

This historic institution, now entering its third century of service to the church and community, has always focused on providing spiritual, social, educational, and recreational activities for the Bridge Street parishioner and for the community at large. This church, located in the heart of the Bedford Stuyvesant community, has a long proud history of overcoming adversity to continue to survive.

The earliest records of the church date back to 1766 when a British captain named Thomas Webb began holding open air services in downtown Brooklyn. Captain Webb was a convert of John Wesley, the father of Methodism in America. In 1794 the congregation purchased the land on which they held these open air services from a wealthy Brooklyn landowner named Joshua Sands. Later a small church was built, and as was the custom in those days to name streets and buildings after wealthy landowners, the church was named The Sands Street Wesleyan Methodist Episcopal Church. The congregation consisted of whites, free blacks, and ex-slaves. The ability of blacks and whites to worship together in the beginning of the church's history foreshadow its unique ability to overcome any challenge it may face.

By the end of the 19th century, the AWME church had survived almost two centuries of struggles, disappointments and oppression. From its origins in 1766, the AWME Church has been a standard bearer for the family of man, especially in the Brooklyn-Long Island area. From Sands Street, to High Street, to Bridge Street, and to Stuyvesant Avenue, the Church has overcome every major obstacle encountered on its Christian journey.

From its pulpit, some of the greatest preachers and orators of the last two centuries have challenged many to higher heights and consistently championed the cause for all men to exist as children of God equal to one another. Throughout the years, the AWME church has made lasting and significant contributions, not only to education and religion, but to every other major profession which helps to shape the lives of so many.

Mr. Speaker they are indeed a "Great People, and a Great Church, Serving a Great God."

REPORT FILING FOR H.R. 701

HON. DON YOUNG

OF ALASKA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2000

Mr. YOUNG of Alaska. Mr. Speaker, today, I filed the bill report for H.R. 701, the Conservation and Reinvestment Act of 1999. This bill represented an agreement fashioned after five days of Resource Committee hearings and months of Member negotiations. On November 10, 1999, the Resources Committee ordered this historic measure out of Committee by a bipartisan vote of 37-12.

This legislation is the most comprehensive conservation and recreation legislation the Congress has considered in decades and provides permanent funding for valuable conservation and recreational opportunities that will benefit the lives of all Americans.

Title I provides \$1 billion each year to create a revenue sharing and coastal conservation fund for coastal states and eligible local governments to mitigate the various impacts of OCS activities and provide funds for the conservation of coastal ecosystems. Several provisions ensure that the valuable funding provided by this title does not prove to be an incentive for additional oil and gas drilling, especially in areas subject to pre-leasing, leasing, or development moratorium. The intent of this legislation is to provide for conservation and recreational opportunities, and the authors and supporters deliver on that pledge.

Title II provides \$900 million to guarantee stable and annual funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) at its authorized level. This dedicated funding would provide for both the state and federal programs included in the LWCF, while protecting the rights of private property owners. Even with the protections won during our negotiations, some feel this bill does not adequately address property rights. While not eliminating land acquisition nor the Land and Water Conservation Fund, H.R. 701 creates a Federal land acquisition process and provides safeguards to private land owners that dramatically improve the status quo.

Title III provides \$350 million for wildlife conservation and education. This title, crafted by Congressman DINGELL and myself, uses the successful mechanism within the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act (commonly known as Pittman-Robertson). The new source of funding will nearly double the historic contribution made by sportsmen through Federal funds available by Pittman-Robertson and the Federal Aid in Sportfish Restoration Act (commonly known as Dingell-Johnson). Since 1937, these programs have contributed more than \$5 billion, matched by the states, to benefit wildlife and fish.

Title IV provides \$125 million to be used for matching grants for local governments to rehabilitate recreation areas and facilities, and provide for the development of improved recreation programs, sites and facilities.

Title V provides \$100 million for the programs within the Historic Preservation Act, including grants to the States, maintaining the National Register of Historic Places, and administering numerous historic preservation programs, including support for Congressionally authorized Heritage areas and corridors.

Title VI provides \$200 million for a coordinated program on Federal and Indian lands to restore degraded lands, protect resources that are threatened with degradation, and protect public health and safety.

Title VII provides \$150 million for annual and dedicated funding for conservation easements and funding for landowner incentives to aid in the recovery of endangered and threatened species.

Since oil and gas royalty payments are not deposited into the federal Treasury as an end-of-year lump sum, revenue held within the "CARA Fund" accrues interest. Up to \$200 million of this annual interest will match, dollar for dollar, the amount appropriated during the annual Congressional Appropriations process for the Payment In-Lieu of Taxes and Refuge Revenue Sharing programs. This provision is intended to fully fund these two programs.

Because of the breath of this measure, H.R. 701 enjoys the support of 294 Members of Congress. These supporters range from the most southern areas of Florida to my most Northern home of Alaska. Countless governors, county commissioners, and mayors have rallied around this initiative. I hope that the Congressional Leadership joins with us to pass this historic bill into Law this year.

HONORING THE FIRST BAPTIST
CHURCH OF BELLAIRE

HON. KEN BENTSEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, February 16, 2000

Mr. BENTSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to recognize the First Baptist Church of Bellaire for 60 years of service.

The First Baptist Church of Bellaire is proud of its reputation as a church where congregants can worship in a friendly atmosphere that is especially supportive of families.

Established in 1940, First Baptist Church of Bellaire now exceeds 500 members who participate in the various musical programs, youth and children's ministries, activities for seniors and singles, support of foreign missions, and more. One of its finest ministries is the Bellaire Christian Academy, which takes students from pre-kindergarten to 8th grade.

The First Baptist Church of Bellaire is affiliated with the Southern Baptist Convention, which supports 4,000 international missionaries. It is also affiliated with the Baptist General Convention of Texas, and the Houston-area Union Baptist Association. More than ten percent of the church's annual budget is dedicated to the support of missionaries.

The driving force behind much of what goes on at the first Baptist church of Bellaire is Pastor Frank D. Minton of Wichita, Kansas. Pastor Minton came out of pastoral retirement from the First Baptist Church of Anchorage, Alaska to join the First Baptist Church of Bellaire in 1995. He has put First Baptist Church of Bellaire on the move. The Church building has a new look, a new orchestra in the Worship Service, and increased children's and outreach ministries.

His credentials include a Bachelor of Business Administration and Master of Divinity from the University of Oklahoma, and another Master of Divinity from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary in Fort Worth. His book, "Baseball's Sermon on the Mound," published by Broadman Press, combines his seminary training with his baseball experience. He has also served or led assorted pastors' conferences and outreach programs. Minton and his wife, Joyce, have four children and 12 grandchildren.

Mr. Speaker, our community institutions are only as strong as its members, and the members of the First Baptist Church of Bellaire have in a short sixty years established a very important cornerstone of the Greater Bellaire Community. I congratulate all the members of the First Baptist Church of Bellaire on their 60th anniversary.