

SENATE RESOLUTION 94

By Akbari

A RESOLUTION to honor and commend Pastor J. L. Payne upon his fiftieth anniversary as pastor of Greater Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we should honor those individuals who have answered a divine call to the ministry and who have served with dedication, vigor, and enthusiasm to perform God's work for their congregations and their communities; and

WHEREAS, Pastor J. L. Payne is one such stalwart servant of the Lord, who ably serves as the pastor of Greater Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church in Memphis and is celebrating his fiftieth pastoral anniversary this year; and

WHEREAS, John Lee Payne was born in Lula, Mississippi, on May 21, 1933, and attended Lula Public Schools; he converted at Morning Star Missionary Baptist Church in Moon Lake, Mississippi, at the age of fourteen and was baptized in Moon Lake; and

WHEREAS, after answering the call into the ministry in 1951 at the age of eighteen, Pastor J. L. Payne was an assistant chaplain in South Korea for two years while serving in the United States Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Payne has preached the Gospel for sixty-eight years as the pastor of seven churches, including Westlake Missionary Baptist Church, Jehovah Rest Missionary Baptist Church, Mt. Olive Missionary Baptist Church, and Macedonia Missionary Baptist Church, all in Mississippi; he then pastored First Baptist Church in Bartlett and Middle Baptist Church Whitehaven in Memphis before being elected to serve as pastor of Greater Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church in January 1970; and

WHEREAS, as the pastor of Greater Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, Pastor J. L. Payne has demonstrated excellence in his calling as a man of God; the members of his

congregation are proud to call him their pastor, leader, and friend and look forward to his continued spiritual guidance for many years to come; and

WHEREAS, during his fifty years of ministry at Greater Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church, Pastor Payne has overseen the renovation of the old sanctuary and the purchase of fifty neighborhood lots as well as the construction of a new edifice, a new community fellowship hall, and a neighborhood gymnasium facility. The church has also developed an adopt-a-school relationship with LaRose Elementary School and purchased and sold additional property, completed renovations on a recreation center and banquet hall, and purchased a building that served as the Archie L. Rice Center; and

WHEREAS, Pastor J. L. Payne conducted his first revival at Mt. Vernon Missionary Baptist Church in Memphis, and since that time, he has conducted revivals at more than forty churches, including a thirty-day tent revival at Greater Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church and an annual revival at Shady Grove Missionary Baptist Church that lasted for thirty years; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Payne has been a member of the National Baptist Convention since 1955 and is a longtime member of the Memphis Baptist Ministerial Association, which he served as president from 1998 to 2000; during his tenure as president, the association purchased the building at 591 East McLemore Avenue and paid off the mortgage; and

WHEREAS, in 2019, this building was renamed The J. L. Payne Memphis Baptist Ministerial Association Building in honor of his progressive legacy; he has also been recognized in his community with a portion of Wellington Avenue renamed Reverend J. L. Payne Avenue; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Payne has had the privilege of traveling to Jerusalem, where he preached on the Sea of Galilee, was baptized in the Jordan River, and traveled the Jericho Road; and

WHEREAS, his many professional accomplishments aside, Pastor J. L. Payne is grateful for the love and support he shares with his wife of more than six decades, Sister Dorothy Payne; and

WHEREAS, Pastor Payne's commitment to God, his spiritual leadership, and his love for people, as demonstrated throughout his numerous years of service, are worthy of our respect and admiration; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED ELEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, that we honor and commend Pastor J. L. Payne for his fifty years of service to Greater Mt. Moriah Missionary Baptist Church and extend to him our best wishes for every future success.

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