

ENROLLED ORIGINAL

A CEREMONAL RESOLUTION

25-224

IN THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

May 7, 2024

To recognize Union Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church's 140th year anniversary.

WHEREAS, Union Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church ("Union Wesley AME Zion Church") began in Georgetown in 1844;

WHEREAS, due to a climate of racial prejudice a small group of men and women desiring religious freedom withdrew from the Mt. Zion Methodist Church to form the Union Wesley AME Zion Church;

WHEREAS, founding members of the Union Wesley AME Zion Church include Gassaway Waters, Isaac Johnson, Charles Simmons, Carl Carusoe, Charity Wilson, and Eliza Wilson;

WHEREAS, Union Wesley AME Zion Church began holding church services in the home of Gassaway Waters on the corner of Twenty-Eight and Olive Avenue, N.W.;

WHEREAS, in 1846 Union Wesley AME Zion Church relocated to a larger space at Twenty-Third Street between L and M, N.W. which was destroyed by fire due to racial prejudice;

WHEREAS, young Black architect Calvin Brent designed and constructed a new church on the same site that was completed in 1848, and dedicated it as the Second Colored Wesleyan Church;

WHEREAS, the Second Colored Wesleyan Church operated independently until it was accepted in the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church on August 26, 1884, and the first pastor was Reverend Wallace Brown;

WHEREAS, during his pastorate Reverend Wallace Brown changed the name of the church to Union Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church;

WHEREAS, in 1967 Union Wesley AME Zion Church relocated to Ward 5 at 1860 Michigan Avenue NE in the Queens Chapel community in Ward 5, and is currently pastored by Dr. Brian S. Relford Sr.;

WHEREAS, in the same year the Queens Chapel Civic Association began meeting at this location which eventually became its headquarters;

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WHEREAS, Union Wesley AME Zion Church and the Queens Chapel Civic Association have partnered with the church for a health fair and a toy drive donation to Children’s Hospital;

WHEREAS, Union Wesley AME Zion Church served as a station on the Underground Railroad for slaves escaping to the North;

WHEREAS, Union Wesley AME Zion Church member North B.F. Grant along with Frederick Douglas and Sojourner Truth helped spearhead the Underground movement;

WHEREAS, the vision of Union Wesley AME Zion Church is ‘[T]o be a growing community of faith that passionately models the life of Christ by equipping and training seekers and believers to do the work of ministry in the church and community.’;

WHEREAS, Union Wesley AME Zion Church makes an annual donation to the Queens Chapel Civic Association’s Reverend David Turner Memorial Scholarship to graduating seniors;

WHEREAS, during the COVID-19 health pandemic, Union Wesley AME Zion Church assisted the Queens Chapel Civic Association in transitioning to virtual meetings;

WHEREAS, during the 2022 general election Union Wesley AME Zion Church invested in additional cameras and television screens for the sanctuary to provide hybrid in person and virtual church services and candidates forum;

WHEREAS, the mission of the Union Wesley AME Zion Church is to “love God and one another, impact and improve our community and the world; and to proclaim and witness to the life changing message of Jesus Christ.”.

IT IS HEARBY RESOLVED, BY THE COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, That this resolution may be cited as the “Union Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church’s 140th Anniversary Recognition Resolution of 2024”.

Sec. 2. The Council of the District of Columbia recognizes and celebrates the Union Wesley African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church on the occasion of its 140th anniversary for its outstanding commitment, dedication, and service to its members and the community.

Sec. 3. This resolution shall take effect immediately.