

2015-J2043

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION commemorating the 200th Anniversary of the Kiantone Congregational Church

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to honor and commemorate the proud and distinguished histories of the people, communities and organizations which comprise the noble body of this great Empire State; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concerns, and in full accord with its long-standing tradition, this Legislative Body is justly proud to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the Kiantone Congregational Church; and

WHEREAS, On May 6, 1815, The Reverend John Spencer rode from what is now Jamestown, New York, to meet a small group gathered at the school house on the Russell Farm bordering Stillwater Creek, in what is now known as Kiantone; and

WHEREAS, Gathered at the school house were John Jones, his son Levi Jones, his grandson Abner Jones, Samuel Garfield, William Deland and Anna Nelson Cheney; these would become the founding members of the First Congregational Church of Ellicott, today known as Kiantone Congregational Church; and

WHEREAS, For the next 15 years, this group of dedicated believers met in members' homes and area school houses, with services being led by visiting missionaries or by the members themselves; and

WHEREAS, In 1830, Ruby Cheney Sears gifted land to the group and a church was constructed which continues to be used by the congregation today; the building is modeled after the mother church in Mendon/Milford, Massachusetts, and was built in the typical plain, New England style; and

WHEREAS, The church was given a gallery above the entry way for musicians and a choir, windows were arched in the gothic style and high-

backed pews with doors on the end were incorporated to keep out any stray animal that may wander into the sanctuary; and

WHEREAS, In 1850, the tops of the spearheaded windows were enclosed to give them a square shape, pews were cut down and a more modern style pulpit was installed; candles which had been used to light the church gave way to oil lamps, the interior walls were papered and the outside of the building was painted white; and

WHEREAS, In 1875, the basement was dug out for the incorporation of a furnace to replace the two old wood stoves and the gallery was enclosed to allow for a mid-week prayer meeting; the organ and choir loft were moved to the front of the sanctuary and an alcove was added for a pulpit; and

WHEREAS, In 1934, the church underwent further renovations as a full basement was added for dinners, church meetings and a Sunday School; by 1972, more space was needed and a two-story addition was added to the rear of the church where a horse barn had previously stood; and

WHEREAS, In 1973, the Geraldine Folke Hagberg Education building was dedicated and housed six Sunday school rooms, a large fellowship hall and a modern kitchen; and

WHEREAS, After some discussion, it was decided that repairs were needed to the church, and from September 1978, until December 1979, a team of dedicated volunteers under the guidance of master carpenter James Mitchener Jr. restored the church to its mid-19th Century appearance; the dedication of the restoration took place on January 13, 1980; and

WHEREAS, Today, under the leadership of Reverend Mel McGinnis, the congregants of the Kiantone Congregational Church celebrate their parish's long and vibrant history while looking forward to its bright future; and

WHEREAS, It is the intent of this Legislative Body to publicly recognize and honor milestones in the history of communities and organizations large and small in this great Empire State; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 200th Anniversary of the Kiantone Congregational Church; and be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution, suitably engrossed, be transmitted to the Reverend Mel McGinnis.