Chapter No. 2060
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HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION No. 113

Originated in House _____ Clerk

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 113

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION COMMENDING THE EXCEPTIONAL SPIRITUAL LEADERSHIP OF BISHOP HOPE MORGAN WARD OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH AND EXPRESSING OUR SUPPORT OF HER CONTINUED INVOLVEMENT IN THE RELIGIOUS ENRICHMENT IN THE LIVES OF MISSISSIPPIANS.

WHEREAS, Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of the United Methodist Church, in listening to the laity and clergy of the Mississippi Conference upon her arrival in the fall of 2004, discerned the heartsongs of the Annual Conference for engagement in ministries of wellness, evangelism, new church planting, mission, racial reconciliation and stewardship; and

WHEREAS, the Conference theme, "Arise, Shine!" continues to be an image to move Mississippi forward in the progression of racial reconciliation and stewardship; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, the focus of the United Methodist Church was on evangelism, their theme was "Arise, Shine, Grow!", and in 2011, the church's focus was on mission, their theme being "Arise, Shine, Go!", and in 2012, the focus of the church is growing generosity, with a theme of "Arise, Shine, Give!"; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Ward was elected a bishop of the United Methodist Church and appointed to serve Mississippi in 2004, and she is believed to be the first woman to lead a mainline denomination in this great state; and

WHEREAS, as resident bishop, Bishop Ward is the shepherding leader of 190,000 United Methodists in 1,147 congregations across the State of Mississippi; and

WHEREAS, before coming to Mississippi, Bishop Ward was superintendent of the Raleigh District in the North Carolina

Annual Conference, and she previously served as North Carolina Conference Director of Connectional Ministries and as a local church pastor; and

WHEREAS, in her 10 years as pastor of Soapstone United Methodist Church in Raleigh, Bishop Ward's church grew from 35 members to 600, and her approach to ministry is "take the next faithful step," and she has been called a shepherd, teacher, evangelist, church builder, missioner and connector by her church, peers and congregations; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Ward's young years were spent in rural eastern North Carolina, and she and her four siblings were the seventh generation to grow up on her family's farm in Corapeake, North Carolina; and

WHEREAS, she was nurtured in Parkers Methodist Church, one of three churches on the North Gates Charge, and her family's values were centered in the Wesleyan tradition with weekly worship, Sunday school, Vacation Bible School, youth choir, youth fellowship, covered dish dinners and mission projects; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Ward attended Duke University, earning her undergraduate degree in English, and upon graduation from Duke, she became youth director of Fairmont United Methodist Church in Raleigh, North Carolina, where she developed a love of ministry and mission; and

WHEREAS, in 1974, she participated in her first mission experience in Cochabamba, Bolivia, and Montero, Bolivia; and the next year, she returned to Bolivia with other work team volunteers, including a young man named Mike Ward; and

WHEREAS, in this work team experience, they established a strong and lasting friendship that grew into a deep and lifelong love, and in 1977, the couple married and both continued to pursue graduate study, Dr. Ward at North Carolina State University and Bishop Ward at Duke Divinity School; and

WHEREAS, after the couple had been married for eight months, they became teaching parents for a group of children in residence at the Methodist Home for Children; and

WHEREAS, the couple counts their family as their greatest blessing, and they have a daughter, Brooke, a son, Jason, and a daughter-in-law, Alison Greene; and

WHEREAS, Dr. Mike Ward has been a public school teacher, athletic coach, principal and superintendent, and was the founding director for the North Carolina Standards Board for Public School Administration, served two four-year terms as Superintendent of Public Instruction for the State of North Carolina, and is currently a professor of educational leadership in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg; and

WHEREAS, the Wards have deep roots in eastern North Carolina, loving the dark soil and watery coastal areas of the state, they also count the world as their home, serving together and individually in work teams and mission endeavors in Central and South America, Africa, the Middle East, as well as in Appalachia, Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina and Washington, D.C.; and

WHEREAS, in leadership of the Mississippi Annual Conference, Bishop Ward has engaged in world missions in several African nations, including Zimbabwe, Mozambique and South Africa; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Ward travels with Mississippians to Zimbabwe and South Africa, preaching and teaching at the General Conference of the Methodist Church of South Africa and at the Annual Conferences of East and West Zimbabwe Conferences; and

WHEREAS, it is the policy of this Legislature to commend the outstanding citizens of this great state, such as Bishop Ward, who have dedicated their lives to helping others and to spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ throughout this state, this nation and this world:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE SENATE CONCURRING THEREIN, That we do hereby commend and congratulate the exceptional spiritual leadership of Bishop Hope Morgan Ward of the United Methodist Church and wish her continued success in all of her future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be furnished to Bishop Ward, the United Methodist Church and to the members of the Capitol Press Corps.

ADOPTED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
April 20, 2012

SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ADOPTED BY THE SENATE
April 29, 2012

PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE