

RESOLUTION NO. 173

Maxine Stark

WHEREAS, Maxine Lois Bruce was born April 20, 1916, in Tougaloo, Mississippi, the only child of George W. Bruce and Daisy Putman Bruce; at 5 weeks old she was brought to St. Louis, a city she lived in all but the final four years of her life; these last years were in the home of her son Bruce, in Chicago; Maxine went home to God peacefully on November 6, 2016; and

WHEREAS, Maxine graduated from Sumner High School in 1932; during her early years, she attended the Church of Christ Holiness; in her later years she united with All Saints Episcopal Church; a talented pianist, Maxine often played for social events and parties of other children; Maxine always did this graciously and brought great joy to young and old alike, in and out of church settings; in the meantime, her piano playing helped her father's fledgling funeral business grow; and

WHEREAS, she accepted a musical scholarship to Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri; there she was introduced to Frederick Stark, a star athlete and science student from a large farm family outside of Kansas City, Missouri; and

WHEREAS, Maxine earned a music degree from the University of Kansas and taught music in the Kinloch and Richmond Heights schools; Frederick taught athletics and science in rural schools and earned his master's degree in physics from the University of Iowa; they married in April 1940, two months before France fell to the Nazis; before Frederick joined the Army Signal Corps in the Pacific in 1943, their first child, Bruce, was born; Frederick Jr. was born in 1948, and Shirley Ruth came along, at age 4 in 1954, to complete the family; Frederick Jr. still resides in the Stark family home on Westminster, purchased in 1956; and

WHEREAS, Maxine and Fred became more involved in the funeral business after her father died in 1959; while Fred taught high school science, Maxine was a substitute teacher of music and taught children with special needs; Maxine was not just a wife, mother, teacher, musician, and mortician she was also extremely involved in the St. Louis community as a leader in Jack & Jill, Inc. and the Union/Sarah Economic Development Corporation; as a board member of the YWCA; and as an avid bridge player; she also was a member of the Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and was a 40-year member of the 28th Ward Regular Democratic Association; Maxine was an original fashionista, as evidenced by Ebony Magazine naming her as one of the best dressed women in their May 1960 edition; and

WHEREAS, In the 1960s through the 1980s, she became more active at All Saints Episcopal Church by joining the Episcopal Church Women and serving as Lay Reader; she was extremely humbled to serve the church in this capacity; and

WHEREAS, when her beloved husband's murder ended their 56 years of marriage, Maxine said she had to learn to accept tragedy; she said once, "I always felt close to God and credit Him with my living a long time. ... I think I've fought a good fight. I've learned to *Hold a Good Thought*"; she identified this phrase as a motto learned from her mother who was a follower of Unity Teaching; and

WHEREAS, in April 2016, she celebrated 100 years of life at the old All Saint's, which will forever be a happy memory for all who attended; her passing came exactly 20 years and 4 days after the death of her beloved Fred.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED by the Board of Aldermen of the City of St. Louis that we pause in our deliberations to recognize the life and contributions of Ms. Maxine Stark, and we offer our condolences to her family and friends. We further direct the Clerk of this Board to spread a copy of this Resolution across the minutes of these proceedings and to prepare a memorial copy to the end that it may be presented to our honoree at a time and place deemed appropriate by the Sponsor.

Introduced on the 9th day of December, 2016, by:

The Honorable Lyda Krewson, Alderwoman 28th Ward

Adopted the 9th day of December, 2016, as attested by:

Timothy O'Connell
Clerk, Board of Aldermen

Lewis E. Reed
President, Board of Aldermen