977 under the pastorate of the beloved late shepherd; his
2 dream and task for Greater New Hope was complete; and

3 WHEREAS, In 1978, a search for a new minister began; Rev.
4 Richard Temple was placed in charge of the pulpit and remained
5 there from June 1978 until December 1978; and

6 WHEREAS, On October 18, 1978, Rev. David Crockett was
7 elected pastor of Greater New Hope Missionary Baptist Church;
8 he accepted this position on November 18, 1978 and began duties
9 as pastor on December 4, 1978; and

10 WHEREAS, On February 25, 1979, Rev. David Crockett was
11 installed as the fourth pastor of Greater New Hope Missionary
12 Baptist Church and presently holds this position; under his
13 leadership in 1982, the Awards and Recognition Committees were
14 organized, and, in 1983, 26 members received Golden Leaves for
15 longevity of 70 years and older; 23 members called Foundation
16 Stone with 50 years of continuous membership were honored; and
17 members having from 25 to 50 years of continuous membership
18 were recognized; the oldest female was Sis. Mattie Thigpen who
19 was 96 years old, joining in 1916 and staying a continuous
20 member for 71 years; the oldest male was Bro. Eli Porter
21 Turnage who joined New Hope in 1922 and had been a continuous
22 member for 65 years; and

1 WHEREAS, Presently, Rev. Crockett has served as pastor of
2 Greater New Hope Missionary Baptist for over 35 years and has
3 instituted the idea of total membership involvement,
4 re-emphasizing the need for a christian educated congregation,
5 and has focused on a total ministry to include children, youth,
6 young adults, older adults, and seniors; the church is blessed
7 with a bus and van for those without transportation to church;
8 a tape ministry to record worship for the sick and shut-in is
9 also available; and

10 WHEREAS, Rev. Crockett envisions the Greater New Hope
11 Missionary Baptist Church as a focal point of evangelism in the
12 community; and

13 WHEREAS, Greater New Hope Missionary Baptist Church has
14 been a beacon of light in the community for 100 years and
15 should be commended for its untiring, dedicated work and
16 services; therefore, be it

17 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
18 NINETY-EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that
19 we congratulate Greater New Hope Missionary Baptist Church of
20 East St. Louis on the occasion of its 100th anniversary
21 celebration on October 11, 2014; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be

1 presented to Greater New Hope Baptist Church as an expression
2 of our esteem and respect.