

By: Paddie

H.R. No. 230

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church in Marshall is
2 celebrating the 150th anniversary of its founding on November 26,
3 2017; and

4 WHEREAS, One of the oldest African American congregations in
5 Harrison County, Bethesda was established in 1867 by the Reverend
6 William Massey and was originally known as the "Colored Baptist
7 Church"; organized with some 450 initial members, the church played
8 a central role in the religious, social, and political lives of
9 recently freed slaves in the Marshall area; it also helped to meet
10 the educational needs of the community, as its building served as a
11 schoolhouse and its first pastor, Reverend Massey, did double duty
12 as a teacher; and

13 WHEREAS, In the early 1880s, Bethesda supported the
14 establishment in Marshall of Bishop College for the purpose of
15 training African American teachers and preachers; David Abner, one
16 of the church's founders and a prominent Reconstruction-era
17 politician and public servant, was instrumental in the creation of
18 the college and served on its first board of trustees; over the
19 years, the congregation's strong link with the school led to
20 Bethesda's becoming known as the "College Church"; since Bishop's
21 move to Dallas in 1961, the church has developed a close
22 relationship with Wiley College; and

23 WHEREAS, Today, members of Bethesda support a number of
24 ministries that provide myriad opportunities for spiritual growth,

1 fellowship, and outreach; this dynamic congregation has benefited
2 from the efforts of many dedicated ministers since its inception,
3 and Bethesda is now fortunate to be led by the Reverend James
4 E. Webb, who assumed the pulpit in 1998; and

5 WHEREAS, Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church has long served
6 as a source of inspiration and guidance to those who worship there,
7 and its continued existence is a testament to the unwavering
8 commitment of its members and clergy, both past and present; now,
9 therefore, be it

10 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 85th Texas
11 Legislature, 1st Called Session, hereby commemorate the
12 sesquicentennial of Bethesda Missionary Baptist Church in Marshall
13 and extend to all those associated with the church sincere best
14 wishes for the future; and, be it further

15 RESOLVED, That an official copy of this resolution be
16 prepared for Bethesda MBC as an expression of high regard by the
17 Texas House of Representatives.