

**RESOLUTION HONORING REVEREND HENRY BELL ROBERSON  
ON HIS 100TH BIRTHDAY**

**WHEREAS,** Reverend Henry Bell Roberson, longtime Chicago resident, is turning 100 years old on April 8, 2023; and

**WHEREAS,** The Chicago City Council has been informed of this milestone by the Honorable Jason C. Ervin, Alderman of the 28th Ward; and

**WHEREAS,** The Reverend, affectionally known as Hank, was born in 1923 in Louisville, Mississippi – the oldest of five sons to bless the union of the late Charlie and Lula Roberson; and

**WHEREAS,** Henry grew up in the segregated South, on a farm owned – not sharecropped – by his father, a rarity at the time, and completed an 11th grade education; and

**WHEREAS,** At the age of 18, Henry was drafted and served during World War II in a segregated Army unit where Blacks were limited to mostly combat support roles; in the week following D-Day, he was assigned to the 957th Quartermaster supply company – part of the famed Red Ball Express, a trucking convoy where almost 75% of the drivers were Black, that transported 412,000 tons of supplies from Normandy to the front lines in a span of three months; and

**WHEREAS,** While he was used to the discrimination Black men faced in the United States, Henry experienced different treatment while stationed in Europe during WWII; and

**WHEREAS,** Two years after moving to Chicago as part of the Great Migration, Henry married Doris Mitchell in June of 1948; they had two sons together: Larry, a Black Panther, killed by Chicago Police in 1969, and Derrick (Ricky); and

**WHEREAS,** In 1953, the Roberson family moved to Garfield Park, and in 1955, Henry joined Central Memorial MB Church where he served as a deacon, the Superintendent of Sunday School, and a member of the original Male Chorus, before being ordained as a minister in 1987; and

**WHEREAS,** Henry has enjoyed a variety of hobbies throughout his life, such as golfing at Columbus Park, farming and fishing on his land in Culver, Indiana, and walking throughout Garfield Park with his wife Doris – continuing to take shorter walks even after the Reverend was hit by a car; and

**WHEREAS,** In 2018, Rev. Roberson was selected by Honor Flight Chicago to fly to Washington, DC as part of their program honoring WWII veterans, and, later that same year, he was selected by Gary Sinise Foundation to fly to New Orleans to visit the WWII Museum as part of the Soaring Valor Mission; Rev. Roberson has also been recognized by retired Chicago ABC7 news broadcast journalist Paul Meincke, who interviewed him for the Honor Flight podcast, and was again recognized by Honor Flight Chicago in February 2022 as one of the featured veterans for Operation Education: Black History Month; and

**WHEREAS,** A storyteller with a great sense of humor, Rev. Roberson continues to be an active member of Central Memorial MB Church, still preaching on occasion, where he is known for saying two things: “love is the motivation factor” and “God is concerned about how we treat one another”; now, therefore

**BE IT RESOLVED,** That we, the Mayor and members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, gathered here this nineteenth day of April 2023, do hereby congratulate Reverend Henry Bell Roberson on the occasion of his 100th birthday, and extend our most heartfelt wishes for his continued good health, happiness, and success; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED,** That a suitable copy of this resolution be prepared and presented to Reverend Henry Bell Roberson as a sign of our esteem, honor, and respect.

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JCB', positioned above a horizontal line.

JASON C. ERVIN  
Alderman 28th Ward