

United States House of Representatives

PROCLAMATION

By

Congressman Steve Cohen
9th District, Tennessee

WHEREAS, on behalf of the citizens of the 9th Congressional District of Tennessee, I join the family in celebrating the life and legacy of Bishop Lee Ward, who served gallantly in the U.S Marine Corps during his tours of duty in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War, and for his diligence, devotion and contribution to the Church of God in Christ; and,

WHEREAS, Bishop Ward was born January 1, 1923, in the small town of Abbeville, Alabama. The son of Amnon and Cora Ward, Bishop Ward was educated in the Alabama school system. He also attended classes at the Church of God in Christ Seminary in Atlanta, GA, and Vance Bible Course, 1st Assemblies of God in 29 Palms, CA; and,

WHEREAS, as a Marine, Bishop Ward served three Commandants for nine years. He accompanied them to meetings with several U.S. Presidents and other national and foreign leaders, traveling extensively throughout the U.S. and other continents. During the courtship of his future wife, the former Julia Scott, it was common for Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson to drop him off in Memphis on Air Force One; and,

WHEREAS, Bishop Ward served 26 years in the Marines Corps and retired with the rank of Master Gunnery Sergeant. On June 7, 2012, he traveled to Washington, D.C. to accept the Congressional Gold Medal for being one of the first African-American Marines (known as the Montford Point Marines) and for his contribution to history and our society; and,

WHEREAS, while serving the Church of God in Christ, Bishop Ward was a member of the State Board of Ordination, Chairman of the State Sunday School Department, Superintendent, and was on the Board of Directors for the C.H. Mason Bible College. He also was Chairman of the Board of Ministry of Godly Men with the Billy Graham Crusades and served on the Board of Directors for the Assemblies of God, in 29 Palms, CA; and,

WHEREAS, Bishop Ward pastored Greater Harvest Church of God in Christ Ministries, Inc. (formerly known as South Fort Pickering Church of God in Christ, which began in 1896), where he led for 42 years. He was appointed assistant pastor to Pastor C.H. Moore in 1969 and was later appointed to the pastorate in 1972 by Bishop J.O. Patterson Sr. after Pastor Moore's death; and,

WHEREAS, he started with 18 members and grew the membership, which prompted a move to 21 East Rollins in 1975. The church continued to grow and moved to its current location at 3509 Boxdale St., between Wooddale Avenue and Winchester Road in Memphis. They're 2,000 members strong; and,

WHEREAS, under Bishop Ward's leadership, several ministries were birthed: a food pantry, free tutoring program, Children's Ministry, Youth Ministry, Substance Abuse Ministry, Summer Camp, Women's Ministry, Married Couple's Fellowship, Hospital Ministry, Outreach Ministry, Men's Ministry, Single's Ministry, Helping Hands Ministry, an Institute of Biblical Studies, a Christian Academy, a library and more; and,

WHEREAS, Bishop Ward was married to Missionary Julia Scott Ward. Five children were born to this union: Whittier, Patrick, Vivian, Renardo, and Reniece; in addition to their grandchildren, great-grandchildren, and great-great grandchildren.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, I, Steve Cohen, Member of Congress, along with the citizens of the 9th Congressional District of Tennessee, celebrate the life and legacy of Bishop Lee Ward, who served 26 years in the U.S. Marine Corps and made contributions to the Church of God in Christ, on this, the 30th day of October 2020. His was a life worth living.



Steve Cohen

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Steve Cohen".

Member of Congress