

2017-J5826

Senate Resolution No. 5826

BY: Senator MONTGOMERY

COMMENDING Janes United Methodist Church of Brooklyn, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its Historic Merger

WHEREAS, Throughout the storied history of New York State, there have emerged among its noble institutions certain houses of worship which have become distinguished through their spiritual leadership and commitment to service, and therefore warrant special recognition; and

WHEREAS, It is the tradition of this State and this Nation to pay tribute to those institutions and individuals who have contributed to the ethical and spiritual values of their communities; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is justly proud to commend Janes United Methodist Church of Brooklyn, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its Historic Merger; and

WHEREAS, Evidence abounds attesting to the humble beginnings of Janes United Methodist Church, named for and ministering in the spirit of Bishop Edmund Storer Janes, the first Resident Bishop of the New York area then Methodist Episcopal Church; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Janes, the youngest in the history of the church ever elevated to that position, dedicated the present site and the first

church building; incorporated on October 15th, 1859, this church and its people have lived up to the strength of character and belief in liberty of, and for all, God's people, as evidenced by the life of this great man; and

WHEREAS, The cornerstone of the church building which stood for 101 years was laid in 1883, where it offered both a rich and vibrant pulpit and music ministry; and

WHEREAS, As the church membership grew, plans were made to enlarge the sanctuary and its pipe organ and build an adjoining chapel; in 1889 the cornerstone was laid for the Janes Parish house adjoining the original building along Reid Avenue; and

WHEREAS, During this time, the parish was so active congregations were formed from its ranks including Bushwick Central Methodist Episcopal Church; then, one dark and dismal day in New York Methodism, the organ was silenced and the doors of the church were closed; and

WHEREAS, Subsequently, a single-minded group of congregants petitioned Bishop G. Bromley Oxnam, Resident Bishop, to send clergy, reopen Janes Church and allow them to worship there; the bishop appointed the Reverend Cyrus W. Perry as pastor to lead this most determined group of Methodists; and

WHEREAS, The church doors reopened on Sunday, October 3, 1948, and although it was a struggle to care for the massive structure, the congregation persevered and grew to become one of the most dynamic and influential in the New York area; and

WHEREAS, At a time when it seemed much of the world was violently

splitting apart, a group of Wesleyan Christians were peacefully and joyfully coming together; and

WHEREAS, On April 23, 1968, two bishops followed by two children, two youths, two adults, six ordained ministers, two church officers and finally all 10,000 people present joined hands and repeated in unison: "Lord of the church; we are united in thee, in thy church, and now in The United 'Methodist Church. Amen"; and

WHEREAS, With those words in a Dallas auditorium, the 750,000-member Evangelical United Brethren Church and the 10.3 million-member Methodist Church became one church; and

WHEREAS, The merger also brought people together in another way, making the official dissolution of the Methodist Church's racially segregated Central Jurisdiction; amid a tumultuous year, just weeks after the assassination of the Reverend Martin Luther King Jr., a new United Methodist Church was born; and

WHEREAS, On November 10, 1984, in the midst of the congregation's 125th anniversary celebration, a six alarm fire destroyed the century old building; and

WHEREAS, Never lacking leadership, Janes United Methodist Church's young Pastor, Reverend Robert Orlando Simpson, and the congregation, began plans for a new church; and

WHEREAS, On June 16, 1985, ground was broken and on May 31, 1987, the cornerstone was set and the new Janes United Methodist Church began its rise from the ashes; and

WHEREAS, The first worship service was observed on August 5, 1990,

and was formally dedicated by Bishop C. Dale White, New York Area Resident Bishop, one year later on April 20, 1991; and

WHEREAS, Through the years, Janes United Methodist Church has sustained its reputation as a beacon of light in Bedford-Stuyvesant by offering seamless service to its members and the community, supporting those in need, and giving comfort to those who seek it, solace to those who come to its doors, guidance to the lost and open arms to the youth and seniors; and

WHEREAS, Under the luminous direction of Reverend Robert Orlando Simpson, Janes United Methodist Church stands on the threshold of tomorrow, prepared to meet the challenges of the coming decades, while retaining that spiritual resolve which characterizes its past; and

WHEREAS, It is the custom of this Legislative Body to take note of enduring religious institutions and to bring such institutions to the attention of the people of this Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commend Janes United Methodist Church of Brooklyn, New York, upon the occasion of celebrating the 50th Anniversary of its Historic Merger; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to Reverend Robert Orlando Simpson, Janes United Methodist Church, Brooklyn, New York.