

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 894

By Johnson

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the congregation of Shorter Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church upon its 144th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, the churches of our nation have been an integral part of our history as people and have had an unparalleled impact in forming and maintaining a stable and just society; and

WHEREAS, it is appropriate that the members of this legislative body should recognize those venerable religious institutions and their congregations who, through their unflinching capacity for love, dedication of spirit, and faith in God, strive to enrich the lives of people in their communities; and

WHEREAS, one such dynamic and historic community of faith is Shorter Chapel African Methodist Episcopal Church of Franklin, the members of which are celebrating the church's 144th anniversary on May 27, 2012; and

WHEREAS, first organized in 1868, the Trustees of Shorter Chapel began negotiations a few years later with the Trustees of the White Methodist Church (First Methodist Church) to acquire a plot of land with a parsonage on Church Street in Franklin, the deed for which they gained on May 12, 1872; and

WHEREAS, historic research revealed that the bricks were forged by slaves and that the church had served as a hospital for Confederate soldiers during the Civil War; and

WHEREAS, when the congregation decided to relocate to the heart of the black community, now known as The Historic Natchez Community, in 1925, they brought with them the original bricks to preserve the historic significance of their church; and

WHEREAS, as a result of their efforts, the Shorter Chapel AME Church is included on the Tennessee and National Historical Registries; and

WHEREAS, a highly active and devout community of worshippers, the church provides its congregants with a Sunday church school, Sunday morning service, and a mid-week Bible study every Wednesday night; and

WHEREAS, its congregants greatly benefit from the faithful stewardship of its church leaders: the retired Reverend Vashti Murphy McKenzie, Presiding Prelate of the Thirteenth Episcopal District and the first elected and consecrated female bishop of the AME Church; the Reverend Troy Merritt, Jr., Presiding Elder of the South Nashville District, Thirteenth Episcopal District; the Reverend Tyronda Howse Burgess, pastor; and the Reverend Lish Burgess, Jr., associate minister; and

WHEREAS, Shorter Chapel AME Church is truly one of the great religious institutions and catalysts for positive spiritual change in our State and Nation, and the members of this exceptional and historic congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of their community; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we join in celebrating the 144th anniversary of Shorter Chapel AME Church, thank the good people of this congregation and their ministers for their notable service to the State of Tennessee, and wish them much continued success and happiness.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.