

# HR254 INTRODUCED



1 HR254  
2 DKRSHTN-1  
3 By Representative Standridge  
4 RFD:  
5 First Read: 02-May-24



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HR\_\_\_\_\_ CELEBRATING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF LESTER MEMORIAL  
METHODIST CHURCH.

WHEREAS, we note with pride and appreciation that  
Lester Memorial Methodist Church will observe its 100th  
anniversary in April 2024; and

WHEREAS, the City of Oneonta in Blount County existed  
from the late 1800s and Methodism was already  
well-established in the community; 1887 was the year that  
the First Methodist Episcopal Church was organized; in 1912  
the Oneonta Methodist Episcopal Church organized and met in  
the Old Cumberland Presbyterian Church Building, where the  
current Annex is located; this group went on to build its  
own structure, commonly known as "The Little Brick Church,"  
which was completed in August of 1913; that building still  
stands and is on the corner of Highway 75 and Second Street,  
North; in 1923, the original structure was replaced with the  
current Sanctuary and named Lester Memorial Methodist  
Church, in honor of pastor Samuel Robert Lester; and

WHEREAS, in 1938, a significant chapter of Methodist  
history occurred with the unification of the Oneonta  
Methodist Episcopal Church, the Little Brick Church, and the  
Methodist Episcopal Church South, Lester Memorial; Reverend  
Robert Murphree led his congregation and they walked up the  
hill to Lester Memorial, where Reverend Murphree clasped the



## HR254 INTRODUCED

29 hand of the waiting Lester Memorial pastor Reverend Hobson  
30 Clark; the two ministers shared the pulpit on alternating  
31 Sundays for the rest of the conference year; at the next  
32 Annual Conference, Reverend Joseph Owen was appointed to  
33 serve as the first sole minister of the unified church; and

34 WHEREAS, the Little Brick Church was used as a Youth  
35 Center until it was sold in 1945; funds from the sale were  
36 used to construct a classroom building adjacent to and north  
37 of the Sanctuary, completed in 1948; further building  
38 expansion did not occur until 1966; in response to church  
39 growth, the current Fellowship Hall and Education Building  
40 was completed at a cost of \$100,000; and

41 WHEREAS, to meet and address growth needs, the late  
42 1970s saw acquisition of one significant piece of property;  
43 in 1976, the Annex building was purchased; prior to Lester  
44 Memorial obtaining this building, a number of Blount County  
45 offices were housed in the Annex; this building was part of  
46 the WPA project, which was completed in 1940; and

47 WHEREAS, several properties were purchased in the  
48 1970's and 1980's on 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Avenues East for  
49 future needs; all structures that existed on the purchased  
50 properties have been removed for building and parking needs;  
51 and

52 WHEREAS, in 1977, Lester Memorial's Kindergarten was  
53 begun for four and five-year old children; a daycare program  
54 was started as a separate entity a few years later; both  
55 programs continue to serve the community; 1977 was also the  
56 advent of Praisings Youth Choir, founded and led by David



## HR254 INTRODUCED

57 Warlick; and

58 WHEREAS, in 1987, a massive renovation of Lester  
59 Memorial properties was begun, significantly updating many  
60 areas of the church; in addition to beautiful changes to the  
61 Sanctuary, a labor-intensive project to create needlepoint  
62 altar kneelers added great beauty to the Sanctuary,  
63 needlepoint altar chair cushions followed in 2007; and

64 WHEREAS, in 1986, under the leadership of Reverend  
65 Gary Formby, Lester Memorial was a pioneer church in  
66 establishing a contemporary worship service; with a Praise  
67 and Worship band and a more casual atmosphere, Lester has  
68 seen steady growth through the addition of this worship  
69 service option; and

70 WHEREAS, in 2001, Lester Memorial welcomed the  
71 construction of the Upper Room and Children's building; this  
72 addition gave the contemporary service a dedicated worship  
73 area; and

74 WHEREAS, in 2022, there was a significant change in  
75 Lester Memorial as the membership voted to disaffiliate from  
76 The United Methodist Church; subsequently, Lester Memorial  
77 chose to join the Global Methodist Church in 2023; now  
78 therefore,

79 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
80 LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA, That we hereby recognize the 100th  
81 Anniversary of the Lester Memorial Methodist Church and we  
82 offer this resolution with warmest wishes for many happy  
83 returns of the day.