

## 2015 SESSION

ENROLLED

### HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 278

*Commending Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 25, 2015

WHEREAS, Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church in Warfield celebrates its 145th anniversary in 2015 of "walking in the spirit of excellence"; the church traces its roots to the arrival of an itinerant preacher in nearby Mecklenburg County in the late 1860s; and

WHEREAS, James R. Howell, an elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, came to the Commonwealth from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, in late 1865; he eventually settled in the Five Forks Boydton area of Mecklenburg County; and

WHEREAS, discovering that African American residents in the area worshipped separately from the white residents—meeting anywhere that was available for worship, James Howell quickly began to work with local ministers to establish local Zion Societies; and

WHEREAS, under the guidance of James Howell and John M. Bishop, a local preacher, Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church was founded and built in Brunswick County on land given by former slaveholders; and

WHEREAS, in the church's early days, members met one Sunday a month for worship; baptisms took place in Sturgeon Creek, and the congregation held annual revival services for five days each summer; and

WHEREAS, throughout its life, Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church has had an active congregation and ministry; the church was remodeled many times, but by the 1950s, the members decided to build a new church, and in 1959, the Mercy Seat Church family began worshipping in the new space; and

WHEREAS, further improvements have been made to Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church over the years, including an addition in the 1980s, a fellowship hall and baptizing pool in the 1990s, and other beautification and restoration projects; and

WHEREAS, Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church's ministry includes a music program, a missionary outreach effort, Sunday school, services honoring the church's young people, a women's day and a men's day, and an annual gospel program and homecoming service; and

WHEREAS, one goal of Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church is to incorporate technology to attract a larger audience and improve the worship experience; in 2015, the church's website went into operation, helping to reach people far beyond its Warfield home; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, That Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church in Warfield hereby be commended on the occasion of its 145th anniversary in 2015 and for "walking in the spirit of excellence"; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Reverend Dr. Danny L. Boyd, pastor of Mercy Seat Reformed Zion Union Apostolic Church, as an expression of the House of Delegates' congratulations and admiration for its many accomplishments during the church's long history and best wishes for an equally strong future.

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