

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 306

By Bone

A RESOLUTION to honor and congratulate the ministers and congregation of Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church upon their 139th Anniversary.

WHEREAS, the churches of our nation have been an integral part of our history as a 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; one such estimable institution, shining as a ray of hope in the Lebanon community for 139 years, is Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, the ministers and congregation of Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church celebrated the church's 139th Anniversary with a special service on Sunday, March 20, 2005; the theme for this service was "Forward in Christ: From the Past Into the Future" and emphasized the Ark of the Covenant; and

WHEREAS, the celebration was a time of reflecting on the past, giving thanks for the present, and joyfully looking forward to a future filled with spiritual enrichment; and

WHEREAS, aptly situated in Lebanon, the town's name acting as a reminder of the Biblical land of the cedars, Wilson County's first church and brick building, Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church, traces its roots to the year 1827; since that time, the devout spirit of the congregational descendants has remained strong enough to last 139 years and continues to strengthen; and

WHEREAS, the congregation of Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church has experienced numerous changes since the time their church was organized, not only in the lives and hearts of the laypeople and the pastorate, but also in the church structure itself; and

WHEREAS, the original congregation moved in 1856 to a new building on East Main Street where the Pickett Chapel still stands; the Church is currently located at 633 Glover Street and provides for the continued growth of the church family; and

WHEREAS, just as the church's good works have remained constant, so has this special place been witness to many devoted preachers; those whose sermons have graced the faithful congregation at Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church have included James N. Campbell, the church's first pastor, and Linney G. Moore, Sr., who has been reappointed to Brooks Memorial United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, the church has flourished under the able guidance of an admirable ministry; the current pastor, who has dedicated his time to sharing his spiritual gifts with the congregation and with the surrounding community, is Steve Handy, Sr., a fourth-generation pastor and lifetime member of the United Methodist Church; and

WHEREAS, following Jesus's command to "go ye forth and preach," the church's members are also devoted to sharing the joy and peace that can only be found within a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, the church's members have long made prominent contributions to the civic, educational, and social fabric of Tennessee and the world, as evidenced by the church's active benevolence programs and its plans for the future; and

WHEREAS, under the able guidance of Pastor Handy, in concert with the untiring generosity of the congregation, the church aspires to create a home for the elderly, as well as a "place for children"; and

WHEREAS, in the interest of helping the less fortunate, the church intends to develop a housing and educational program for half-way house members who need support during their transition into productive members of society; and

WHEREAS, specific ministries for men and for family financial planning are also being planned, thereby enabling the congregation to reach out and address the many varied and diverse needs of its laypeople and the community; and

WHEREAS, the good people of Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church have also cultivated a moral and principled youth whose spiritual engagement is enhanced through their participation in Church activities, which provide young people a supportive atmosphere of Christian fellowship and a chance to hone their gifts; and

WHEREAS, Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church is among those exemplary institutions upon which a just and orderly society is based; it provides a safe haven for our citizens to worship their Creator as a community of faith from which they reach out to the secular community as a response to God's saving grace; and

WHEREAS, as a powerful tool in the service of the Kingdom of God, Pickett-Rucker United Methodist 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 congregation should be appropriately honored for their exemplary service to their fellow Christians and to the good people of Lebanon and Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we join in celebrating the 139th Anniversary of Pickett-Rucker United Methodist Church, thank the good people of this historic congregation and their ministers for their notable service to their Lord and 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.